Beliefs of female student-teachers at Petra University in Jordan regarding children's literature role in developing language skills of first primary classes

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Abstract

The study aimed to identify the beliefs of female student-teachers regarding children's literature and its importance in developing language skills of first primary classes at Petra University of Jordan in light of specialization and academic year variables. The study sample comprised (64) female student-teachers of B. A level at the faculty of education in the university. The sample included (42) class-teacher students and (22) kindergarten majors with an aim of unraveling their beliefs. The researcher designed a questionnaire comprising (32) items divided into two domains: the importance of children's literature in developing language skills and that of developmental aspects. Results of the study revealed that student-teachers hold a positive attitude towards the significance of children's literature; besides positive beliefs towards the role of literature in developing language skills and various developmental aspects as well. The study was statistically significance with regard to class-teacher specialization. It proposed certain recommendations among which are: the need to train class teachers on how to select literary texts in order to develop language skills and to make use of such texts in the classroom.

Keywords: Beliefs; Female student-teachers; Petra University; Primary classes; Significance of children's literature.

1. Introduction

The beliefs of kindergarten teachers affect a child's language development. Studies pointed out that such beliefs, pertaining activity design, were propitious for the development of their language, and exceed that of teachers in subsequent stages, where the child tries to imitate and use the language of his teacher. Such a thing requires the teacher to encourage him through different activities such as: talking, writing, or reading to make him express himself freely. In this respect, much of the development in language teaching has occurred outside of the educational mainstream (Nunan, 1988). Therefore, the teacher should choose suitable models that arouse his feeling and games that suit the child's developmental capabilities in the domain of linguistics. This is why teaching children reading and writing is important, being integrated basic skills and the foundation of the learning-teaching process.

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Webster dictionary defines beliefs to be "unchangeable convictions used to explain a real thing whether through logical thinking, in-advance collective rules, authority source, or experience. They don't need accurate true evidences". (Cremaso, Fox, Evans, Mckinnon, 2004) defined them as "the ideas or knowledge that individuals accept to be correct answers for certain truths".

Most researchers agree that children's literature is new. It is based on artistic and formal frameworks that take into consideration social and psychological situations.

It is a new branch of grand literature with certain features that distinguish it from its adult counterpart, though both of them represent artistic works in which form and content are united (Hawamdeh, 2020).

In this research, the author tackles student-teachers beliefs regarding children's literature, its significance in developing language skills and the developmental aspects in the first three primary classes in Amman.

2. Statement of the Problem

Preparing kindergarten and class teachers need a follow-up and assistance in order to obtain educational and scientific competence to develop readiness which in turn requires developing language skills. This can be achieved only through a complete understanding of childhood. As female teachers are directly involved in teaching children, developing their language and caring for its various developmental aspects. Through this work, as a researcher in the field of early childhood, the first basic cycle, and being acquainted with some teaching practices done by class teachers, the researcher noticed a difference in their beliefs pertaining importance of children's literature and the way it is used for developing language skills. He also noted some inappropriate language practices which were mostly traditionally oriented. Therefore, the current study attempts to answer the following two questions:

1-   What are the beliefs of female student-teachers at Petra University in Jordan regarding the role children's literature plays in developing language skills of the first three primary classes?

2-   Are there differences with statistical significance at the function level (a ≤ 0.05) between arithmetic means of sample members evaluations for teachers' beliefs regarding children's literature and its importance in developing language skills and developmental aspects of the first three primary classes, in accordance with variables of specialization and years of experience?

3. Objectives of the Study

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

-    To identify beliefs of female student-teachers at Petra university regarding children's literature in developing language skills of the first primary classes.

-    To identify the beliefs of those student-teachers regarding the significance of children's literature in developing language skills besides developmental aspects in the first three primary classes in accordance with variables of specialization and years of experience.

4. Significance of the Study

The significance of the current study lies in presenting some variables that were never tackled in the previous studies; these are:

- Draw the attention of female student-teachers at Petra University to the importance of the concept of children's literature and language skills pertaining to kindergarten students in addition to the first three primary classes.

- Provide education literature with a tool to measure student-teachers beliefs on children's literature and its role in developing language skills and developmental aspects of that literature.

- Secure data and experiences that help teachers use children's literature in developing language skills at kindergarten, besides the first three primary classes.

5. Terms of the Study

Female student-teachers are the students registered for children's literature course for seniors at Petra University, summer session 2019/2020.

- Children's literature: For Tueimah (2001), it is an educational mediator that provides children with an opportunity to find answers to their queries and to use imagination. It develops creativity through interaction, triggering talents, and accepting new experiences that children's literature offers.

- Skill: It is an acquired capability of good performance; it is a series of successive movements acquired through constant training which makes it a habit rooted in a child's behavior the time he acquires it (Bahader, 19994, 32).

- Language skills: These are the four major skills that constitute the basic system of language; they are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

- Developmental aspects: These are a set of changes through which the child undergoes at various stages since birth and influences his special capabilities and cognitive processes (Perception, thinking, imagination and remembering. (Rimawi, 1998: 54).

6. Study Limitations

Study limitations of place, time, subject, and human are as follows:

- Space limitation: the study was limited to Petra University in Amman, Jordan so results are associated with the type of sample covered by the study.

- Time limitation: It was applied commensurate with distance teaching, summer session 2019/2020.

- Subject limitation: The subject was confined to student-teachers' belief regarding the significance of children's literature and its role in developing language skills and developmental aspects of the first three primary classes.

- Human limitations: This was limited to the study sample of female student-teachers at Petra University.

7. Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

This part of the study presents the theoretical framework that includes study variables that incorporate: definition of children's literature, developing language skills, besides developmental aspects. It also presents previous studies relevant to the subject.

7.1 Definition of Children's Literature

This might be defined as "artistic works that depict children's opinions, feelings, and imagination that cope with their awareness; it could be one of the following types: Novel, poetry, play, essay, and song" (Heiti, 1977). It is a renewed literary type derived from the literature of the adults with its different categories: poetry, prose, (oral or written). It is part of a general genre that addresses the childhood stage in which the writer takes into consideration language and perception levels of the child, presenting it in a newly processed form of the literary forms that were presented to him. He then elevates their language, imagination, knowledge, and involvement in life to make them love literature and its genres by which educational, moral and aesthetic functions could be achieved. (Zalat, 1994).

Children's literature is that type of literature, whether in verse or prose, whose contents and style cope with the perception of children of approximately 5-13 years old. The style of this type of literature is simple, clear, and void of complexities never goes beyond concepts which the child can perceive. It is also defined as an artistic linguistic form that belongs to a genre of dramatic or lyrical verse presented by a critic who puts it in a framework associated with literature whose function is deeply connected with world of childhood.

Thus, literature on the other hand, is a correlation between the linguistic form mentioned previously and the idiomatic one. So, the term child or children evokes in us children's literature which is the craftsmanship of expressing human feelings, emotions, ideology, and culture in the wiring which will be conveyed to the recipient, the child in this case. Therefore, this literature takes into consideration a child's needs, capabilities, psychological and somatic characteristics.

Thus, any adult literary work could not become children's just by simplifying it because, in origin, the writer adapts artistic elements of literary work to suit children's qualities. This is why children's literature is considered part of grand literature that has its own elements in form and content.

Two concepts for children's literature have been used by readers; each of them goes with his nature, interests on one hand and with specialization on the other. The first stems from the comprehensive meaning of the term culture. According to this concept, children's literature implies all that is written for and about the child, at the same time and on various branches of human culture.

According to this concept children's literature of cognitive origins covers all behavioral methods, types of thinking, the world of values and that of material, and scientific achievements. In other words, it covers what the human mind has already accomplished and will accomplish on two levels, materialistic and moral.

According to this concept, children's literature means all that is written for and about the child at the same time and on various branches of human culture. Analytically speaking and in accordance with this vision, children's literature stems from scientific origins that cover all behavioral methods, types of thinking, worlds of values and material besides scientific achievement. In other words, it covers what the human mind has already accomplished and what it will accomplish on two levels, materialistic and moral. The second concept stems from a specialized literary stance that determines its general and basic characteristics, based on critical theories that clarify connotations of the word "literature" historically and expressively (Hawamdi, 2020).

Thus, the literature of child's world (prose or verse) can be divided into three parts (Hawamdi, 2020):

- Literature of the children (specialized children's literature represents this concept).
- Children's literature is derived from its adult counterpart.
- Literature that talks about children.

7.2 Significance of Children's Literature

The significance lies in the following:

- It develops a child's imagination from whose texts the child learns about good and evil in life.
- It is a general educational source for values and social customs.
- It develops a child's aesthetic taste and increases his linguistic wealth.
- It plays a great cultural role in a child's life.
- It augments various developmental aspects as seen in:

1- Mental side: It provides the child, especially novels, with lots of knowledge which help implant values and sound moral principles in his education and orientation. Mental development is subjected to several mental processes of development that start with the motor sensory level. The

novel, for example, develops general intelligence that secures the development of the nervous system through augmenting abilities to remember, memorize, broaden imagination, and develop mental functions represented by intelligence, perception, taste and innovation.

2-   Social aspect: The novel, as well, embodies social trends. It implants noble values in the child, consolidates positive values and love to do good, develop sound social customs, and provides communication skills with others.

3-   Psychological aspect: Via literature-specially-novel – the child is able to express his harmful inner feelings and emotions, mitigate perplexity and stress, and make him sympathize with situations that require offering help to the poor (Hameed, 1426).

7.3 Development and its Features

In dividing stages of development, psychologists relied on several foundations starting with the pre-birth period, mid-childhood stage begins at six and ends at the end of year nine, and late childhood stage ends at the onset of adolescence stage. Many studies such as that of (Haitee, 1977) confirmed the significance of the early childhood stage in building up child's personality as that child learns customs, skills, and trends.

The first six years of child's age are the most important in forming his personality because they are the cornerstone on which the upcoming years of experience rest. They also positively influence his psychological and social build up. Therefore, taking care of the child at this stage is a human requirement that should be achieved by available means (Nashef, 2001).

Thus, being acquainted with stages of development and their characteristics help educators to rectify children's behavior, how to deal with them, and how to help in building their personalities on sound bases. Because child's mental development is influenced by the way others deal with him, his mental development varies in accordance with the treatment of the surroundings and experiences they go through (Jad, 2003). Due to that, child's environment should be enriched with stimuli and available activities that help develop the mental and cognitive skills the child has. As for the linguistic development of the child, it constitutes a significant part of his mental development that contributes to knowledge, for language is a container of thinking. Language development at this stage plays a significant role in self-expression. More than that mental, development is a requisite for linguistic development with regard to gaining a stock of vocabulary, understanding sentences. That development at this stage is also influenced by experiences and the quality of stimuli children encounter. The more experiences the child goes through, the more his language develops. The more mature his language becomes, the more he integrates with various types of literature. Moreover, the psychological development of any child necessitates the availability of care provided by educators and psychologists in the sense that the psychological development is associated with psychological tendencies, desires, emotions, feelings, memories, values, and habits (Melhem, 2007).

Among the requisites of mental development are the following: developing mental skills such as remembering, perception, inventive thinking, and problem solution. Thus, providing the child with an opportunity to review types of children's literature increases his linguistic wealth (Nashef, 2001).

7.4 Linguistic Development

Language is what distinguishes humans from all other creatures on earth. It is the tool for social communication and the means of thinking through words which are considered by linguists the major element of intelligence. This is how it plays an important role in the mental, social, and psychological life of the individual. The importance of man's life lies in two functions:

1-   Expressive: It is an active means on which the human depends to express his desires, needs, and feelings.

2-   Mental: This function opens up for the human new horizons which help him through abstraction and action to go beyond the tangible and instant things to perceive the absent and to mentally imagine the future.

There is a difference between language and speech; the former incorporates all means of communication that the human uses to express his ideas and feelings including written language i.e., the language of drawing, figures, and images. In the speech, the human uses certain specific sounds, words, to express his ideas and feelings. It is more generic than speech. It is noted that the child starts his own language prior to acquiring societal methods of expression. He learns speech through producing his own sounds similar to those he hears from the surrounding. As all know that the child doesn't inherit any nervous system that accurately guides him to the muscles, he should refer to produce a certain sound. One of the most important phenomena of human development that obsessed researchers was speech and language acquisition. Speech is the mean by which the human communicates with others when expressing his ideas, wishes, and inclinations. It is also the means by which he understands the external ambience.

It is also noted that language, through which the human could express his physiological and psychological needs, is what distinguishes him from other living creatures. It is also the means by which the human communicates with his gender to express his feelings towards others, either through words, gestures, or kisses which are all forms of language.

Language development undergoes two stages:

First: Pre-speech stage which is also subdivided into five stages:

1-   Crying: The cry is the first signal of a newly born human which at that stage signifies nothing but later becomes a voluntary operation associated with child's emotional case.

2-   Random sounds: At this stage, the child produces a variety of sounds that gradually become more complex. Repetition of the semi-sound syllables is labelled babbling where children are able to produce all basic sounds of the language.

3-   Automatic alphabet stage: After the babbling stage speech dwindles and the child stops uttering. Vowels and consonants start to emerge when contract movements give a speech in a more specified form.

4-   Mimicry stage: At this stage, the child focuses on the sounds of primitive words after which he exerts efforts before such sounds are given any meaning, when parents repeat the name of something the child is familiar with, as when the says "toy". Whenever he presents that to his child, the latter associates it with what it stands for, thus, he uses it correctly.

5-   Meaning stage: At this stage, a new factor which is visual perception gets into child's acquisition of the language where he links what he hears to what he sees, thus gets the meaning.

6-   Sound Speech stage:

It is subdivided into two stages:

1-   Vocabulary development

Vocabulary development doesn't occur quickly or of a sudden. Studies confirmed that children's vocabulary stock between 6 months of age and one year won't be more than three words. It annually increases to 500-600 words at the age of one year to six, except for the period between 15-18 months of age when the development stops because the child is busy with acquiring motor skills.

2-   Using phrases and sentences

Word stage starts with the child between 8-16th months of age; this is "word sentence" in which the child expresses his needs using one word like uttering the word "toy". After month 16, the child shows a greater desire to acquire and learn more words. Therefore, he repeats certain words and asks new questions which imply that he has acquired new mental and linguistic capabilities which enable him to correlate meanings with things he discovered. "light" means light, "fire" means heat, "ice" means cold, "night" means darkness and so on and so forth.

One of the most important aspects of development parents should care for is the linguistic one. In fact, it is not less significant than its kinetic counterpart or any other aspect of a child's development. The linguistic one enables the child to communicate with the surrounding without any obstacles. Therefore, it should be followed up daily and monthly. If we want the child to positively interact with educational situations, he should be psychologically and emotionally ready so as to augment concentration and awareness. It is really difficult to separate the various aspects of development. For example, language skills strongly interrelate. Language as (Jamal, 2005) pointed out covers all things children do. (Yoo, 1988) ascertained that kindergarten beliefs affect a child's language development and the designs that suit it is more than the beliefs of the teacher for the subsequent stages. Thus, the kindergarten teachers should develop their language skills, as she is the model whom the child imitates using her language. Henceforth, the child should be encouraged to talk, write and read by securing everything he needs to achieve such a goal.

The researcher stresses the importance of the learning process for the first three primary courses taught by class teachers who are supposed to possess activities and skills that contribute to acquiring language. The researcher also thinks that whoever adopts this process needs to use the cognitive linguistic content of children's literature texts to be able to build their knowledge of linguistics. The researcher expects, as well, that teachers choose texts that provide real education chances to practice numerous language skills via those texts. Such a thing helps develop different developmental aspects that suit students' interests, capabilities, and inclinations to achieve an integrated development (emotionally, cognitively, and self-kinetically).

It is expected that learners could substantiate their identities in a teaching-learning environment filled with love, emotional support, mutual respect and cooperation that fully actualize the development of learners' personalities, self-confidence self-perception, in addition to linguistic achievement.

7.5 Developmental Aspects

Various aspects of a child's development are influenced by a variety of domains, the foremost of which is the educational one that the teacher's shoulders. She needs to develop a child's capabilities and skills exemplified in somatic, mental, emotional, and social aspects. Kindergarten teachers can play a big role in child training and in getting balanced emotional behaviors that contribute to self-confidence. She might also be of help to the child in the artistic, literary, and aesthetic domains that help produce balanced emotions, self-understanding and expression (Fahmi, 2007).

Through language, the child can create social relationships because of the strong correlation between language skills and socialization (Jamal, 2005).

The fastest aspect of a child's development at this stage is the linguistic one. It is essential for realizing personal, social, and mental compatibilities in his life. Such a thing enables him to acquire many words that help him create correct sentences (Milhem, 2007).

8. Literature Review

Several studies tackled the issue of children's literature and its significance in different domains and variables. The following are some of them:

In the study of (Rabieah & Abdul Muttaleb, 2013), they tried to evaluate the status of using the kinetic and poetic story, in light of children's literature goals, by kindergarten teachers in Riyadh.

The sample which comprised (105) teachers of kindergartens in Riyadh was randomly selected. The standard evaluation tool on the reality of using kinetic and poetic stories in light of children's literature goals was adopted by these teachers. The two researchers concluded that the teacher's application of the story was (66.4%) and what the story accomplished from the goals of children's literature was (84.6%).

The study of (Taha, & Zahrani, 2020) aimed to measure the strategic efficacy of (RAFT) via black board in developing creative writing skills with the intention of using children's literature by student-teachers majoring in kindergarten at the faculty of education in king Khalid university. The study sample comprised (80) second-level students. The sample was divided into two groups, control and experimental. Results revealed that there were differences with statistical significance between means of the experimental and control groups in favor of the former with regard to the intention of using children's literature. Such a result reinforces the strategic efficacy of (RAFT) through black board system in developing creative writing and inclination to use that literature.

The study of (Ribovich & Jcrilyn K, 1976) aimed to determine the extent of kindergarten's child's understanding of syntactic structures and its impact on word pronunciation and related sentences.

The tool used was an objective test supported with images and drawings that accompany written symbols. The study sample comprised (14) male and female children distributed among (9) kindergartens in Fairfax city. The results revealed that there was a strong relationship between a child's understanding of syntactic structures and correct pronunciation of words. The results also unveiled children's ability to add more new vocabulary of which (85%) were context related and (15%) were far from the linguistic pattern they were given.

As for the study of (Medonaldjl, 1997), it aimed to determine the major elements that constitute language as a system and its impact on a child's awareness of grammar of the language. The study determined the following: phonology and its role in developing a child's ability to distinguish between analogous and different sounds; morphology and semantics which help the child to determine his past experiences, to compare them with the upcoming ones and to understand their new meanings.

The study of (Fisher, 1998) aimed to determine a child's system for building a linguistic sentence. To achieve such a goal, a sample of children whose ages ranged between (4.5-6.5) was selected.

The researcher prepared three linguistic units with the purpose of developing a child's sense of using new verbs and the possibility of generating new ones through texts that included patterns of scientific, literary and poetic sentences relevant to the environment. Results of the study relevant to children's responses regarding the sentences were ordered as follows: literary sentences, scientific, and environmental. He came up with a set of recommendations, the foremost of which were: teacher's aversion of using sentence combining rules with sentences that depend on language form; teacher's increase of using language activities to train children on skills of language guessing to determine word meanings, language structure, making use of keys for building and generating sentences through providing examples with congruent meanings that present language situations in the form of an artistic portrait.

The study of (Abu Haija & Saadi, 2006) aimed to construct a scale that was applied to teachers of the first three primary classes and their teachers to detect their beliefs of designing Arabic language syllabus for such classes. The study also aimed to examine the impact of experience and kind of school variables on beliefs of male and female teachers with regard to those designs. Sample members

amounted to (337) male and female teachers. Results revealed that there were differences with statistical significance in their beliefs on designs (academic, cognitive, and ecological) that might be attributed to teaching experience, type of school and interaction between them. In light of such results, the researchers recommended acquainting male and female teachers with the designs set for the Arabic language syllabus for the first three primary classes and training them to participate in designing that syllabus in a complementary manner.

9. Method and Procedures

9.1 Study methodology

The study adopted the descriptive analytical approach to examine students' beliefs regarding the role that children's literature plays in developing language skills and development aspects in the first three primary classes in Amman.

9.2 Study population

The study population comprised all B.A student-teachers whose specialization is class teacher or kindergarten in the faculty of education at Petra University, the summer session of the academic year 2019/2020. The number amounted to (215) students (171) class teachers and (44) kindergarteners. The study sample was purposively selected from the population for that was easier to get to them in a distance-learning situation.

9.3 Study sample

It comprised (64) students, (44) class teachers and (22) kindergarten majors from freshman level to seniors. The researcher distributed the questionnaire electronically via a link.

Table 1. Description of study sample members in accordance with demographic variables

Variables	Groups	Number	Percentage
Specialization	Class teacher	42	65.63
	Kindergarten	22	34.37
	Total	64	100
Study ears	Freshman	17	26.56
	Sophomore	47	73.44
	Total	64	100

9.4 Study tool

The researcher, in preparing the study tool, (a questionnaire), made use of questionnaires used by other researchers relevant to the subject of the current study such as those of (Kress & Elias, 2006; Evans et al., 2004; Fisher, 1998)

9.5 Tool validity

To verify the validity of the tool, the researcher presented it to a group of judges, professors from Jordanian universities, for their opinion on questionnaire items of which some were modified, some added, and others deleted. Some items were merged and others rephrased. Items of the first draft were (43), (11) of which were deleted, ending up with (32) items distributed into two major domains. To verify the validity, the coefficients were elicited by applying the questionnaire to an exploratory

sample comprising (24) students. Correlation coefficients between every item and its domain were calculated. Values of beliefs domain pertaining language skills ranged between (0.715-0.94) and those of developmental aspects ranged between (0.524 - 0.915). Internal consistency of the researcher field was verified through computing correlation coefficients between them and the total degree of the two domains. The relation value between beliefs pertaining language skills and total degree was (0.685), as it amounted to (0.839) between the domain of beliefs and developmental aspects.

It is noted that the lowest levels of correlation coefficients were more than (0.40), the suggested value in most researches for accepting the correlation value of constructive validity. Results are presented in the two following tables:

Table 2. Correlation coefficients between every item of the research domain and the total degree of the domain it belongs to

Item number	Domain pertaining language skills	Domain pertaining developmental aspects
1	.744**	.699**
2	.771**	.734**
3	.878**	.722**
4	.837**	.789**
5	.840**	.827**
6	.678**	.560**
7	.837**	.781**
8	.940**	.557**
9	.875**	.915**
10	.772**	.595**
11	.837**	.728**
12	.888**	.733**
13	.715**	.524**
14	.793**	.698**
15	.799**	.570**
16	.788**	.915**

** Indicates that correlation coefficients are functional at the level (0.01).

Table 3. Correlation coefficients between questionnaire domains and tool as a whole

Domains	Correlation value
Beliefs pertaining language skills	.685**
Beliefs pertaining development aspects	.839**

** Indicates that correlation coefficients are functional at the level (0.01)

9.6 Study tool reliability

To verify tool reliability, Cronbach Alpha for internal consistency was used and results are presented in table (4).

Table 4. Reliability results of student-teachers' domains pertaining to the role of children's literature in developing language skills and developmental aspects of the first three primary classes using Cronbach Alpha

Domains	Item number	Value of Cronbach Alpha
Beliefs pertaining language skills	16	0.614
Beliefs pertaining developmental aspects	16	0.796
Total	32	0.760

Table (4) shows that student-teachers beliefs have a high degree of internal consistency value which amounted (0.760) for all items and a reliability value for internal consistency (0.614) for the domain of language skills. While the domain pertaining, developmental aspects got (0.796). All these values are sufficient and propitious for the current study because they were all close to the highest reliable value, one.

Steps of Implementing the Study

After verifying the validity and reliability of the study tool, the researcher followed the following steps of implementation:

1-   He distributed the belief scale on children's literature to study the sample elaborating on its aims.

2-   He informed student-teachers that the aim of the study was to uncover their beliefs pertaining to children's literature and its role.

3-   He informed them, as well, that their responses would be solely for researcher purposes.

4-   He received (64) answers out of (70); the other six were lost.

5-   He graded the scale of beliefs by adding all points of each respondent to the items relevant to the two domains (children's literature; its significance in developing skills and developmental aspects). One point was given to the answer of every item in each domain with a rate (1-5).

10. Study Results

To see the results of teacher- students' beliefs regarding children's literature and …, arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated and arranged according to the level of importance. The results revealed that the total mean pertaining language skills was "high" (4.29) with a standard deviation (0.21); the mean for developmental aspects was (4.27) with a deviation (0.34), ranking "high" as well. Language skills were rated first, while developmental aspects were rated second.

11. Discussion of Results

First question: What are the beliefs of student-teachers in Amman of children's literature significance for developing language skills and developmental aspects in the first three primary classes?

In answering this question, arithmetic means and standard deviations for each domain of beliefs were used, in addition to using the tri-classificatory scale to describe means values (low, medium, high) as follows:

1.00 - 2.33	Low
2.34 - 3.64	Medium
3.65 – 5.00	High

The previous classificatory groups were computed according to the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{Highest response weight} - \text{Lowest weight}}{\text{Number of classificatory groups}}$$

$$\text{Group length} = \frac{(1-5)}{3} = 1.33$$

Table 5. Arithmetic means and standard deviations for the domains of student-teachers pertaining development of language skills and developmental aspects, arranged in descending order

No.	Domain	Mean	Standard deviation	Relative importance	Level	Rank
1	Beliefs pertaining language skills	4.29	0.21	85.80	High	1
2	Beliefs pertaining developmental aspects	4.27	0.34	85.40	High	2
		4.28	0.23	85.60	High	

Table (5) shows that the beliefs' level of student-teachers towards children's literature and its role was "high"; the total mean was (4.28) with a relative significance of (85-60); the domains' level was also "high" where means ranged between (4.27-4.29). The domain of language skills rated first with a mean (4.29) and a relative significance (85-80); the belief pertaining developmental aspect rated last with a mean (4.27) and a relative significance (85.40); the domains pertaining language skills and developmental aspects were analyzed with regard to their items as follows:

First, beliefs domain pertaining language skills

Arithmetic means and standard deviations for beliefs pertaining language skills are presented in table (6).

Table 6. Means and deviations for items of the domain pertaining language skills arranged in descending order

No.	Item	Mean	Deviation	Relative significance	Level	Rank
14	Children's literature encourages students to read because it correlates reading to pleasure.	4.45	0.64	89.00	High	1
1	Children's literature enriches student's language dictionary with words and structures.	4.44	0.59	88.80	High	2
13	Listening to stories helps students to get along with literature regarding sentence construction and opinions' correlation.	4.42	0.56	88.40	High	3
3	Children's literature trains students on how to articulate sounds clearly.	4.39	0.52	87.80	High	4
6	It develops in students' types of expression regarding narration, dramatization, and summarization.	4.36	0.82	87.20	High	5
2	It makes students good listeners.	4.34	0.72	86.80	High	6
4	It provides students with opportunities of comprehending and understanding.	4.33	0.69	86.60	High	7
7	It enables students to precisely note pronunciation and structures that express meanings.	4.27	0.62	85.40	High	8
10	It helps students to successively complete language tasks and activities.	4.27	0.62	85.40	High	8
16	Listening to stories help to predict events of non-familiar stories.	4.23	0.71	84.60	High	10
5	It helps students to express themselves accurately.	4.22	0.60	84.40	High	11
8	It is expected that children's	4.22	0.63	84.40	High	11

	literature will develop students' ability to critically analyze problematic situations in their lives.					
9	Children's literature trains students to write literary texts in their own language which helps them develop their oral and written abilities.	4.20	0.65	84.00	High	13
11	It is expected that children's literature will help students to speak fluently in accordance with Arabic grammar.	4.20	0.60	84.00	High	13
12	Musical beauty of children's songs discloses students' good reading models and recitation.	4.13	0.70	82.60	High	15
15	Children's literature helps students to elicit grammar pertaining language activities.	4.09	0.66	81.80	High	16
	Belief domain pertaining language skills.	4.29	0.21	85.80	High	

Table (6) shows that the level pertaining language skills was "high"; it's mean was (4.29) with a relative significance (85.80); domains' level ranked "high", means ranged between (4.09-4.45). Item (14) "children's literature encourages…" rated first with a mean (4.45) and relative significance (89.0); item (15) "children's literature helps students to elicit…" rated last with a mean (4.09) and relative significance (81.80).

Second domain of beliefs pertaining developmental aspects

Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the domain were calculated as presented in table (7).

Table 7. Means and deviations for items of the domain pertaining developmental aspects arranged in descending order

No.	Items	Mean	Deviation	Relative significance	Level	Rank
6	Children's literature pleases students, arouses them, and attracts their attention in class.	4.48	0.69	89.60	High	1
7	It improves children's emotional intelligence through model personalities to overcome negative emotions.	4.48	0.59	89.60	High	1
9	Children's literature through artistic devices helps students' conscience to mature regarding their emotions coordinating that with emotions of others.	4.38	0.65	87.60	High	3
13	Playing roles of characters in children's literature helps them to interact with their surrounding and society.	4.38	0.68	87.60	High	3
16	Children's literature through objectives it contains develops positive intentions and values.	4.38	0.55	87.60	High	5
12	It develops good social relations in students.	4.36	0.70	87.20	High	6

4	It develops spiritual values and religious awareness in students.	4.34	0.70	86.80	High	7
5	It makes understanding the scientific facts included in its texts easier.	4.28	0.65	85.60	High	8
15	Children's literature cares about students' inclinations.	4.25	0.76	85.00	High	9
13	If provides students with general culture.	4.23	0.71	84.60	High	10
1	It helps students to regulate their ideas and experiences to come to logical solutions for problems presented.	4.20	0.60	84.00	High	11
8	Emotions in children's literature provide an opportunity for students to build balanced personalities.	4.16	0.70	83.20	High	12
3	Children's literature provides students with a chance for self-contemplation.	4.14	0.71	82.80	High	13
10	It mitigates students' emotional stress and psychological anxiety.	4.14	0.64	82.80	High	13
11	It develops in students' literary taste and critical capabilities.	4.09	0.64	81.80	High	15
2	It directs students to follow steps of scientific thinking.	4.02	0.88	80.40	High	16
	Beliefs' domain pertaining developmental aspects.	4.27	0.34	85.40	High	

Table (7) shows that the belief domain pertaining developmental aspects was "high", as the mean was (4.27) with a relative significance (85.40). The level of its items was also "high". Arithmetic means ranged between (4.02-4.48). Items (6) and (7): "gives students pleasure …" and "It improves student's emotional intelligence…" rated first, with a mean (4.48) and relative significance (89.60). Item (2) "children's literature directs students' attention…" rated last with arithmetic mean (4.02) and relative significance (80.40).

Second question: Are there differences with statistical significance at the function level (0.05) in teacher-students beliefs that might be attributed to variables of (specialization, academic year)?

Table 8. (T) test for differences between domains' means with regard to specialization variable.

Domain	Specialization	Number	Mean	Deviation	T value	Function level
Beliefs pertaining language skills	Class teacher	42	4.32	0.15	2.05	0.044
	Kindergarten	22	4.21	0.28		
Beliefs pertaining developmental aspects	Class teacher	42	4.41	0.16	5.81	0.000
	Kindergarten	22	3.99	0.41		
Total	Class teacher	42	4.37	0.12	5.22	0.000
	Kindergarten	22	4.10	0.29		

Results of the table (8) show that there are differences with statistical significance at the function level ($a \leq 0.05$) in domain means pertaining specialization variable in accordance with calculated (T) value that amounted to (5.22) at the function level (0.000) for the total degree, a statistically functional value. The calculated (t) value was (2.05) at the function level (0.044) pertaining language skills and (t) value (5.81) at the level (0.000) for the beliefs' domain pertaining developmental aspects, a value that is statistically significant as the functional value level is (0.000) for the belief pertaining developmental aspect, a value that is statistically significant for that value is less than (0.05). The

difference was in favor of class-teacher specialization, as students of that major got higher arithmetic means compared to those of kindergarten specialization as demonstrated in the table.

Table 9. (T) test results for differences between domains means pertaining academic year variable

Variable	Academic year	Number	Mean	Deviation	T value	Function level
Beliefs pertaining language skills	Freshman	17	4.38	0.12	2.13	0.037
	Sophomore	47	4.25	0.22		
Beliefs pertaining developmental aspects	Freshman	17	4.40	0.14	1.96	0.054
	Sophomore	47	4.22	0.37		
Total	Freshman	17	4.39	0.10	2.45	0.017
	Sophomore	47	4.24	0.25		

Results in a table (9) show that there are differences with statistical significance at the function level (a ≤ 0.05) between means of belief domains pertaining academic year variable in accordance with the calculated (t) value which was (2.45) with a function level (0.017) of the total degree, a statistically significant value.

The difference was in favor of freshman whose mean was bigger than that of sophomores. The calculated "t" value amounted to (2.13) a function level (0.037) for the belief pertaining language skills, a value that is statistically significant, as the value of the level was less than (0.05). The difference was in favor of freshman whose means was bigger than that of sophomores. As for the beliefs pertaining developmental aspects, the calculated (t) value was (1.96) with a function level (0.054), a value that is not statistically significant, as that level is bigger than (0.05).

12. Recommendations

In light of what preceded, the study recommends the following:

- To train class teachers on how to choose literary texts to develop language skills and to use such texts in classrooms.
- To gear programs of student-teachers to focus on language skills for children.
- To provide such programs with equipment that helps in dealing with children's literature and contribute to the development of language skills besides developmental aspects in children of first primary classes.
- To conduct further studies to examine the range of student-teachers application of children's literature and its role in improving children's developmental aspect in the first primary classes in schools of Amman governorate.

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