

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study focused on assessing the effectiveness of a two-year English program provided for the higher-vocational certificate level students at Lampang College of Commerce and Technology. The participants consisted of three English teachers of the higher-vocational certificate level at Lampang College of Commerce and Technology, second-year students in the intensive English program at the same college, and the alumni of the same program who graduated in 2001 and 2002.

The interview questions were adapted from Nunan's (1992) key questions in program evaluation. In addition, the analysis of documentary sources were also employed to assess the two-year English courses.

Based on the results of the analysis presented in the previous chapter, Chapter VI first concludes the major findings about the courses. Second, pedagogical implication of the findings are discussed. Finally, recommendations for further research are provided.

## Summary of the Major Findings

Concluding from the findings in Chapter V, there were five items that the program evaluators needed to be considered: needs analysis, content, methodology, learners performance, and assessment and evaluation.

### Needs Analysis

The finding indicated teachers conducted needs analysis surveys and implemented the results of needs surveys analysis into course contents. Teachers conducted needs surveys differently, however alumni and students agreed that the needs analysis procedures were effective.

However, the results revealed that the program had no certain system for conducting needs analysis. Although teachers believed that the instructors and students gained benefits from needs analysis, only two of the three conducted the needs surveys loosely and the other one did not because he thought that it was not the school requirement to have teachers perform the needs surveys.

It is obvious that the program manager needs to arrange an orientation for the new teachers at the beginning of the semester. Since the LCCT English Program always have new teachers at the

beginning of every academic year. Everything is new for these teachers. For this reason, the LCCT English Program manager should inform and train new coming teachers about the program curricula and classroom design.

Moreover, the LCCT English Program manager must arrange a form and time for conducting needs analysis surveys, which all teachers share in preparation and follow the same format. Obviously, teachers lack knowledge regarding needs analysis survey. LCCT may need to provide a training or a workshop for in-service teachers so that they understand the purposes of conducting needs survey analysis. Consequently, teachers could use different ways to gather information so that they can design a better course that serve needs of students and teachers (Hutchinson & Waters, 1993; Perkan & Garip, 1999).

Regarding the data collection, the finding revealed that teachers employed only one technique- interviewing. More techniques like questionnaires, observation, informal consultation with the sponsors or learners and self-reports (Hutchinson & Waters, 1993; Richards, 1994) should be introduced so that teachers can gather information deeply.

Teachers can then discuss the results and implement the results into the course contents. This is supported by the findings of

some researchers who succeeded in using needs analysis procedures in their studies (Sittipop, 1994; Xenodohodis, 2002).

### Contents

In terms of contents, all teachers, students, and alumni agreed that the contents of the LCCT English Program were appropriate. This leads to a conclusion that the contents, which the teachers implemented the results of needs analysis surveys into the course contents, served the learners needs. Besides, LCCT graduates could apply their English knowledge learned from the courses in their workplace and their further study.

However, providing course contents that serve the learners need is not adequate for students, if course objectives are too vague. Since course objectives include all important learning outcomes and convey how students are expected to perform at the end of each course (Gronlund & Linn, 1990), the program manager and teachers, should write course objectives clearly. This helps the students know what to achieve and helps teachers know what to test. So the LCCT English program manager and teachers should revise some course objectives.

From document resources, Teachers raised steps for developing English curricula in the seminar by teaching students the topics

around them then expanding to their community, region, and global. Moreover, some teachers recommended that at the beginning of the academic year, first-year students were difficult to teach. They were from different schools with different English background. Furthermore, compare to good students, poor students need more time to adjust themselves to the new classroom atmosphere, especially with native speakers. This means that teachers also need to adjust the English Curriculum so that weak students can improve their language abilities and increase their self-confidence.

### Methodology

The methodology, which included materials, methods of teaching and activities used in the LCCT English courses, were consonant with the pre-specified courses. Two teachers agreed that the textbooks were consonant with the specified objectives. Likewise, five students and three alumni agreed that the materials like textbook, workbook and some grammar exercises, were related to the objectives of the courses.

Moreover, all of the students agreed that methods of teaching and activities were good and harmonious. This means that they were satisfied with the activities that their teachers used. However,

one alumni suggested that teachers should utilize multimedia technology such as video in teaching and learning activities to increase students' language skills and building up cultural background. It is clear that students were willing to learn and wanted to experience more about the outside world.

Having native teachers teach the courses was not enough, students wanted to practice their language skills with other native English speakers besides their teachers and experience real world. The LCCT English courses and the teachers need to include more teaching materials especially modern technology for example videos, UBC programs which can be recorded from home TV. Teachers could use these materials in the classroom or keep them in the ISC room so that student could watch them when they do not have classes. In addition, teachers should use more business games in class to motivate students to practice their English abilities more (Sittilop,1994).

There was one point that cannot be omitted. That was all of teachers talked in the interviews and the seminar about poor office facilities, lack of cassette tapes, workbooks or other resources. This indicated that the LCCT English Program manager needed to revise the budget for teaching materials and tried to support teacher in what they needed. This could help teachers feel happy to do their work which would be beneficial for their students (Taworn, 1996).

### Learners Performance

The focused themes under “learners performance” in teachers’ interview were class attendance, class atmosphere, and students’ enjoyment. Concerning class atmosphere, the findings revealed that teachers did not have explicit solution for absenteeism, and one of them believed it should be best left to parents. In addition, the problems about classroom discipline were raised in the seminar. Teachers suggested LCCT to organize teachers’ annual assembly and discuss students’ discipline. Moreover, in teachers’ reports, they suggested the LCCT English Program to set up classroom regulations for all levels. After that classroom teachers and students discuss the regulations to listen to students’ opinion. However, the regulations set should be harmonized with the school’s rules and regulations. After that, Thai teachers in the LCCT English program should contact parents and arrange parent-teacher conference day. Teachers could take the opportunity to discuss regulations for absenteeism with the parents.

With regard to class atmosphere and students enjoyment, the findings showed that the class atmosphere at LCCT was positive. Nevertheless, teachers were still worried about students’ achievement. This implied that teachers needed to work harder to prepare their lessons. They should try to use other techniques with

their students to have them acquire some knowledge besides enjoyment. Assessing student outcomes is another way to know if students acquire some knowledge. Even though there were some tests conducted during and after courses, teachers could not clearly indicate what students could achieve. This was because the existing course objectives were vague. The program manager and teachers should state course objectives clearly so that teachers can assess students' achievement properly.

The focused themes under "learners" used in students' interview were learning strategies, class atmosphere, timing, and class attendance. In terms of learning strategies, the findings revealed that students employed note-taking, self-study, language skill practice, paying attention in the class and studying hard. They believed that their learning strategies were effective. Students realized what their learning strategies were and they chose the ones that suited them. Moreover, students wanted to know more about the outside world and wanted to improve their language skills; hence, teachers should use appropriate materials to serve students' needs.

Regarding class atmosphere, student enjoyed the class for several reasons: 1) teacher provided more time to discuss, 2) the Center provided some extra-curricula activities, 3) teachers were not too strict, and 4) the course were not boring. This means that the



teachers and the LCCT Program manager should review a plan for extra-curricula activities and teachers have to work hard in designing the classroom activities.

With regard to the time allocation of the courses, students suggested to have English classes in the mornings because they were fresh and ready to acquire new knowledge. Class schedule could be rescheduled for them on some days not the whole weeks since there were some limitation in scheduling the whole school timetable.

In terms of class attendance, the students who were absent because of sickness tried to catch up with the lessons. Obviously, students had some responsibilities for their study.

#### Assessment and Evaluation

In terms of assessment and evaluation, teachers agreed that the assessment procedures were appropriate to the pre-specified objectives. Teachers assessed students via assignments, examination, and classroom performances. At the same time, students assessed their progress and language abilities through their work, assignments and tests.

From the findings, it revealed that teachers did not understand about writing tests. Since the existing courses contained vague

objectives, the tests were not merely testing what the students should achieve. So teachers should be careful when writing tests. The tests must be based on the specific objectives written in each course. Teachers should also make a table of specification so that they know which objectives they want to test. The program manager should arrange a seminar and workshop about testing so that teachers understand the procedures and realize the connection between course content, course objectives and testing.

To inform parents about the progress of their children in learning English, teachers should report every test results to parents. This can increase parents assistance in monitoring and encouraging their children.

Moreover, students should have a distinct profile about their learning outcome by keeping the records of all their test scores and assignments. At the same time, when teachers return the corrected assignments or test paper, teachers should provide feedback to students so that they realize what their weak points are and can improve them.

### Pedagogical Implications

According to the findings concluded above, several pedagogical implications are proposed. First, needs surveys analysis should be

done at the beginning of each semester by using the same form. Then teachers discuss the results and implement into the courses. This helps teachers redesign the effective course contents for students.

Second, in order to enable students to practice their language skills and learn more about the outside world, teachers should utilize some teaching resources and materials provided in the ISC.

Third, teachers and students cooperate to solve the problems about students' class participation. It is important for the teachers to use new teaching techniques in the classroom. Teachers should use more language games to engage the students in learning the language.

Fourth, most of the native English teachers in the program hold a one-year contract. There were some problems occurred for example the continuity of teaching, new teachers did not have background knowledge about the students. The LCCT English Center should propose a two- year contract when recruiting new teachers.

#### Limitation of the Study

This study retrieved the data from teachers, students, and alumni interviews and some of the documents including data

regarding methods of assessment. It did not include data about student assessment. The analysis of those assessment should be investigated in the further study. Another limitation is the current study did not survey the opinions of the employers of LCCT's graduates. Their feed backs in terms of language abilities or efficiency of these graduates should be useful for further evaluation. Finally, the findings of the current study was based on the interview data, which was self-reported. Other method of data collection, for example observation should be employed.

#### Recommendation for Further Study

Based on the finding of this study, some recommendations are suggested for further research. First, the program evaluation should be conducted as a formative evaluation so that the evaluator could know if there is some limitation of each process.

Second, there should be a follow-up study of the students who finished the program. Third, the LCCT English program evaluation should be conducted at a vocational certificate level to investigate the continuity of the English Program. Fourth, an evaluation of the English courses at other vocational institutes should be conducted.

Lastly, program manager should arrange with the teachers about workshop on test preparation. Thus teachers know how to

design the tests that help teachers and students to realize how far the course objectives have been reach.

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