



Full Length Research Article

**A PROPOSED SUPERVISORY PROGRAM TO DEVELOP PLANNING FOR TEACHING SKILLS OF
ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPECIALTY STUDENT TEACHERS AT NAJRAN UNIVERSITY**

Dr. Thouqan Saleem Masadeh

English Language Teaching and Curricula faculty of Education, Najran University, KSA

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to investigate the impact of a developed supervisory program on developing student teachers' teaching skills. The sample consisted of (31) students who were enrolled in the field experience course offered by Najran University for 8th level students at the department of English language in the second semester of the academic year 2014/2015. To accomplish the aim of the study, a supervisory program of five main aspects, namely writing behavioral objectives, setting for the lesson, organizing the lesson content, presenting the lesson content, and determining evaluation methods was developed. Results proved the effectiveness of such program in developing student teachers' skills needed for planning for teaching. Effectiveness of the program was due to the training strategy used and to the previous awareness of trainees needs, attitudes, and practices. Finally a set of recommendations were made.

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INTRODUCTION

Harris cited in Tellez (2015) forty-six years ago and mainly in 1969 wrote that the growth of teachers' professional knowledge and skills has been the topic of policy, research, and even philosophy for many decades. The assessment of English Learners, a more specific concern, has become an interest of the educational community in just the past 40 years. That is, expert teachers require a mix of generalized and specialized knowledge. This means that there are certain elements that affect the success of English language teaching among which is the existence of a well-prepared and qualified teacher whether scientifically, professionally, or culturally to orient the teaching process in the right way. Teacher education institutes have the potential to bring changes in the society, have the potential to shape knowledge and skills of future generation and can play a critical role in preparing quality teachers for the 21st century. There is no doubt that teachers play a significant role to the success of any ongoing educational reform. Well prepared and well qualified teachers are not only agents of positive societal change but also have a multiplying effect while executing their regular roles and duties. Teachers of the highest quality will lead to education of the highest quality.

To achieve the goal of training effective teachers, different approaches have emerged in teacher preparation programs. The introduction of practicum was the most highly valued component of teacher education, Tuli and File, (2009). The field experience courses offered by universities to students before graduation is the most important segment in university preparation of its students to become teachers in the future. Not only field experience course offers graduate students an opportunity to become familiar with the teaching process through the observation of master teachers but also enables them to practice it in real contexts before joining the profession of teaching. Field experience course is often considered to be an ideal place to develop understanding of teaching practice through the co-teaching approach that help pre-service teachers to develop competency at effective classroom practices, (Bowen and Roth, 2002).

The need for ongoing teacher education has been a recurring theme in language teaching circles in recent years and has been given renewed focus as a result of the emergence of teacher-led initiatives such as action research, reflective teaching, and team teaching. Opportunities for in-service training are crucial for the long-term development as well as for the long-term success of the programs in which they work. The need for ongoing renewal of professional skills and knowledge is not a reflection of inadequate training but simply a response to the fact that not everything teachers need to

***Corresponding author: Dr. Thouqan Saleem Masadeh**
English Language Teaching and Curricula faculty of Education,
Najran University, KSA

know can be provided at pre-service level, as well as the fact that the knowledge base of teaching constantly base, (Richards and Farrell, 2005). In conclusion, the atmosphere in which practical education takes place differs from any other training circumstances student teacher faces in future, particularly after his graduation and joining the workforce, (Abo Shendi, *et al.* 2009). It is like the laboratory where theoretical knowledge is applied, (Kenaan, 2001). It generates a great self- trust within students and stimulate them for more success in the teaching process, (Al- Jassar and Al- Tamar, 2004: 71).

Statement of the Problem

The present study starts from an idea that effective teacher preparation is the best way to achieve the desired development in education. Therefore, most countries cared about the basic rehabilitation to enable the student teachers be more capable of carrying out their roles when joining the teaching profession. In Saudi Arabia, for example, there is a continual need for the development of training programs, more specifically for English language student teachers. Therefore, the attention of the present study is concentrated on the skills of lesson planning which were found inadequate among all Saudi teachers. Thus, the researcher, as he was the field supervisor of those students at Najran University held a program to train them on the planning for teaching skills. The program focused on the development of students' skills in formulating teaching objectives, setting for the lesson, organizing the scientific content, presenting the lesson, and determining evaluation methods.

Importance of the Study

In Saudi Arabia, English has gradually become the most popular foreign language; and at present, it is the mostly taught foreign language. Teaching practice, as well as in all countries has come to be recognized as one of the most important aspects of the Saudi teacher education programs. Although there has been a considerable amount of research on teacher learning in the general education field, there is in English language teaching a paucity of data on what exactly takes place during field experiences, particularly practicum experiences undertaken by non-native ESL/EFL teacher candidates. Therefore, the present study is important because it tries to address this gap in ESL/EFL teacher education and provide a program that can develop trainees' planning for teaching skills before joining the teaching profession.

Aims of the Study

Based on the continual need for the development of student teachers' training programs for English language majors, the present study aimed to develop a supervisory program and test its impact on the improvement of the planning for teaching skills among a sample of student teachers at the college of science and arts at Najran University. To do so, these two main questions were stated and tested:

- Are there any statistically significant difference between the means of student teachers' responses to the evaluation scale as a whole regarding their planning for teaching skills on the pre and post applications?

- Are there any statistically significant differences between the means of student teachers' responses to the evaluation scale items, namely their skills in planning for teaching; formulating behavioral objectives; setting for the lesson; planning the lesson content; presenting the lesson; and determining the evaluation methods on the pre and post applications?

Review of Related Literature

Economic, social, and technological transformations are linking us in unprecedented ways. Today's students will need extensive knowledge of the world and the skills and dispositions to engage with people from many cultures and countries. They will need these to be responsible citizens and effective participants in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Few teachers today are well prepared to educate students for this new global context. One main shortage in teachers' preparation programs is the fact that the critical role of teachers in internationalizing students' education has never been clearer. Today's educators rarely begin their careers with the deep knowledge and robust skills necessary to bring the world into their classrooms. For example Serna and Meier (2010) examined the credential candidate teachers' perceptions of their preparation to teach English language learners. It also assessed how do these perceptions inform the design of the curriculum in teacher preparation programs for working with English language learners. Prior analysis of teachers' perceptions revealed that the large majority of the teacher credential candidates had little to no academic background in issues of second language learning and working with English language learners. About half had some experience working with such students. Often this experience was in undergraduate field placements. The other half had little to no such experience.

Lucas, *et al.* (2008) mention that most mainstream classroom teachers have had little or no preparation for providing the types of assistance that such learners need to successfully learn academic content and skills through English while developing proficiency in English. They state that despite the promising evidence that some teacher educators are seriously tackling the challenge of preparing all teachers to teach English Language Learners, most pre-service teacher education programs still have a long way to go to sufficiently develop among teacher candidates the necessary knowledge and skills. Teacher educators need to act more quickly than they have up to now to prepare all future teachers for English Language Learners. Fenner and Kuhlman (2012) state that several factors must be considered when designing an ESL teacher licensure program that fully addresses and incorporates two standards, i.e. language as a system and language acquisition and development. While the first standard requires candidates to demonstrate understanding of phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics and semantics, and support English Language Learners as they acquire English language and literacy in order to achieve in the content areas. The second standard needs candidates to understand and apply theories and research in language acquisition and development to support their English Language Learners' English language and literacy learning and content area achievement.

Samson and Collins (2012) claim that to date, there has been relatively little attention paid to the essential standards, knowledge, and skills that general education teachers ought to possess in order to provide effective instruction to ELLs placed in their classroom. Teachers should be made aware of the following point as essential knowledge for the teaching profession (P:11):

- Oral language proficiency allows students to participate in academic discussions, understand instruction, and build literacy skills.
- Students with more developed first language skills are able to better develop their second language skills.
- Vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in oral language proficiency. ELLs require direct teaching of new words along with opportunities to learn new words in context through hearing, seeing, and saying them as well as during indirect encounters with authentic and motivating texts.
- Building oral proficiency in a second language can be supported by the use of nonverbal cues, visual aids, gestures, and multisensory hands-on methods. Other strategies include: establishing routines, extended talk on a single topic, providing students with immediate feedback, opportunities to converse with teachers, speaking slowly, using clear repetition, and paraphrasing supports oral communication.
- Students should receive explicit instruction and preparation techniques to aid in speaking with others by teaching words and grammatical features that are used in academic settings.
- Understanding the differences of informal language and academic language is important. Opportunities to learn and practice academic language are essential. Students must be exposed to sophisticated and varied vocabulary and grammatical structures and avoid slang and idioms.
- Opportunities and instruction on using academic language accurately in multiple contexts and texts is of critical importance for all English language learners.
- School wide efforts and coordination of curriculum across content area teachers helps build on a foundation of prior knowledge.

Peacock (2009) briefed the qualities of good preparation programs. He mentioned that preparation programs should have a clearly stated philosophy. They should balance between received and experiential knowledge. There should be a balance among the required components of ELT training namely, linguistic, pedagogic and managerial competence. Preparation programs should promote trainee flexibility in using different teaching approaches for different situations and ability to use and adapt teaching materials. Furthermore, they should incorporate and encourage trainee reflection on the experiences and values they have when they enter. Further proposals for program content are that they should embody coherence among courses in linkage and avoid overlaps, be up-to-date, and balance teacher- and student-centered learning. Having all these things, preparation programs can be evaluated in terms of how well the programs prepare teachers for classroom teaching.

Birjandi and Hesari (2010) sought the different perceptions of Iranian EFL instructors and teachers on the present and optimum status of in-service programs. Data analysis revealed that instructors and teachers had different conceptions about these in-service programs. Findings revealed that although most teachers were satisfied with these programs, they lacked adequate motivation to participate in these programs. Moreover, most instructors were not also satisfied with the present in-service programs, and they were looking for reforms in the educational plans and programs. The findings also suggested that, on the one hand, instructors should provide teachers with appropriate motives to enthusiastically take part in these classes, and they should feel responsible to address teachers' weaknesses and strengths both theoretically and practically. On the other hand, teachers should seize these opportunities with both hands to ameliorate and refresh their English knowledge.

Bani Abdelrahman (2003) mainly investigated the effectiveness of the English Language/Field Teacher Preparation program at Yarmouk University in preparing qualified English language teachers for the Basic Educational Stage. It also evaluated the role of the practicum teaching program in improving students' abilities in language teaching. The findings indicated that the design of the program, its educational courses, its English language courses, the practicum supervision, and the practicum teaching courses, need to be modified and improved. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the students still have some needs to be met. Fuller (2014) mentions that the effort by National Council on Teacher Quality's (NCTQ) to evaluate, judge, and rank university-based teacher preparation programs revealed that the vast majority of such programs were inadequately preparing the nation's teachers. Hoque, *et al.* (2011) sought to describe the teachers' professional development activities in Bangladesh and explored the hypotheses about the relationship between teachers' traditional professional development activities and school improvement. The study found significant impacts of some of teachers' professional development activities on school improvement. It also found that the maximum school improvement can be achieved if schools put more emphasis on teachers' collaboration, in-service training and classroom observation and less emphasis on individual action enquiry.

Deni and Malakolunthu (2013) carried out a collaborative learning project coded as the teacher inquiry community over a year in a private higher education institution to improve the professional capability of language-based subject teachers. The study focused on three questions namely teacher benefits, impact of practice, and application of solutions. Findings revealed that the former two questions were well substantiated for most teachers. With regard to the third question, there were significant differences among teachers that were due to individual characteristics, personality, and culture.

Methodology

With regard to the requirements of the present study and its aim, the experimental method was used. The experimental method is the only method of research that can truly test hypotheses concerning cause-and-effect relationships. It

represents the most valid approach to the solution of educational problems, both practical and theoretical, and to the advancement of education as a science, (Moore and McCabe, 1993 p. 298). In an experiment the investigator controls the application of the treatment. One or more independent variables are manipulated to observe their effects on one or more dependent variables, (Shadish, *et al.*, 2002, p.12). In this research the program is the independent variable which is meant to understand the degree of its effect on the planning for teaching skills which are considered the dependent variable among the experimental group. The researcher has taken into consideration the interfering variables which are out of his attention and may share the independent variable the effect on the dependent one. This was represented by the accomplishment of the conditions of the experimental control during the program application.

Participants

All the student teachers enrolled in English language major at the college of science and arts at Najran University in the second semester of the academic year 2015-2016 participated in the present study. The total number was (31) student teachers constituting the experimental group. They all agreed to take part in the program after being announced and were provided with the study aims and schedule for its sessions' implementation.

Study Methodology and Instruments

In order to achieve the aim of the present study, an observation card was developed to analyze the student teachers' planning for teaching skills in addition to the supervisory program as follows:

Students' Planning for Teaching Skills Observation Card

The aim of such a card was to measure the planning for teaching skills. The primary version was developed by a group of experts at the college of education at Najran University. The total number of the items in the final version was (50) distributed to five skills namely formulating behavioral objectives, setting for the lesson, writing the lesson content, presenting the lesson, and determining the evaluation methods. According to Likert's scale, five choices were attached to each item, very high, high, moderate, low, and very low. When corrected they were given 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The maximum degree was (250) and the minimum degree was (50). To check the reliability of the card, reliability coefficient was calculated according to the equal halves way. The coefficient, according to Spearman- Brown formula was (0.92) and was (0.86) according to Guttman formula. These numbers indicate that this coefficient is trusted and suitable for the purpose of scientific research.

The Supervisory Program

A list of the required skills of the planning for teaching was prepared after an access to references and specialized writings in the field in addition to the judgment of the program by a set of experts. The proposed supervisory program was prepared in light of the final list of the planning for teaching skills. Then it

was shown to (11) experts who were specialists in the field. After making some modifications, the program was produced into its final version which consisted of:

Aims of the Program

The program aimed to improve the skills of planning for teaching, formulating the behavioral objectives, setting for the lesson, presenting the lesson, designing the content of the lesson, and determining the methods of evaluation.

The Content of the Program

The researcher depended on many methods to do so. He referred to the literature that discussed the subject of planning for teaching skills, the interviews he conducted with student teachers of science specialty, and other topics.

Teaching Methods

The researcher depended on many teaching methods such as guided reading for the topic of the skill, brainstorming, explanation and illustration, discussion, induction, models, workshops, peer learning, field study, feedback, clinical supervision for training, and electronic groups.

Teaching Tools and Aids

Such as lesson preparation notebook, pens, a group of lessons in specialty, board, additional board, pointer, crayons, data show, and a computer connected to the internet.

Evaluation Methods

Such as observation, oral and open- ended questions which were written after each lesson of the program. At the end of the program, the researcher used the analysis card for measuring the extent of planning skills' growth among student teachers.

Program's Time Plan

The total number of program's sessions was (12). A session for pre- measurement and another for post measurement. Two sessions were assigned for each skill of the five targeted skills.

Procedures of Program Implementation

The program was implemented as follows:

a. Before going to classrooms

- Dividing participant into five groups. Each group was asked to chose a name and leader.
- Setting up an electronic loop via e- mail for all groups.
- Asking each student to fill in the observation card about his skills in writing behavioral objectives, setting for the lesson, writing the lesson content, presenting the lesson, and determining the evaluation methods.
- Assigning each group to prepare for an oriented reading about one main language skill mainly, *behavioral objectives, setting for the lesson, writing the lesson*

content, presenting the lesson, and determining the evaluation methods.

- Then, a research file about the assigned reading was to be prepared by the group.
- Each research was electronically sent to the academic supervisor (the researcher himself) and to all participants.
- At the end, the academic supervisor and all students could have hard copies of all prepared files to discuss.
- After that, micro teaching sessions on each assigned topic were carried out.
- A discussion by students and supervisor about the points of weakness and strength of each micro teaching session was held.
- When a conclusion was achieved by all, it was written down and handed to all participants. It was the supervisor's task to do so.
- At last participants were urged and encouraged to implement at classrooms what they had theoretically or practically got.

b. after training

- The researcher prepared a supervisory schedule for every participant to be visited and evaluated under his guidance by his peers in the same group.
- Every student teacher was required to be visited at least by three colleagues in the absence of the supervisor.
- Each visitor was to write a report about every visit to his colleagues.
- When finishing peers' classroom visits, the supervisor alone conducted field visits for all students to evaluate the performance of every student teacher.
- After that, the supervision evaluation, remarks done by the student teachers and supervisor, and evaluation through the observation card were sent electronically to all participants.
- Discussion sessions were set to discuss the performance of each student.
- At the end, each student was asked to fill in again the observation card about his skills in writing behavioral objectives, setting for the lesson, writing the lesson content, presenting the lesson, and determining the evaluation methods.

Findings

Results Related to the First Question

To answer the first question that stated, "Are there any statistically significant difference between the means of student teachers' responses to the evaluation scale as a whole regarding their planning for teaching skills on the pre and post applications?" T. test for the difference between the participants' means in the pre and post-evaluation was used. Results are shown in Table (1) below. Table (1) shows that there are statistically significant difference ($\alpha= 0.01$) between the means of the participants' pre and post-evaluation their planning for teaching skills as a whole in favor of the post evaluation.

Results Related to the Second Question

To answer the second question that stated, "Are there any statistically significant differences between the means of student teachers' responses to the evaluation scale items, namely their skills in planning for teaching; formulating behavioral objectives; setting for the lesson; planning the lesson content; presenting the lesson; and determining the evaluation methods on the pre and post applications?" T. tests were used for the difference in the means of participants' responses to the five main skills involved in the supervisory program. Table (2) illustrates the findings. Table (2) reveals that there are statistically significant differences ($\alpha= 0.01$) between the means of participants' responses to the five aspects of the program on the pre and post evaluation in favor of the post application.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the present study revealed the effectiveness of the proposed program in improving the student teachers' skills. Revision of studies conducted on student teachers' planning for teaching skills revealed that very few studies addressed developing the skills of English language majors in the way the present study has done. Most of the studies concentrated on the development of English language

Table 1. T. test for the significance of the difference between the means of the responses of participants to the planning for teaching skills scale as a whole on the pre and post evaluation

Application	No.	Mean	Std.	T. Value	Significance.
Pre - application	31	1.17	0.07	101.63	Significant at ($\alpha= 0.01$)
Post application		4.72	0.16		

Table 2. T. test for the difference between the means of participants' responses to the five aspects of the program on the pre and post evaluation

Program Aspects	Application	N.	M	SD	T. Value	Significance (0.01)
1. Formulating behavioral objectives	Pre	31	1.147	0.150	75.99	Significant
	Post		4.774	0.142		
2. Setting for the lesson	Pre	31	1.250	0.220	53.15	Significant
	post		4.720	0.180		
3. Planning the lesson content	Pre	31	1.180	0.160	68.02	Significant
	Post		4.700	0.240		
4. Presenting the lesson	Pre	31	1.130	0.090	96.95	Significant
	Post		4.680	0.200		
5. Determining evaluation methods	Pre	31	1.170	0.140	66.02	Significant
	post		4.710	0.190		

teachers' competencies in the main language skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Some other studies focused on developing teachers' communication skills and so on. Therefore, findings will be compared to findings of studies conducted on participants of other majors. Generally speaking, Yousef (1999), Al- Ahmed (2004), Khaleel (2005), Badr (2005), and Bogus (2006) applied nearly the same program on the samples and concluded similar results. Such an agreement is due to the importance of the used techniques in the development of the planning for teaching skills in the practical education or practicum courses at university. Nevertheless, the nature of this proposed program, the ways of training involved students, and the way of supervising it makes it different from other programs. In fact, the difference is due to the fact that the present study was conducted to investigate the effect of the supervisory program on developing the planning for teaching skills of English language male student teachers at the department of English language at Najran University. No females' skills were investigated.

The effectiveness of the proposed program of the present study might be attributed to the availability of all variables mentioned by Eret and Ok (2010). Effectiveness of any preparation program and the quality of teacher education, mention Eret and Ok is affected by a number of variables such as physical environment of the institutions, instructor quality, the curriculum implemented, and administrative support. The perspective of students of these variables also influence the direction and quality of the education taking place at the college of education. One main source for the positive impact of such a supervisory and training program is the fact that challenges facing any teacher or trainer' good performance were overcome and eliminated to the least. These challenges as mentioned by Inozu (2011) involve students' negative attitudes towards classroom practices, dissatisfaction with the language learning activities, and lack of motivation among the students. All these challenges were taken into consideration from the beginning of the program until the end.

Students were free to determine how training sessions can be conducted. They were guided not forced to the training materials. Trainees' motivation was very high as they were made familiar with the importance of the teaching profession they will join immediately after graduation. Positive beliefs of student teachers taking part in the present supervisory program as Karabenick and Noda (2004) mention resulted of the fact that this program took into account the teachers' beliefs, attitudes, practices and needs related to language learners. All participants were trained to how to form a belief, have an attitude towards something or somebody, practice doing thing in proper ways, and how to analyze others' needs. Positive attitudes of students teachers towards the present program were, to some extent due to this fact. Teachers teach teachers is the main strategy used by the present study, which in turn yielded positive beliefs about teaching profession. Through this study teachers got what Mahn, et. al. (2005) mentioned about the merits of such a teaching strategy. Peer teaching sets the classroom as an on-site teaching learning centre to facilitate the collaborative work of teachers teaching teachers. Sustained periods of time are needed during which practicing teachers can work with other teachers to consider new ways of teaching and to think about ways how to help students in their

particular schools and social- cultural contexts. Peer teaching enhances the value of interacting with and learning from peers. Through peer teaching strategy, the power of peer modeling, observation, feedback, and dialogue can be emphasized.

In his turn, the researcher of the present study attributes the effectiveness of this supervisory program skills to the unique characteristics it owns. The use of E- mail to strengthen communication among participants and internet to access the latest in the field of teaching foreign languages to students of different mother tongues makes this program more effective and successful to develop trainees' teaching skills. English language teachers, as well as teachers of other subjects need to access the latest in the field of teaching methodology. They should also be knowledgeable of the effective teaching methods, (Nashwan, 2001: 373). The steps and phases used For teaching each skill of the five skills involved in this program make it more effective. Various methods and ways using successive steps beginning with lecturing were used. Moreover, workshops, peer teaching, ways of supervision, and the use of emails to pass and discuss notes encouraged participants to effectively participate and benefit from this program.

Recommendations

Through the previously mentioned results, people in charge of teacher preparation programs at Najran University are recommended to:

- Take into account the necessity of training English language student teachers at the college of education on the planning for teaching skills.
- Reconsider the program of practical education to involve the activation of all planning for teaching skills among students.

In addition, other researchers are recommended to conduct similar studies on students of other specialties at Najran University and of English language specialty at other universities.

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