Towards Optimal English Language Teaching and Learning: Dependence on or Independence from Research-based Practices

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Abstract

Despite the universal urgent appeal to close the gap between researchers and language practitioners in attempts to better enable effective language instruction and professional pedagogical assistance, proposing discernible solutions remains one of the most difficult conundrums, even for experts. Therefore, the present study aimed to methodically investigate and explore the perspectives and decision-making skills of forty U.S. English language educators, who have different teaching experiences at different types of institutions and grade levels, with respect to either implementing instructional and educational research findings in their teaching methodology or not. The research data were anonymously collected through a causal- comparative survey and analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively by inspecting the participants' answers to pre-structured closed and open-ended questions. The findings indicated that, regardless of teaching backgrounds, the majority (80%) of U.S. English language educators (group A) implement research-based findings as well as abide by state, board of education, and school standards at the same time; whereas (20%) of teachers (group B) follow a research-free teaching approach. Moreover, participants of both groups (A&B) reported similar learning outcomes (in terms of meeting learning objectives, students' grades/engagement/participation). Eventually, the criterion of 'experience' was mostly affecting the successful application of and satisfaction with research practices, where 21.8% of Group A teachers (71.4% of them are novice) admitted not attaining similar results to those reported in the research findings; while 78.2% of the same group (90% are experienced/expert) gave a detailed and extensive description and reported attaining pretty similar results after critically 'adapting', not merely 'adopting', research data to meet their lessons objectives, unique classrooms settings, state requirements and students' interests. The study concludes with a provisional call to start a regional/state-wide/national/or even international database platform, where existing research papers are updated by comparing and contrasting researchers' findings with practitioners' feedback, test results, and/or suggestions after clinically following the same research methodology in their classrooms to deduce the reasons behind reaching similar/different outcomes.

Keywords: effective English language teaching/learning, successful research-based/free practices, years of experience, grade level, public/ private schools.

1. Introduction

Modern classrooms are so diverse, and the fact that teachers do make a difference in students' learning is commonly agreed upon. Ferguson (1991, as cited in Villarreal, 2003) found that 'teacher quality' accounts for a significant portion (40 %) of the variance in students' test scores in reading and math.

This challenging truth mandates that teachers implement an all- inclusive teaching strategy designed to meet every student's intelligence, culture, interest, mindset, metacognition, and prior knowledge.

Although personal or peer professional experiences are prerequisites in teaching, sometimes these resources may not be enough to make the best decisions, especially in the current era where teachers are required to keep pace with the recent innovations in the field of teaching. Upon reviewing current educational practices, and despite ineffective and subjective teaching practices and evaluations still being a norm, research-based practices have emerged in classrooms as a promising approach. A research-based instructional strategy is any teaching approach supported by a statistical analysis of data from the learning environment (Apostolou, Dorminey & Hassell 2020), and the focal aim of research-based strategies is to opt for an experimental approach in educational research to 'induce a meaningful improvement in learning outcomes.' (Apostolou, Dorminey, and Hassell, 2020, p. 19). However, the existing literature makes it evident that, till now, the role that research plays in ameliorating educational and instructional practices still fluctuates between the two extremes of the pendulum. Thus, for this approach to be successfully implemented, the gap between researchers and practitioners must first be bridged, and the current study is an attempt to fill this gap by reporting and analyzing English language educators' perspectives and feedback with respect to the dependence on, independence from, benefits of, and advice about research-based practices.

2. Statement of the problem

While almost every English Language teacher admits the paramount importance of research in education, the actual classroom practices do not reflect a similar pervasive homogeneity. The main problem is that despite the abundant availability of informative English language learning and teaching research studies, a quite big number of practitioners still follow a research-free methodology; and what is more, among the teachers who do implement research-based practices in their lesson plans, there are some who do not reach satisfactory results in their classrooms. In other terms, the main problem is that despite the hard work of researchers in general and in the English Language in particular, not all practitioners are implementing the research findings or even taking them seriously.

3. Significance of the study

This research study investigates whether a successful English language teaching and learning approach is dependent on or independent from research and reveals the causes behind such choices on one side. It also analyzes the reasons that hinder some educators from enjoying the desired benefits after implementing a specific research practice. Hence, the current research paper aims at bridging this double-folded gap that exists between researchers and practitioners by not only assisting researchers in working meticulously on their publications and getting the trust of a greater number of educators, but also changing some educators' perspectives towards the instructional and educational value of research, while helping others to overcome possible obstacles in the course of research application.

4. Research Questions

After reviewing the existing literature around the role of research in language teaching and learning, the researcher addresses three main questions:

Q1: Is effective English language teaching/learning based on research-based practices?

Q2: Can English language teachers, who follow state guidelines and coordinators' directives and do not resort to any research study, reach successful teaching/learning outcomes?

Q3: Does the type of institution, grade level, or years of experience of English language teachers affect the extent to which the results of a research study and the ones recorded after its application are similar?

4. Hypotheses of the study

In an attempt to formulate some engaging hypotheses based on the previous research questions, the researcher speculates about the following:

H1: An effective English language teaching/learning approach is either research-based, or research-free.

H2: The extent to which a specific research study and its clinical (classroom) application can achieve similar results depends on the type of institution, grade level, or years of experience of the English language educator.

6. Literature Review

Pickering, Marzano & Pollock's (2001) book Classroom Instruction that Works – Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement can be considered as a research-based framework for teaching strategies. It allows educators to be decisive about focusing their instructional approaches on learning rather than on teaching. Moreover, Marzano (2000) identified 10 research-based effective instructional strategies (comparing, contrasting, summarizing, vocabulary, reinforcing, non-linguistic representation…) that cover the different content areas and all grade levels. Still, he made it clear that these strategies need appropriate implementation in order to reach the reported results.

According to Gusky (2003), the ultimate goal of professional development should be the attainment of tangible improvements in student learning outcomes, such as test results, portfolio evaluations, scores from standardized examinations, as well as students' attitudes, attendance and dropout rates among others. However, later in 2016, he analyzed 13 different lists of what characterizes an effective professional development described as "research - based" and was able to identify a remarkable gap: How do these characteristics improve instructional practices and student learning outcomes? Instead, the lists were just surveys of researchers and educators' opinions who, despite the lack of evidence, still favor these characteristics.

In this section, the researcher will explore the literature around the reasons behind the success and failure of research-based practices, AERA and BERA and the 'at risk' role of research, Research about English language, Research about writing approaches, Researchers in discord, Teachers as the 'best researchers', and the Research-Practice Partnerships.

6.1. Research-based strategies: Success and Failure

Among the numerous advocates of Research-based strategies, it is worth mentioning BoltLee (2021) who supported the effectiveness of these strategies for many reasons:

1- a 'high impact teaching' based on research leads to 'strong student outcomes'.

2- Using pretest/post-test diminishes the biases on learning advancement.

3- Implementation in more than one class section, for more than one semester, at different universities, and at varying levels of instruction provides stronger research results.

4- Published Research-based instructional strategies offer faculty the opportunity to incorporate them in their curriculum avoiding any "trial and error" issue related to classroom design. (p.2).

However, there are several obstacles that hinder some research-based strategies from attaining the desired results. Olswang and Prelock (2015) attributed the challenges associated with the actual application of research into practice to the following reasons:

- research findings may not be clinically relevant,
- practitioners might not trust the methodology of the researchers,
- organizations may dispute the validity of new treatments,
- lack of motivation to change one's routine practice, and
- the benefits may not be enough to guarantee implementation.

Kennedy (1997) listed four main factors that refrain some research projects from reaching the desired effect in education: poor research studies, impractical research, complex research language, and education systems being unreliable to educational research.

 Likewise, Froyd et al. (2013) analyzed the acceptance of research-based instruction in engineering courses, and noticed that awareness and initial use is high, but due to student resistance, preparation time, and a perceived lack of effectiveness, educators cease using these instructional practices. Also, in examining the percentage of practitioners who apply research based instruction in physics, Henderson and Dancy (2009) found that 87% of faculty are aware of this concept while less than half (48%) actually apply such studies in their classrooms.

6.2. AERA and BERA: the 'at risk' role of research

On one hand, the significant role of research in education was optimistically viewed and received immense support and great fundings in the U.S. in the late 1960s, where according to Bloom (1996, as cited in Kennedy, 1997), Federal funding for educational research rose 2000%.

Despite being convinced of the global positive impact and advantage of research in teaching and learning, AERA or American Educational Research Association members started to show skepticism towards the ability of research being translated into practice (Kennedy, 1997).

Interestingly, and after a while, the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (2000, as cited in Coburn, Honig & Stein, 2009) has conditionally promoted the role of research-based programs by granting Title 1 funds to districts that only base their curriculum, instruction, and professional development on "scientifically based research". This is in line with Beichner et.al (2007) who studied modifications to large undergraduate physics classes, using an active learning environment, building the curriculum reform on research-based pedagogy. This reformed instructional project was called SCALE-UP and has become applied at over 250 sites worldwide (NCSU PER&D, 2011 as cited in Foote, 2014). This project being internationally widespread, is an indicator of the success of research-based strategies.

On the other hand, research studies and findings in supporting professional learning have potentially evolved both 'in principle and practice' in the United Kingdom (Cordingley, 2015).

In addition, Bell et al. (2010) witnessed the major benefits of research not only for students (who achieved and engaged in learning better) but also for teachers (who improved in differentiating, experimenting and expanding the range of their learning activities), and Cordingley (2015) insisted on the highly important role of research in teachers' professional development and as a characteristic of high-quality teaching as well.

However, despite the meticulous attention of scholars towards the importance of connecting research, policy, and successful practice, a significant gap still persists. In fact, Musset (2010) noticed a great shift towards adopting school-based programs replacing the conventional university-led ones, and this in turn will diminish the power of research. Moreover, according to the 2013 report of BERA or British Educational Research Association, not only the quality of teaching is challenged, but also the role of research in teacher education might have declined in England.

6.3. Research about English language

In 2006, one report by August & Shanahan and another by Genesee et al. set forth numerous publications around improving instruction for English learners and in 2010, nearly 15 books were published on how to enhance English language instruction as counted by Gold (2010) and the number has been increasing ever since. After identifying effective instructional practices used by teachers with English language learners (ELLs), English as a new language (ENL), transitional bilingual (TBE), and dual language (DL), a modern case study was conducted by Gerena (2020) and generated a compilation of practices, strategies, and research-based teaching approaches that can either be part of professional development, or directly adapted by teachers.

Add to that, the synthesized research-based report by Li (2012) is one of the existing reviews of the literature about effective instructional principles for English language learners (ELLs) documented by prominent researchers in the field. It lists the most effective principles for ELL instruction (a total of nine principles) along with the supporting research evidence for those principles. Each of the nine principles is a result of the convergence of at least two relevant studies and orderly deal with implementing a challenging curriculum based on higher level thinking, establishing high expectations for learners, making the language of teaching materials culturally relevant, assisting learners through available effective instructional strategies, acknowledging the benefits of ELLS first language, helping ELLs acquire vocabulary and reading techniques, modeling the good use of the English language, and finally integrating the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in teaching ELLS.

Finally, De Jong, Harper, and Coady (2013) highlighted three major areas to advance effective learning experiences for ELLs: (a) looking at ELLs from a bilingual/cultural perspective, (b) acknowledging the important role of language and culture in informing pedagogy for bilingual learners, and (c) demonstrating the ability to work with schools, community, and other external effects.

6.4. Research about Writing approaches

Kenner (1999) study found that when the teacher incorporates literacy activities and materials from home and the community into classroom activities, young English learners' writing development is better assisted.

Also, after comparing a 5th grade structured writing approach (where teachers instructed, corrected the errors, and gave feedback) with a free writing approach (where no explicit instruction or error correction were present), Gomez (1996 as cited in Goldenberg, 2013) found that the former had more positive effects on the learners' writing skills' development.

6.5. Researchers in discord

Not only teachers are skeptical about research findings, but also researchers contradict each other. A study by Jiang and Grabe (2007) doubted the results of a study by Tang (1992) that found that graphic representations helped improve seventh-grade Canadian ESL (English as a second language) students' comprehension and academic language for being the only study of its kind with second-language learners till their time.

In the same context, Echevarria et al. (2011) found a small effect, one that is not statistically significant, of the sheltered instruction that aims at facilitating the academic content of language struggling students.

Finally, Bos et al. (2012) argued that 'Quality Teaching for English Learners', an approach to enhance the teaching of 6th,7th, and 8th grade English language learners "produced no significant effects on student achievement in language arts or English language proficiency and no effects on teacher attitudes, knowledge, or classroom practice." p.xiv

6.6. Teachers as the 'best researchers'

Kriewaldt and Turnidge (2013) encouraged teachers to refer to 'clinical reasoning' in order to intuitively analyze findings in order to make the best judgments. Moreover, Burn & Mutton (2013) explained the function of 'clinical practice' as a mediator between the different kinds of knowledge that is found within the different contexts of school and university.

Teachers conduct different kinds of research in their classrooms such as 'action research' (Elliott, 1991), 'practitioner research' (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001), 'collaborative inquiry' (Bray, 2000), 'critical inquiry' (Aaron et al., 2006), 'self-study' (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001), and 'teacher-research' (MacLean & Mohr, 1999). Shedding more light on the crucial role of teachers, Ayers (1993) spoke of their dual role as "part detective", conducting students' needs analyses, and "part researcher", collecting and analyzing the information, as well as testing hypotheses.

6.7. Research-Practice Partnerships

In efforts to overcome possible reasons that hinder the application of research in policy and practice, Tseng (2012) stresses the need for "Research- Practice Partnerships" or (RPP) between researchers and school districts and listed a number of conditions and challenges (table 1) to ensure the success of these partnerships.

Table 1

Research-Practice Partnerships conditions and challenges

Conditions	Challenges
1- Researcher and Practitioners contribute jointly to define research questions	1- Meet stakeholders' needs
2- Mutual commitment and understanding takes over the one-way process of disseminating research findings.	2- Take into consideration the time frames between research and practice
3- Researchers should acknowledge practitioners' challenges and limitations of using research.	3- Objectively and sincerely reveal findings despite the possible damage of districts' public image
4- Researchers build a trustworthy relationship with practitioners allowing them to use and produce research data.	4- Maintain partnerships despite leadership changes

Furthermore, Coburn et al. (2013) define Research-Practice Partnerships at the district level as: "Long-term, mutualistic collaborations between practitioners and researchers that are intentionally organized to investigate problems of practice and solutions for improving district outcomes" (p.2).

In the same context, Westfall et al.,(2007) proposed 'Practice-based research' as a promising solution to the challenges that have led to the research-practice gap, because it addresses research questions based on problems that arise in practice, and tests whether the implementation of findings is effective in a clinical setting.

7. Methodology of Research

7.1. The type of research

This research paper used the Causal-comparative, more specifically the Retrospective causal-comparative research, also known as ex post facto (after the fact) research design. In this method, a research question is investigated after the effects have occurred. The researcher aimed to determine how one variable may have impacted another variable. It also took the form of a survey that is a technique for gathering data where a population (here 40 English language teachers) responded to a structured set of questions describing their attitudes, knowledge, opinions, beliefs without interfering or manipulating any variable.

7.2. Time and place of the study

The survey took place in the spring semester of 2022-2023 academic year at public as well as private Collin County schools (preschool to high school campuses) in Dallas, Texas, U.S.A.

7.3. Sample/population/corpus of the study

The Research data were collected from forty English language educators of both private and public schools (chart 1.1) teaching at preschool, elementary, middle school, and high school campuses (chart 1.2). Participants could later be divided into three groups: novice (1-5 years), experienced (5-10 years), and expert (over 10 years) (chart 1.3)
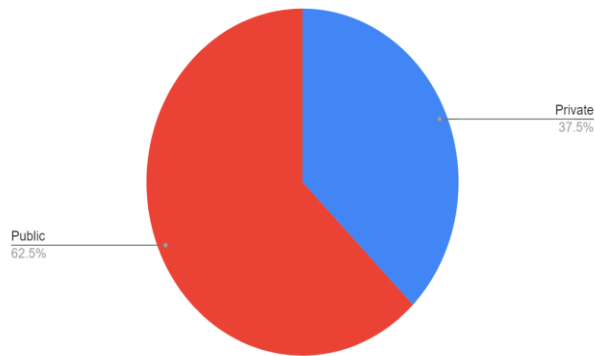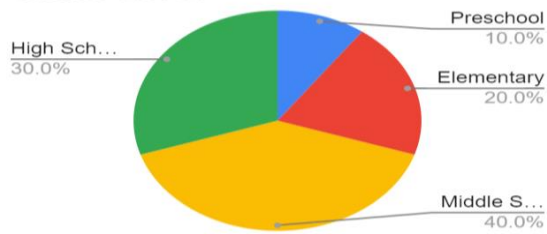
Chart 1.1

Type of Institution

Private
37.5%
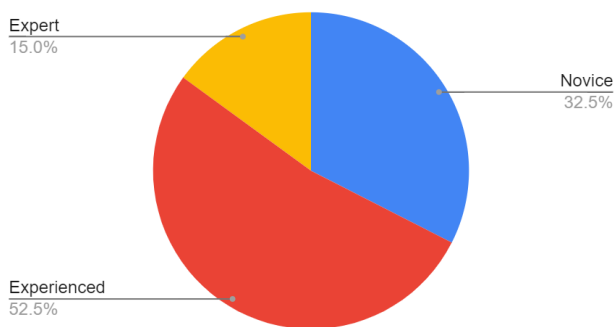
Public
62.5%

chart 1.2

Grade Level

Preschool
10.0%

High Sch...
30.0%

Elementary
20.0%

Middle S...
40.0%

chart 1.3

Educator Experience

Expert
15.0%

Novice
32.5%

Experienced
52.5%

7.4. **Sampling procedures**

Selecting the research sample based on the type of institution, the grade level, and the years of experience is important because the researcher believes that these criteria might affect the answers of the teachers and represent varied feedback of educators with different backgrounds.

7.5. **Instruments of the study**

The research questions were tested through a pre-structured survey questionnaire (7 main questions), in which the choice of the type of questions (open and close ended such as yes/no, checkboxes, ranking) and the information to collect, were based on the review of previous literature and were promising to give a detailed answer to each of the study questions, and as a result help test the hypotheses.

7.6. **Variables of the study**

In the current study, each hypothesis has its own dependent and independent variables; for H1, the independent variable (or the variable that affects the outcome) is the teaching methodology (whether it is research-based or research-free) and the dependent variable (the resulting effect of the independent variable or the outcome) is an effective English language teaching and learning. As for H2, the independent variables are the:

1- type of institution ; 2- grade level ; 3- The English language teacher's years of experience

Whereas the dependent variable is the ability of English language teachers to attain similar results after applying a certain research-based methodology.

 7.7.   Procedure of the study

The survey questions (please refer to the numbered questions of the questionnaire in the appendix) were mainly divided into three large themes or criteria:

1- Participants' background data (question #1), availability (question #2) and acknowledgement (question #3) of the role of research in English language teaching/learning.   2- Nature (question #5) and degree of success (questions #4-6) of the participants' English language teaching methodology (whether research-based/free). (Please refer to questions # 4-5-6 of the questionnaire in the appendix).   3- The ability of English language teachers of group A (who follow and implement research-based practices) to achieve similar results in their classrooms as compared to those of the research findings.(question #7).

7.8. **Ethical considerations**

At the onset of the study, the researcher sent emails to school/campus administrators explaining the reasons and the need to conduct such a survey and asking for permission to ANONYMOUSLY get access to the results, with a copy of the questionnaire being attached. It was at the administrators as well as teachers' discretion to accept/refuse to take part of the project.

 8.   Findings and Analysis

After collecting and categorizing raw data according to each of the three criteria, results were analyzed:

First, qualitatively by describing the participants' answers to open-ended questions (#5 and 7) of the survey questionnaire. What was noticeable was that, in both questions, the responses of the novice teachers were concise, yes/no, or even had the form of short answers without any explanation of the possible causes. On the other hand, experienced and expert teachers answered by providing extensive descriptions of their beliefs, feedback, and 'adaptation' of teaching strategies to meet state, curriculum, and students' needs, where some of them used the other blank side of the questionnaire to complete their answer.

Second, results were reported quantitatively as contingency tables and then analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. To better represent findings, the researcher made use of graphs to visually display the different values and categories.

Analysis of criterion # 1

After analyzing the participants' answers (raw data) to survey questions 1,2,3 that dealt with the effect of teachers' background on accessing or acknowledging the importance of research in teaching and learning the English language, and based on the correspondent contingency tables, the researcher was able to draw Graph 1.

Effect of teachers' background on accessing and acknowledging research importance

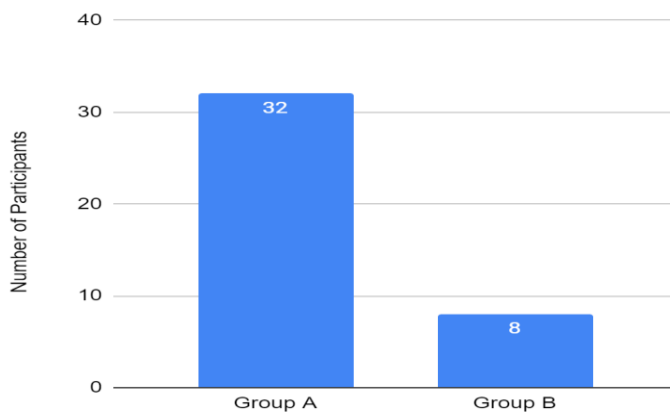Participant Access to & Acknowledgement of Research
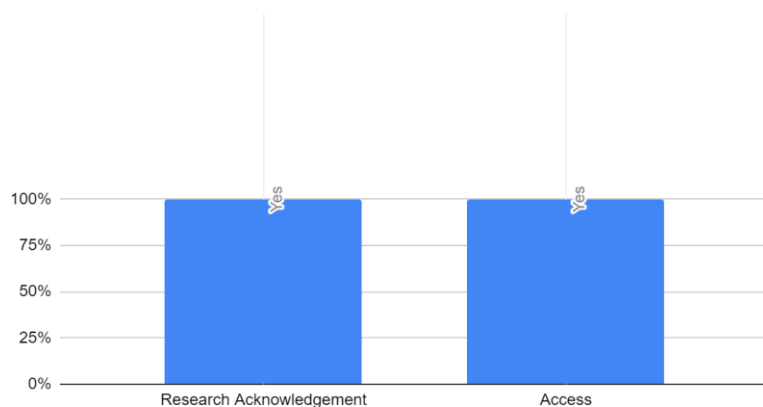
Analysis of criterion # 2

After analyzing the participants' answers (raw data) to survey questions 4,5,6 that dealt with the nature, reasons behind and degree of success of English language teaching methodology and based on the correspondent contingency tables, the researcher was able to draw graph 2.1 (nature of teaching methodology where group A represents the number of teachers who follow a mixed teaching methodology that is both based on and free from research, and Group B stands for those who stick to a research free approach) , graph 2.2 (reasons behind choosing a methodology), and graph 2.3 (group A/B means for test means).
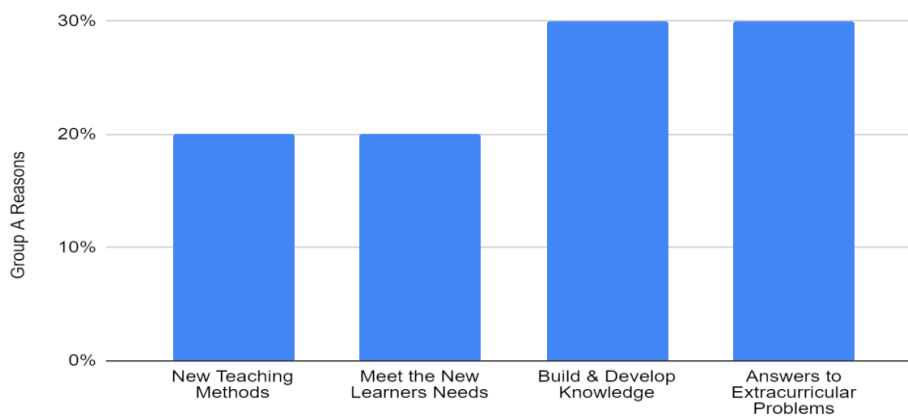
Graph 2.1

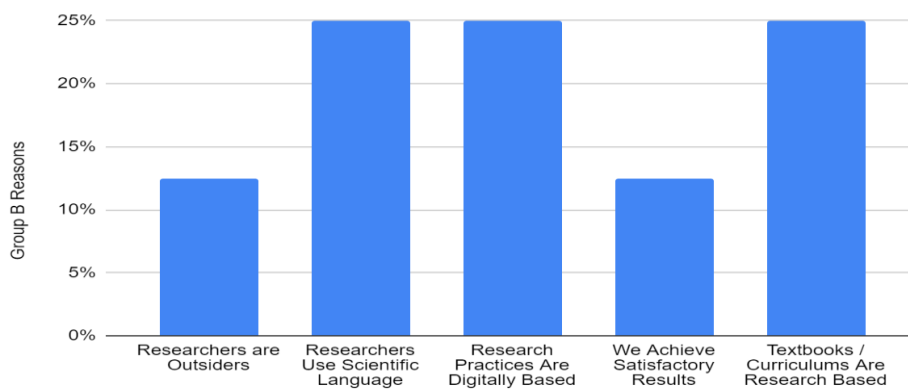*Nature of teaching methodology*

Number of Participants

Graph 2.2

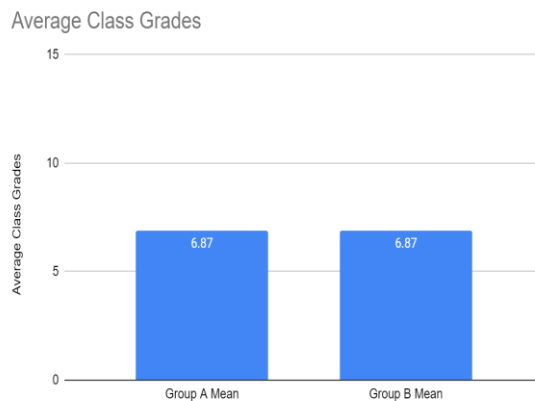*Reasons behind choosing a methodology*

Group A Reasons

Group B Reasons

Graph 2.3

Group A/B means for test means

Analysis of criterion # 3

After analyzing the participants' answers (raw data) to survey question 7 that dealt with the ability of English language teachers of group A to achieve similar results in their classrooms as compared to those of the research findings and based on the correspondent contingency tables, the researcher was able to draw

Graph 3

Group A results similarity assessment
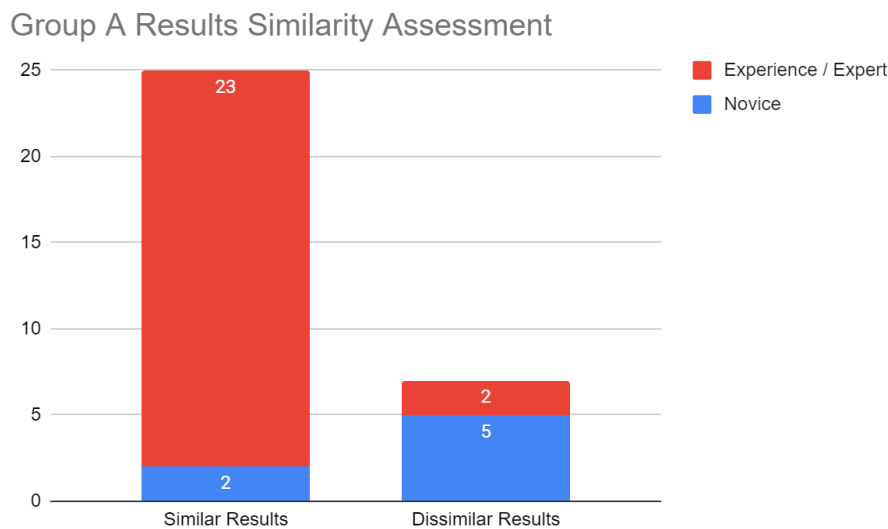
9. Discussing the findings

It is more accurate to state that the results showcased possible effects/causes since surveys are sometimes subject to the teachers' subjectivity or misrepresentation of facts, plus the sample size can affect the extent to which results can be generalized.

Based on the analysis of the criterion #1, **Graph 1**, it is revealed that no effects were found of the type of institution (public/private), grade level (preschool, elementary, middle and high

school), or years of experience (novice/experienced/expert) on English Language Teachers who have access to, read, and acknowledge the importance of research in enhancing educational practices and expanding knowledge (100 %).

However, after examining the three graphs (**Graph 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3**) of criterion #2, participants could be divided into 2 groups regarding their teaching methodology:

- A predominant Group A (32 teachers) that is made up of 80% of the practitioners, whose choice of a combined teaching methodology (by implementing research-based findings and adhering to research-free practices based on their curriculum/ personal experience at the same time) is due to several reasons: "Research-based practices offer us new teaching methods and approaches (20%) that are updated and work better than old disciplines to meet the interests and mindset of the new generation of learners (20%)"; finally, 30% of group A teachers found that research findings help them as well as their students build and develop valuable knowledge about the English language and that they also have solutions to specific pedagogical, managerial, and instructional problems that textbooks and curriculums do not answer (30%). However, they (100%) also follow state standards and the curriculum guidelines.

- And Group B (8 teachers), that includes the remaining 20% who adhere to a research-free instructional approaches in their classrooms (based on state guidelines, educators' standards, curriculum, coordinators' directives) for many reasons: "researchers are outsiders and unaware of my classroom, students' needs, affordable materials (20%), use complex scientific language in their studies (10%), are sometimes subjective and thus not trustworthy (20%)", (20%) opposed most research methodologies that are encouraging the use of digital material such as tablets, i-pads, electronic learning programs and applications while they prefer hands on learning activities, (20%) asserted that their research-free methodologies are achieving successful results and that textbooks and curriculums should have been based on adequate research (10%).

 Moreover, both groups reported reaching successful outcomes (in terms of meeting learning objectives, students' grades, engagement/participation) and the mean (of the test means for their classes' last English Language tests) for Group A (6.87) was strikingly equal to that of Group B (6.87).

Eventually, based on **Graph 3** of criterion #3, we noticed that despite the application of research practices, 21.8% or 7 teachers (71.4% of them or 5 teachers are novice) from Group A used short and straightforward answers to admit not attaining similar results to those reported in the research findings and the causes were divided as 30% being due to the lack of classroom availability (appropriate materials /services /enough time..) whereas 70% accounted for students' quality (multiple intelligences/attention span/interests). Meanwhile, 78.2% or 25 teachers (92% or 23 teachers are experienced/expert) reported attaining fairly similar results and elaborated on this question to give a detailed and extensive description of how they are trying to critically 'adapt', not merely adopt research findings to meet the needs of their individual classes and students and turn them into successful classroom practices that are not only research-based, but also abide by the state, board of education and curriculum requirements.

10. Testing the Hypotheses and answering the Research Questions

10. 1. Testing the H1 and answering Q1 and Q2

After analyzing and discussing the findings, the first hypothesis, or H1, that stated that an effective English language teaching/learning approach is either research-based, or research-free is refuted on the basis of the results of the criterion #2 where the majority of participants (80%) follow a mixed methodology that is neither based on, nor free from research, whereas the other teachers are able to reach successful outcomes through a research-free methodology. Based on the results of H1, Q1 and Q2 can be answered:

Q1: Is effective English language teaching/learning based on research-based practices?

A1: yes, but not 100%.

Q2: Can English language teachers, who follow state guidelines and coordinators' directives and do not resort to any research study, reach successful teaching/learning outcomes?

A1: yes, but not 100%.

10. 2. Testing H2 and answering Q3

After analyzing and discussing the findings, the second hypothesis, or H2, that stated that the extent to which a specific research study and its clinical (classroom) application can achieve similar results depends on the type of institution, grade level, or years of experience of the English language educator, is verified through the third criterion, where "novice teachers" constituted the majority of the educators who do not achieve satisfactory research results in their classrooms.

Q3: Does the type of institution, grade level, or years of experience of English language teachers affect the extent to which the results of a research study and its application are similar?

A3: It is only the years of experience that affect the educators' ability to 'adapt' research-based findings and arrive at similar results.

11. Conclusion

Tseng (2012) list of 'HOWS', materializes the clash among researchers, practitioners and/or policy makers, "how researchers can produce more useful work, how practitioners can acquire and use that work productively, and how policy-makers can create the conditions that enable both to occur." (P. 3)

To sum up, after conducting this research study and getting familiar with the literature around effective teaching strategies and the role of research in teaching, we conclude that despite the clash between research and practice, there is a general agreement on research being fundamentally important in educational and instructional domains, that effective teaching and learning can be either based on or free of research, and that experienced and expert teachers are better at attaining satisfying research results due to their 'adaptation' of findings.

11.1. Limitations of the study

This study could be more accurate and objective if the researcher had the time to conduct an experimental or quasi experimental research study, where volunteer teachers choose 1 research-based strategy that she may find useful (that helps her/him solve certain problems in their teaching methodology) from a list of main current teaching issues. Then, the educator records and compares students' PRE /POST application test grades, involvement, enthusiasm, and how they are similar/different from what the research-based strategy had reached.

11.2. Recommendations and implications for further research

Eventually, it is possible that most of the problems (70%) that face novice teachers regarding the attainment of satisfactory research results may be amended by offering them a "quality" training based on their more experienced colleagues' panacea of 'adapting' research informed practices and deeply probing into their students' mindsets, interests, backgrounds and matching these practices with their unique educational settings.

Furthermore, researchers and practitioners might profit from jointly working on a future regional/state-wide/national/or even international database platform where existing research papers are updated by asking practitioners/teachers, who based their instruction and clinically applied the same research methodology in their classrooms, to report their feedback, test results, and/or suggestions and then compare and contrast both findings to deduce the reasons behind reaching similar/different outcomes. This kind of research will definitely help bridge the gap between research and practice by not only allowing researchers to explore the study results in varied settings and gain the trust of more practitioners, but also by offering practitioners ample insights into a list of different paradigms and parameters that they need to review as a crucial condition in choosing what is pertinent to their individual and unique classrooms.

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Appendices

Research and Classroom Practices: ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

1- Please check what best describes you

I am a☐ novice (0-5 years)   ☐ experienced (5-10 years)   ☐ expert (10 and above)

   ☐ preschool   ☐ elementary   ☐ middle school   ☐ high school teacher

at a   ☐ Private   ☐ Public school

2- In your opinion, does Research bring any valuable addition to your teaching professionalism? In other words, does Research help you build knowledge in the field of education, particularly in relation to English language classes?

YES ☐   NO

3- Do you have access to instructional research-based studies and findings?
If YES, do you

   ☐ stop,

   ☐ read, and/or

   ☐ reflect upon them? Please check what you practically do.

If NO, are you interested in having this access and reading about the research - based educational practices?

YES ☐   NO ☐

4- Are you satisfied with your teaching methodology outcomes in terms of

☐ meeting learning objectives

☐ students' engagement/participation

☐ students' grades

5- Please check what best describes your teaching methodology and explain why:

☐ I follow a research-based teaching approach

Reasons: --

☐ I follow a research-free teaching approach (depend on educators' standards, coordinators'

directives/curriculum/state guidelines.)
Reasons:

6- Can you recall the mean (grades average of the class) of the last English language test.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7- If you incorporate research-based instructional practices in your English language classrooms, please describe how well it worked

□ Students' results are approximately/similar to those of the research findings	□ Different results, please explain what went wrong:

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