

Research Trends in the Field of TEFL at Saudi Universities: An Analytical Study for Selected MA Theses and Ph.D. Dissertations

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ABSTRACT

In the last two decades, Saudi universities began to present post-graduate programs in the field of teaching English methodology. Many MA and PhD studies were done in TEFL field that required analyzing or examining those studies to determine their trends in order to guide future studies towards the effectiveness of the scientific studies in developing English language in Saudi Arabia. This is a meta-analysis study for 82 M.A and PhD research trends in the field of TEFL in the areas of research topic, research methodology, research tools, research targets, research targeted educational stage. The findings of the study revealed that: Teaching methodology was the first topic that addressed by the target studies (53.7%), second topic was Evaluation (15.9%) and the third was using technology in teaching English language (14.6%). There was less repetition in the first topic titles than the second and third topics. The quasi-experimental studies (55%) are more than the descriptive studies (44%) in the total of target studies. Test was the most usable tool (46%) in the target researches. The second tool was questionnaire (26%). Secondary stage was most stage targeted by M.A. and PhD. studies (40%), the second stage was intermediate = 34%. The male students (40%) were the most targeted as population for MA and PhD studies. Then, female student's represented (20.5%), male teachers (19.5%), female teachers (9%) and content (11%). The study recommended to avoid the repeated topics in the future MA and PhD studies, and open more PhD programs in the field of teaching English language methodology.

Keywords: English, M.A, Methodology, Research, PhD, Teaching trends.

Introduction

Adopting appropriate teaching methods and designing suitable teaching materials are among the major concerns of language teachers around the world. Although many teachers are eager to find the 'best' or most effective ways of teaching, there are no easy answers. Educational research in the field of teaching language supposed to find the best methods and techniques to ease the language learning practices.

As (Waters, 2012) reported that (the idea that the most effective kind of methodology will be based on the sociocultural norms of the teaching situation to, ironically enough, a renewal of 'Methodism', one caused by the way that a 'communicating to learn' approach is increasingly advocated as the single best method). In the latter approach, learners use language to solve problems and (in theory, at any rate) acquire a knowledge of grammar and so on as a by-product of the communication work. This approach is the strong form of task-based learning and teaching, Content and Language-Integrated Learning, and soon.

In Saudi Arabia, English language is taught in all public and private schools from Grade 4 throughout the educational ladder of the school system. In tertiary education, English also enjoys a prestigious status as a medium of instruction in most colleges and as an important foreign language in other subjects. As (Alhaisoni, 2013) mentioned that the status of

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English in the Kingdom is completely different now. Due to the global demand and being the language of 'science and technology, business and commerce' 'window on the wall' etc the importance of English language grew rapidly. It is now one of the major subjects in the education system of Saudi Arabia. Universities prepare teachers to teach students English Language in public schools Primary, intermediate and secondary stage. As (Alamri, 2013) mentioned, higher education in Saudi Arabia has undergone a tremendous growth over the past decade. The higher education system, which is based on diversification, has expanded to include: 28 Government Universities, 18 Primary Teacher's Colleges for men, 80 Primary Teacher's Colleges for women, 37 Colleges and Institutes for health, 12 Technical Colleges, and 33 Private Universities and Colleges.

In spite of continued growth in educational research among Saudi universities, there are some reasons that preclude its effectiveness in developing English learning. These reasons (Al-Matham, 2008) are: The lack of research linkage with the development plans of English learning and teaching, the lack of future research plans in the field of English teaching methodology, the lack of co-ordination between the Research institutions and educational institutions, most researches concentrate on non-central issues in the field in English methodology or neglect other important issues.

In the last two decades, Saudi universities began to present post-graduate programs in the field of teaching English methodology. Many MA and PhD studies were done in TEFL field, which required analyzing or examining those studies to determine their trends in order to guide future studies towards the effectiveness of the scientific studies in developing English language in Saudi Arabia.

The problem of the study and its questions:

The last decade has showed us increased growth in higher studies demand in Saudi universities. Many universities introduced programs in M.A. and PhD. in the field of education including curriculum and instruction. There are many higher studies in the field of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). This study questions are:

- What are research trends of M.A. and PhD in the field of English Language Teaching Methodology at Saudi Universities?
- What are the topics of M.A and PhD. studies in the field of TEFL in Saudi universities?
- What are the research methods conducted in M.A. and PhD. Studies at Saudi universities in the field of TEFL?
- What are the tools that used in M.A. and PhD. studies at Saudi universities in the field of TEFL?
- In which educational stage M.A. and PhD. studies are conducted at Saudi universities in the field of TEFL?
- Who are the targets in M.A. and PhD. studies that conducted at Saudi universities in the field of TEFL?
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Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to explore research trends of M. A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations in the field of teaching English methodology at Saudi universities. It aimed also to determine the addressed and neglected topics in the completed post-graduate studies during the period from 2010 to 2015. The study also aimed to determine the tools used in the target studies and to determine the types of target samples among M. A. Theses and Ph.D. Dissertations.

Importance of the study

The importance of this study lies in helping future post-graduate studies and researchers in selecting their researches themes in an effective manner. The results of the current study will help researchers not to repeat the same topics because

it guides them towards the studied and neglected areas in the field of teaching English methodology. This study also helps in planning for developing English language teaching and learning through determining the trends of previous researches.

Theoretical background:

Meta-analysis:

The current study used meta-analysis method. The term 'meta-analysis' originated in 1976 and early forms of meta-analysis used calculations of combined probabilities and frequencies with which results fell into defined categories (e.g. statistically significant at given levels), although problems of different sample sizes confounded rigour (e.g. large samples would yield significance in trivial effects, while important data from small samples would not be discovered because they failed to reach statistical significance).

In an age of evidence-based education (Thomas and Pring 2004), meta-analysis is an increasingly used method of investigation, bringing together different studies to provide evidence to inform policy-making and planning. Meta-analysis is a research strategy in itself. Meta-analysis is, simply, the analysis of other analyses. It involves aggregating and combining the results of comparable studies into a coherent account to discover main effects. This is often done statistically, though qualitative analysis is also advocated.

It is said that there are three levels of analysis: primary analysis of the data, secondary analysis, a re-analysis using different statistics, and meta-analysis that analyzing results of several studies statistically in order to integrate the findings. (Cohen and et al, 2007: 290-293)

Definition of Meta-analysis

Glass (1976, p. 3) defined meta-analysis formally as the statistical analysis of a large collection of analysis results from individual studies for the purpose of integrating the findings. According to Glass, the meta-analyst (a) uses objective methods to find studies for a review; (b) describes the features of the studies in quantitative or quasi-quantitative terms; (c) expresses treatment effects of all studies on a common scale of effect size; and (d) uses statistical techniques to relate study features to study outcomes. Several aspects of Glass's characterization of meta-analysis are especially worthy of note.

1. A meta-analysis covers review results. It encompasses results found in objective searches of a research literature. Glass did not use the term to describe analysis of a planned series of investigations.

2. A meta-analysis is an application of statistical tools to summary statistics, not raw data. The meta-analyst's observations are means, standard deviations, and results from statistical tests. An analysis of raw scores is a primary analysis or secondary analysis; it is not a meta-analysis.

3. A meta-analysis covers a large number of studies. A meta-analysis by Glass and his colleagues on effectiveness of psychotherapy covered 475 studies (Smith, Glass, & Miller, 1980). Their meta-analysis on class size covered 77 reports (Glass, Cahen, Smith, & Filby, 1982; Smith & Glass, 1980). Reviews that cover only a handful of studies may be mini-analyses; they are not meta-analyses.

4. A meta-analysis focuses on size of treatment effects, not just statistical significance. Reviews that do not base their conclusions on effect sizes and relationship strengths differ in a critical way from Glass's meta-analytic reviews.

5. A meta-analysis focuses on relations between study features and outcomes. The meta-analyst's goal is not simply to summarize a whole body of literature with a single average effect size or overall significance level. A meta-analyst also tries to determine how study features influence effect sizes.

Procedures of meta-analysis

Fitz-Gibbon (1984: 141–2) mentioned four steps in conducting a meta-analysis:

1. Finding studies (e.g. published, unpublished, reviews) from which effect sizes can be computed.
2. Coding the study characteristics (e.g. date, publication status, design characteristics, quality of design, and status of researcher).
3. Measuring the effect sizes (e.g. locating the experimental group as a z score in the control group distribution) so that outcomes can be measured on a common scale, controlling for ‘lumpy data’ (non-independent data from a large data set).
4. Correlating effect sizes with context variables (e.g. to identify differences between well-controlled and poorly controlled studies).

Whereas DeCoster (2004, p.3) ensured five steps in conducting meta-analysis:

1. Define the theoretical relationship of interest.
2. Collect the population of studies that provide data on the relationship.
3. Code the studies and compute effect sizes.
4. Examine the distribution of effect sizes and analyze the impact of moderating variables.
5. Interpret and report the results.

Literature review

Previous studies had been reviewed to explore research trends in the domain of teaching methods in general, and in the field of English Language teaching methodology. The previous relevant studies were rare. Almost all previous studies used Meta-analysis method. (Klette, 2007) conducted a study aimed to investigate research trends in teaching and learning in schools. The study results showed that there is still a tendency to discuss issues of teaching and learning in general terms separated from the content that has been taught inside classroom. This research argues for the need to bridge studies of teaching and learning with studies of the subject involved – to establish a conversation between didactics and classroom studies

(Al-Matham, 2008) conducted a study that aimed to explore research trends (methodological and objective) of mathematics education researches in post-graduate studies at Saudi universities. Content analysis approach was used to analyze 220 M. A. theses and PhD. Dissertations. The results indicated that most studies are quantitative. They focused on the descriptive and the experimental approaches. Most studies used tests or questionnaires as tools for collecting the target data. Finally, the study recommended to do further studies about its topic.

A study conducted by (Lin & Cheng, 2010) and aimed to explore research trends in selected theses of M.A TESOL programs in Taiwan during the period between 2003 to 2007. Data of this study consisted of 493 thesis abstracts retrieved from the Electronic Theses and Dissertations System of National Digital Library. A content-analysis method was used in the study. The analysis of the research contexts showed that the two most common contexts were secondary education in high school and undergraduate education in universities. The analysis identified the three most frequently investigated topics, in the target theses, were: (1) language skills, including research on listening, speaking, reading, writing, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, (2) teaching methods or approaches, (3) materials or curriculum and computer assisted language learning.

(Al-Oseimi, 2010) conducted a study that aimed to investigate topic areas in science education. It analyzed 126 M.A and 109 PhD. Studies in the universities of Um Al-Qura in Saudi Arabia and Al-Yarmok in Jordan. The results indicated that some studies neglected important topics in science education, other studies neglected scientific criteria in writing

research.

(Tavşancı; Çitak and Kezer, 2011) conducted a study aimed to investigate the abstracts of theses and dissertations completed in the field of measurement and evaluation in state universities (Abant Izzet Baysal University, Ankara University, Hacettepe University and Mersin University) in Turkey between 2000 and 2009 in terms of categories of form and content considering the standards determined by the American Psychological Association-APA. The study analyzed 90 masters and 21 doctorates. The findings indicate that information about the aim of research is not presented at one fourth; the aim is a repetition of the title at one third of abstracts at Master's Degree. At one third of the abstracts at Doctoral Degree, findings of the research are not presented; at the four fifth of the abstracts of Master's Degree, 19 of the 21 abstracts at Doctoral Degree, there is not research design; in the half of the abstracts at Master's Degree and three fourth of abstracts at Doctoral Degree, there is not data collection procedure; at one third of abstracts at Master's Degree and one third of abstracts at Doctoral Degree, there are not data analysis techniques. These findings imply that the abstracts have crucial inadequacies regarding to the features, which determine the quality of research.

The study of (Hsu; Ho; Tsai; Hwang; Chu; Wang & Chen, 2012) aimed to provide a content analysis of studies in technology-based learning (TBL) that were published in five Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) journals (i.e. the British Journal of Educational Technology, Computers & Education, Educational Technology Research & Development, Educational Technology & Society, the Journal of Computer Assisted Learning) from 2000 to 2009. A total of 2,976 articles were cross-analyzed by three categories including research topic, research sample group, and learning domain. It was found that "Pedagogical design and theories" was the most popular research topic, "Higher Education" was the most utilized sample group, and "Non-specified" and "Engineering/Computer sciences" were the most selected learning domains in the last decade. However, topics in "Motivation, Perceptions and Attitudes" drew more attention in the latest five years, while the number of articles in "Digital game and intelligent toy enhanced learning" and "Mobile and Ubiquitous Learning" grew significantly between 2005 and 2009. The results of the analysis provide insights for educators and researchers into research trends and patterns of technology-based learning.

The study of (Bani-Khaled, 2012) aimed to identify the key areas of research interests over the years and to highlight the distribution of the topics studied among the titles of all available theses and or dissertations on the English language. A gross of (550) titles of EL theses and dissertations were analyzed within the database of the electronic library at the University of Jordan. The findings indicated that there was a chance to determine six main periodical themes or fields under which Jordanian EL researches were done. The themes were arranged according to their distribution in the titles as follows: (1) pedagogy or methodology, (2) language description, (3) curriculum studies (4), translation studies, (5) perceptions and attitudes, and (6) error analysis.

A study conducted by (Ramírez-Romero & Pamplón, 2012) and aimed to investigate selected language learning and teaching studies in Mexico. These studies were presented according to the categories of: (a) students, (b) teachers, (c) learning activities, strategies and teaching methods, and (d) educational resources and materials. The results indicated that reviewed studies have a wider range of research methods and instruments that assure stronger designs and new epistemological perspectives. But they need to reflect more deeply and extensively on the socio-cultural characteristics and needs of Mexican students and contexts and their connection to language learning processes, objectives, and results.

Also this study recommend establishing research mapping for future studies in the field of English teaching and learning in order to get more effectiveness and practicability for the results of the studies in the English learning processes.

The study of (Kawano, 2012) aimed to investigate research trends on English/language education in Japan and in the US. The studies of JACET Journal, JALT Journal, and TESOL quarterly published from 2005 to 2010 were analyzed

according to themes and research methods. The study analyzed 315 studies and categorized them into 12 themes: early childhood education/elementary school education, linguistics, curriculum, SLA, learner factors, vocabulary, phonetics, pragmatics, psycholinguistics, teacher education, testing, and teaching methodologies/skills. The findings showed that the reviewed research methods were one of the following: experimental study, questionnaire survey, protocol analysis, argumentation, quantitative analysis, or conversation analysis. According to the comparison of the data of the three journals, it was found that these organizations are different in: interests, needs, and approaches, which may reveal some aspects of realities and issues English/language educators are facing in Japan and in the US. For example, TESOL Quarterly had different trends from these Japanese journals. There were no studies on English linguistics, syntax, and semantics, and only one paper on phonetics during period of the study.

The study of (Sun, 2014) argued the most popular international trends in ELT field. The trends included: changes in Perspectives on English Language Teaching and Learning; changes in Goals of English Language Teaching and Learning; changes in Teaching Approaches; changes in Teaching Content, Curriculum Design, and Assessmen; expanding the Dimension of Communicative Competence; changes in Views of an Effective English Educator; early Start in Learning English; rapid Development and Integration of Information Technology in ELT.

A master study conducted by (Bani-Salamah, 2014) and aimed to pinpoint research trends of Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL) for both Arabic and English languages, during the 3rd millennium, 2000-2013. The total number of the analyzed studies included 24 theses and 53 research articles addressing Computer assisted Arabic language learning (CAAL) and Computer-Assisted English language learning (CAEL) during 2000-2013. The results of study indicated that: The “learning and teaching” was the most researched aspect and ranked first among others aspects of language learning followed by the ‘evaluation’, “teacher”, and “textbooks” respectively.

The study of (Batteikh, 2014) aimed to explore research trends in the field of mathematics education among many of the world countries such as: Germany, Italy, Philippine, Thailand, South Korea, Singapore, India, Japan, China, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and USA. The study recommended establishing database for all mathematics education researches in the world in order to benefit the other previous tries and experiments.

The previous studies were interested in the research trends in the field of teaching Methodology in several topics: Mathematics, science, English and Arabic languages, and educational technology. Also, the previous studies about research trends were done in many places in the world included: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, USA, Japan, Spain, Turkey, Mexico and Taiwan. The researcher did find any previous study investigated or explored research trends in teaching English methodology in Saudi Arabia. So the current study expected to be good addition to the previous efforts. It hopes to contribute in guiding the future studies towards the neglected research areas in the field of teaching English methodology.

Method

The analytical, descriptive method (meta-analysis) is used in the current study through reviewing the previous M.A. These sand PhD dissertations related to English teaching methodology in Saudi Universities.

Instrumentation

The researcher used content analysis form to analyze the studies of teaching English language at target Saudi universities. The process of formulating the tool included: determining the tool domains (title, university, date, topic, tool, stage, and targets), determining its validity by refereeing some specialists, and determining the tool reliability by applying Alpha Cronbach on (10%) of study community through the help of SPSS. Reliability value was 83%.

The Population and sampling

The population of the study consists of 116M.A theses and Ph.D. dissertations that are done during the period from 2010 to 2015 in universities of Um Al-Qura, Taibah, and Taif in the field of curriculum and instructions (TEFL). The sample of the study was 82 M. A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations chosen at random from the database of Saudi Digital Library (SDL). Table (1) shows their distribution according to university.

Table (1)

Research distribution according to university.

| University | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Um Al-Qura | 39 | 47.6 | 47.6 | 47.6 |
| Taibah | 20 | 24.4 | 24.4 | 72.0 |
| Taif | 23 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table (2)

Type of studied researches

| University | Type of research | | Total |
|------------|------------------|-----------|-------|
| | master | Doctorate | |
| Um Al-Qura | 35 | 4 | 39 |
| Taibah | 20 | 0 | 20 |
| Taif | 22 | 1 | 23 |
| Total | 77 | 5 | 82 |

It can be seen from table (2) that most target studies were master theses 77. Whereas, doctorate dissertations were only 5.

Table (3)

Target studies according to the year.

| university | year | | | | | | Total |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | |
| Um Al-Qura | 3 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 18 | 39 |
| Taibah | 6 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 20 |
| Taif | 3 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 23 |
| Total | 12 | 17 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 19 | 82 |

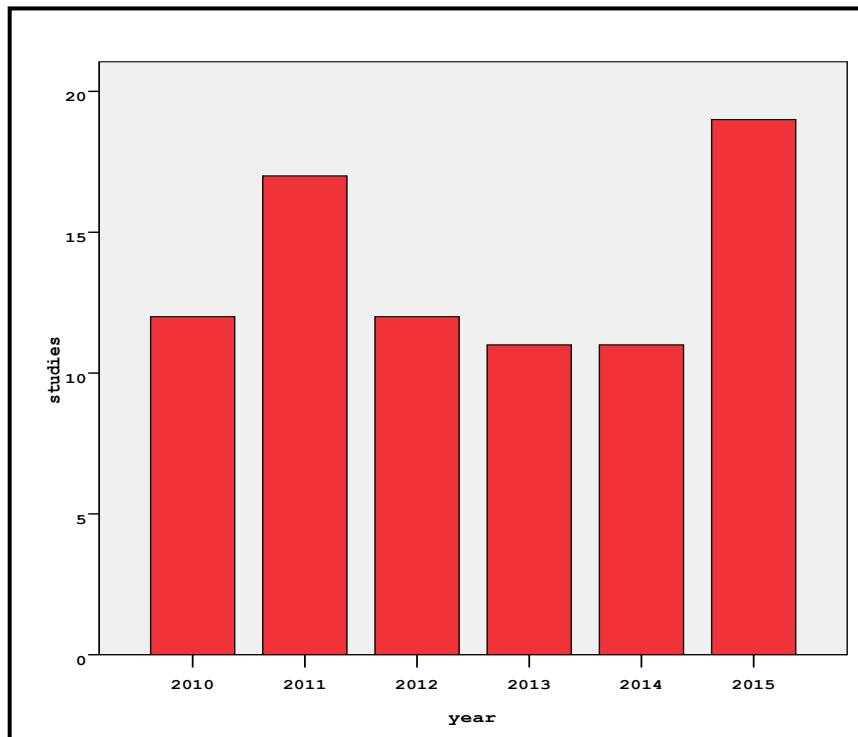


Figure (1) studies according to the year

Data collection and Statistical treatment

Study data collection was done according to the following procedures:

-The researcher collected all M. A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations credited during the period 2010-2015 available in the database of Saudi Digital Library (SDL).

- A table designed to collect data from the collected post-graduate studies. The data consisted of: Research title, research type (M.A./ Ph.D.), university, date of research, main topic, research methodology, research tool, and targets (population/sample).

Statistical treatment was done for collected data through the help of the Statistical Package for Social Science “SPSS” to answer the study’s questions by using Frequencies and percentages.

Results and Discussion

Collected data was analyzed by using (SPSS) to reach the objectives of the study and answer its questions. Qualitative analysis used below. To answer the first question of the study (What are the topics of M.A and PhD. studies in the field of TEFL in Saudi universities?). It can be seen in table (4) that the topics of M.A. and PhD. studies in TEFL are: courses content analysis (6.1%), English teacher development (4.9%), teaching methodology (53.7%), using technology in teaching English (14.6%), difficulties and mistakes (4.9%), and evaluation (15.9%).

Table (4)

M.A& PhD research trends in topics

| topic | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Courses content analysis | 5 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 6.1 |
| English teacher development | 4 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 11.0 |
| Teaching methodology | 44 | 53.7 | 53.7 | 64.6 |
| Using technology in teaching English | 12 | 14.6 | 14.6 | 79.3 |
| difficulties and mistakes | 4 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 84.1 |
| Evaluation | 13 | 15.9 | 15.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Teaching methodology came the first topic that addressed by the target studies (53.7%). The titles of studies in this topic were 44 and included the following items:

1. Concept maps.
2. Flipped classroom.
3. Alternative teaching strategy.
4. Marzano model.
5. Metacognitive strategy.
6. Scammer program.
7. Self-learning.
8. Processes approach.
9. Advanced organizers strategy.
10. Blended learning.
11. Linguistic activities.
12. Achievement file.
13. Self-organized learning.
14. Differentiated learning.
15. Instructional games.
16. Writing contemplative diary.
17. Project-Based Learning Strategy.
18. Learning Circles.
19. The Strategy of Mental Imagery.
20. Role-playing.
21. Keyword (effectiveness).
22. Active learning strategies.
23. Cooperative learning strategies.
24. SQ3R Strategy.
25. Multiple Intelligences.
26. Explicit Vocabulary Instruction.
27. Pictorial Dictation.

28. Instrumental Enrichment Approach.
29. MI-Based Strategies.

This result indicated that there was no more repetition (33%) in choosing the topic of the target studies because there are 29 (66%) different topics among 44 studies in the field of teaching English methodology. Similarly, the previous study of (Bani-Khaled, 2012) about research trends in Jordan universities indicated that pedagogy and methodology came also first in percentages of target studies (31.45%), but it was less than its percentage in the current study (53.7%).

Evaluation (15.9%) came as a second domain that addressed by the target studies. The topics under this domain were:

1. Continuous evaluation.
2. Analyzing tests questions.
3. Suggested evaluation card for English teachers' performance.
4. Evaluating English teachers' performance
5. Evaluating activities of English language courses
6. Evaluating English language course.

As indicated above there are 6 topics among 13 studies. This means that there is more repetition (54%) in the topics of evaluation domain.

The third domain addressed by target studies was Using technology in teaching English language (14.6%). The topics under this domain were:

1. Using computer Programs.
2. E-learning Materials.
3. Electronic achievement file.
4. Electronic laboratory.
5. Using Multimedia.
6. Using web 2.0
7. Using smart phones.

There are 7 topics among 12 studies which means that there is also repetition in topics (42%) under the domain of using technology in teaching English language.

Table (5)
M.A& PhD research trends in study's methodology

| university | methodology | | | | | % | Total |
|------------|-------------|-------|------------------|-------|--------------------------------|----|-------|
| | Descriptive | % | Quasi-Experiment | % | Descriptive & Quasi-Experiment | | |
| Um Al-Qura | 19 | 49% | 19 | 49% | 1 | 2% | 39 |
| Taibah | 10 | 50% | 10 | 50% | 0 | 0% | 20 |
| Taif | 7 | 30.5% | 16 | 69.5% | 0 | 0% | 23 |
| Total | 36 | 44% | 45 | 55% | 1 | 1% | 82 |

In order to answer the second question: What are the research methods conducted in M.A. and PhD. studies at Saudi universities in the field of TEFL? It can be seen in table (5) that the quasi-experimental studies (55%) are more than the descriptive studies (44%) in the total of target studies .But it is found that Um Al-Qura methods of studies (descriptive studies= 49%, quasi-experimental studies= 49%, both=2%) are almost equal. Same thing can be said about Taibah

university research methods (descriptive studies= 50%, quasi-experimental studies= 50%). Whereas Taif university had more quasi-experimental studies (69.5%) than descriptive studies.

This result is opposite of that of the previous study (Al-Matham, 2008). There were less (46.8%) quasi-experimental studies than descriptive studies (53.2%) in the field of mathematics teaching.

In regard of answering the third question of the study: What are the tools that used in M.A. and PhD. studies at Saudi universities in the field of TEFL?.It can be seen in table (6) that Test is the most usable tool (46%) in the target researches. The second tool that was used by target studies was questionnaire (26%). Content analysis card/table came as the third tool used by target studies (16%). Target studies also use two additional tools: observation card (8%) and attitude scale (4%).

The same result appeared among two universities in regard of Test as the first research

Tool: Taibah university= 45%, and Taif university= 61%, whereas in Um Alqura university questionnaire was the first used tool (43.5%) in the target studies. The three universities varied in the second used research tool: in Um Alqura university, test is the second tool used in the target researches; in Taibah and Taif universities, content analysis card/table was the second used tool in their researches: Taibah =25%, Taif= 22%.

This result is similar to that of the previous study (Al-Matham, 2008). Test was the first used tool (48.6%), questionnaire came second (20%), then attitude scale (17.7%) and observation card (5.7%) (Al-Matham, 2008) was in the field of mathematics teaching.

Table (6)
M.A& PhD research trends in studies tools

| University | Tools | | | | | | | | | Total | |
|--------------|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------|
| | Test | % | questionnaire | % | observation card | % | Attitude scale | % | Content Analysis Table/card | | |
| Um Al-Qura | 15 | 38.4% | 17 | 43.5% | 3 | 8% | 1 | 2.5% | 3 | 7.5% | 39 |
| Taibah | 9 | 45% | 3 | 15% | 2 | 10% | 1 | 5% | 5 | 25% | 20 |
| Taif | 14 | 61% | 1 | 4% | 2 | 9% | 1 | 4% | 5 | 22 % | 23 |
| Total | 38 | 46% | 21 | 26% | 7 | 8% | 3 | 4% | 13 | 16% | 82 |

To answer the fourth question of the study in which educational stage M.A. and PhD. studies are conducted at Saudi universities in the field of TEFL? It can be seen in table (7) that secondary stage is most stage targeted by M.A. and PhD. studies(40%), the second stage is intermediate = 34%, then, university stage =11%, and primary stage = 10%. The secondary stage also came the first target for the studies of Um Alqura university= 42%, and Taibah university= 45%, whereas in Taif university, intermediate stage came as the first targeted stage by M.A. &PhD studies= 44%.

Table (7)M.A& PhD research trends in educational stages

| university | stage | | | | | | | | Total | | |
|--------------|---------------|------------|--------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Primary stage | % | Intermediate stage | % | Secondary stage | % | University stage | % | *k-12 | % | |
| Um Al-Qura | 4 | 10% | 11 | 28% | 16 | 42% | 4 | 10% | 4 | 10% | 39 |
| Taibah | 0 | 0% | 7 | 35% | 9 | 45% | 4 | 20% | 0 | 0% | 20 |
| Taif | 4 | 17% | 10 | 44% | 8 | 35% | 1 | 4% | 0 | 0% | 23 |
| Total | 8 | 10% | 28 | 34% | 33 | 40% | 9 | 11% | 4 | 5% | 82 |

*K-12 =studies targeted all three stages of public education

This result is different to that of the previous study (Al-Matham, 2008), because the intermediate stage came the first targeted stage by studies (32.5%), the primary stage came as the second=24.3%, then secondary stage= 22.2% and university stage= 9%.

Table (8)

M.A& PhD research trends in targeted population and samples

| University | Targets | | | | | | | | | Total | |
|------------|---------------|-------|-----------------|-------|---------------|-------|-----------------|-----|---------|-------|----|
| | Male students | % | Female students | % | Male Teachers | % | Female teachers | % | content | | |
| Um Al-Qura | 15 | 38.5% | 4 | 10% | 14 | 36.5% | 4 | 10% | 2 | 5% | 39 |
| Taibah | 10 | 50% | 4 | 20% | 2 | 10% | 1 | 5% | 3 | 15% | 20 |
| Taif | 8 | 34% | 9 | 39% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 9% | 4 | 18% | 23 |
| Total | 33 | 40% | 17 | 20.5% | 16 | 19.5% | 7 | 9% | 9 | 11% | 82 |

To answer the fifth question who are the targets in M.A. and PhD. studies that conducted at Saudi universities in the field of TEFL? It can be seen in table (8) that the male students (40%) the most targeted as population for MA and PhD studies. Then, female students (20.5%), Male teachers (19.5%), female teachers (9%) and content (11%). In Taibah university studies' population appeared Male student as the first targets (50%), female students (20%), male teachers (10%), female teachers (5%) and content (15%). But in Taif university studies' population female students came first (39%), the second targets were male students (34%), female teachers (9%) and content (18%). Male teachers are not targeted by Taif university higher studies. In Um Al-qura university male students came as the first targeted population (38.5%), Male teachers came as the second (36.5%), female students and female teachers got the same percentage (10%), content targeted by (5%) of MA and PhD studies.

This result is similar to that of the previous study (Al-Matham, 2008) where students were the first targets (56.8%), teachers came second (24.9%), and documents or content (5.5%) (Al-Matham, 2008) was in the field of mathematics teaching.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In summary, results of the study revealed that:

1. Teaching methodology was the first topic that addressed by the target studies (53.7%) ,second topic was Evaluation (15.9%) and the third was Using technology in teaching English language (14.6%).
2. There is less repetition in the first topic titles than the second and third topics.
3. The quasi-experimental studies (55%) are more than the descriptive studies (44%) in the total of target studies.
4. Test is the most usable tool (46%) in the target researches. The second tool was questionnaire (26%).
5. Secondary stage is most stage targeted by M.A. and PhD. studies (40%), the second stage is intermediate = 34%.
6. The male students (40%) were the most targeted as population for MA and PhD studies. Then, female students (20.5%), Male teachers (19.5%), female teachers (9%) and content (11%).

In the light of the previous results, the study recommends to:

1. Avoid the repeated titles in the future studies.
2. Use more research methods in the future studies especially qualitative ones.
3. Use more types of research tools in the future studies.

4. Do further studies in the stages that have less studies as primary stage and university stage.
5. Do further studies in the field of TEFL targeted female students and teachers?

Open more PhD programs in the field of teaching English language methodology.

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اتجاهات البحث في مجال مناهج وطرق تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعات السعودية: دراسة تحليلية لأطروحتي الماجستير والدكتوراه

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ملخص

في العقدين الماضيين، بدأت الجامعات السعودية بتقديم برامج الدراسات العليا في مجال مناهج وطرق تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. وقد أجريت العديد من دراسات الماجستير والدكتوراه في هذا المجال الأمر الذي تطلب تحليل أو فحص لتلك الدراسات لتحديد اتجاهاتها من أجل توجيه الدراسات المستقبلية نحو فاعلية أكثر للدراسات العلمية في تطوير اللغة الإنجليزية بالمملكة العربية السعودية. وقد حللت الدراسة الحالية اتجاهات 82 بحثاً من بحوث الماجستير والدكتوراه في مجال مناهج وتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وفقاً للعناصر التالية: موضوع البحث، ومنهج البحث، وأدوات البحث، ومجتمع البحث، المرحلة التعليمية التي طبق بها البحث. وكشفت نتائج التحليل عن ما يلي:

1. طرق التدريس هي الموضوع الأول الذي تناولته الدراسات المستهدفة (53.7%)، وكان الموضوع الثاني التقويم (15.9%)، والثالث كان استخدام التكنولوجيا في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية (14.6%).

2. هناك تكرار أقل في عناوين الموضوع الأول من التكرار الموضوعين الثاني والثالث.

3. الدراسات شبه التجريبية (55%) أكثر من الدراسات الوصفية (44%) في مجموع الدراسات الهدف.

4. الاختبار هو الأداة الأكثر استخداماً في بحوث الماجستير والدكتوراه (46%) بينما كانت الأداة الثانية الاستبيان (26%).

5. المرحلة الثانوية هي أكثر مرحلة استهدفتها بحوث رسائل الماجستير والدكتوراه بنسبة (40%)، والمرحلة الثانية هي المتوسطة بنسبة (34%).

6. الطلاب الذكور (40%) والأكثر استهدافاً كمجتمع لدراسات الماجستير والدكتوراه. ثم، الطالبات بنسبة (20.5%)، والمعلمون الذكور بنسبة (19.5%)، والمعلمات بنسبة (9%)، والمحتوى أو الوثائق بنسبة (11%).

وأهم توصيات هذه الدراسة تجنب البحث في الموضوعات التي اشبع بحثاً في الدراسات المستقبلية، وافتتاح مزيداً من برامج الدكتوراه في مجال مناهج وطرق تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات الدالة: اللغة الإنجليزية، الماجستير، اتجاهات البحث، الدكتوراه، طرق التدريس.

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