An Evaluation of the Srinakharinwirot MA in TEFL Program

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Abstract

This research was to evaluate the MA in TEFL program in terms of its objectives; structure, content, and facility supporting the teaching and learning process, teaching and learning process, and graduates’ ability and characteristic traits. The samples were 9 instructors, 36 graduates’ employers and 50 graduates. The instruments were two sets of questionnaires with open-ended questions. One was specially-designed for the instructors and graduates to evaluate the MA program, the other for the employers to evaluate the graduates’ ability and characteristic traits. The data were analyzed by the SPSS program to find frequency, percentage, means, and standard deviation. The findings revealed that the curriculum objectives were considered highly appropriate by the graduates but moderately appropriate by the instructors. The difference was significant at the level of .05. The structure of the program was highly evaluated by both the graduates and the instructors. The content of the program was highly rated by the graduates, but moderately by the instructors. The facility supporting the teaching and learning was moderately rated by the instructors but highly rated by the graduates. The difference was significant at the level of .05. The learning and teaching were highly ranked by the graduates but moderately ranked by the instructors. The difference was at the level of .05. The graduates’ ability and characteristic traits were highly evaluated by the graduates’ employers but moderately evaluated by the graduates.
Introduction

The Srinakharinwirot MA in TEFL program was originated from the Diploma in TEFL Program. The Diploma program has been used since 1986. This program was famous among teachers and other academic groups. According to “An Evaluation of SWU Diploma in TEFL Program: a joint project between Srinakharinwirot University and the British Government under the Columbo Plan” (1989: 174), “The accomplishment of the program has been shown to the people involving to teaching and learning in Thailand, thus the instructors in the program were well-known to many organizations and institutes. The instructors were also trainers to contribute their concept and successful learning and teaching.” Following that project in 1992 the Linguistics Department set up an MA in TEFL Program. So far the program has been used for more than 10 years. According to Somboon Chittapong (1998), “Normally, the program should be updated, and improved to suit the advancement of academic issues. A program development often needs to be evaluated because its findings can tell which parts of the program are going to be improved and changed effectively.” Therefore, I believe it’s time to evaluate the program.

The MA in TEFL program is designed to provide teachers in various levels such as kindergarten, primary, secondary, or vocational schools with not only knowledge on English language but also new methodology in teaching English as a foreign language.

Objectives of the study

The study aims at evaluating the Program in four areas: the Program objectives, the structure, the teaching learning and process, and the graduates’ ability and characteristic traits of the program.

Significance of the study

The findings of the study can be used as guidelines for teachers to improve their program.

Methodology

1. Informants

The informants were 36 graduates’ employers, 50 graduates, and 9 instructors.

2. Procedures

Two rating - scales questionnaires with open - ended questions were constructed: one was designed to evaluate the objectives, structure, and teaching and learning process by the graduates, and instructors; while the other was designed to evaluate the graduates’ ability and characteristic traits by graduates’ employers, 50 and graduates.
3. **Data Analysis**

3.1 The rating-scale questionnaires with open-ended questions were constructed to evaluate objectives (Context Evaluation), structure (Input Evaluation), teaching and learning process (Process Evaluation), and graduates’ ability and characteristic traits (Product Evaluation) with open-ended questions.

3.2 The data were collected from August 2004 to January 2005, and were computed for frequency, percentage, means, standard deviation, and t-test by SPSS program.

**Findings**

The findings of this study were as follows:

1. Regarding the Program objectives, the findings revealed that the curriculum objectives were considered highly appropriate by the graduates but moderately by the instructors. The difference was significant at the level of .05. Two appropriate objectives were highly evaluated: the graduates continued studying and following up modern academic knowledge, and learned to adjust themselves.

2. In regards to the Program structure, it was highly evaluated by both the graduates and the instructors. The existing program structure was rated appropriate at high level, and there was no difference in other areas.

The content of the program, generally, was highly rated by both the graduates, and the instructors. The content appropriateness was highly ranked. The course content of the TF 561: Seminar in Language Teaching, TF 571: Teaching Projects, TF 651: TEFL Teacher Training 1, TF 652: TEFL Teacher Training 2, were considered as appropriate courses.

The facility supporting teaching and learning, in sum, was highly rated by the instructors, but moderately by the graduates. The difference was at the level of .05. The classroom, one of the facilities supporting teaching and learning, was especially highly rated by the instructors.

3. The teaching and learning process was generally highly rated by the graduates, but moderately by the instructors. The difference was at the level of .05. In teaching and learning process, graduates using analysis and synthesis in teaching and learning, and teaching techniques in class were applicable, the instructors’ competence, the selection of advisors, the evaluation of thesis and Master’s Project were highly evaluated by the graduates.

4. The graduates’ ability and characteristic traits were generally highly rated by the graduates’ employers but moderately by the graduates. The difference was at the level of .05. In regards to the graduates’ ability and characteristic traits, their basic English language skills and the ability to master the language were appropriately rated. However, no significant difference was found in other items.
Suggestions for the Program

1. **The Objectives of the program** (Context)

   1.1 The objectives of the program should meet the needs of the society in teaching and learning at different levels of education. It should also include bilingual education and management of nursery schools.

   1.2 The objectives should be adjusted to suit modern technology.

   1.3 The objectives should be correspondent with the master plan of the Ministry of Education.

2. **The Structure** (Input)

   2.1 **The Structure**

   2.1.1 The graduates studying in Plan A are required to take 37 credits in Plan B, they are required to take 39 credits. These two plans are appropriate. However, the elective courses should be varied. Three credit courses should be organized for graduates who are interested in literature or business or other fields.

   2.1.2 For the selective courses, more integrated courses should be constructed.

   2.1.3 Graduates should be developed both in teaching methods and skills accurately and fluently.

   2.2 **The Content**

   2.2.1 The content of TF 501: Pedagogic Implications of Language Studies and TF 502: Organization and Lesson Plan should be adjusted and related to each other.

   2.2.2 The content of TF 502 and TF 503: Teaching-Learning Strategies and Classroom Procedures are overlapped.

   2.2.3 The course TF 504: Teaching Practicum should be merged with the course TF 561: Seminar in Language Teaching and the new course will be 4 credit hours.

   2.2.4 The course TF 505: Language Testing and Evaluation should concentrate on practice, for example, constructing writing tests, reading tests, and others.

   2.2.5 In the course TF 651: TEFL Teacher Training 1, the seminar would separate students according to their teaching level, for example, kindergarten, primary, secondary and vocational schools.

   2.2.6 The course description of TF 581: Technology in Language Teaching should be changed according to fit state-of-the-art of current technology.

   2.2.7 Various electives are needed for part-time graduates.

2.3 **The facility supporting teaching and learning process**
2.3.1 The instructors should be good examples in implementing technology such as using a computer in searching information, so that graduates can apply similar technique in their teaching career.

2.3.2 The learner should be encouraged to keep themselves updated by searching academic information about teaching through various sources such as the internet, e-books etc.

3. The Process (The teaching and learning process)

3.1 More elective courses are required and technology should be employed in the teaching process so as to create effective learning process.

3.2 It was found that the successful candidates to this program had good attitude in their teaching career. However, they are required to improve their English proficiency constantly because the actual teaching and learning process is mainly based on English language textbooks. Therefore they should seek other relevant sources.

3.3 More teaching experts should be invited to give lectures or to lead seminars so that students have opportunities to meet and exchange their teaching and learning experiences with instructors and experts from different institutes.

4. The Product (The graduates’ ability and characteristic traits)

4.1 The graduates’ employers indicated that they need the graduates who are proficient in English, and who are responsible to the society.  

4.2 The graduates should be able to apply what they have learnt to improve not only themselves but also the society.
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