

MLD Report

Introduction

This program evaluation study adopts a decision-facilitation approach to program evaluation (Brown, 1995). The researchers do not carry the intention to make judgments, but aim to collect information in order to help relevant parties to make their own judgments and decisions regarding the program. Keeping in mind the key elements of the decision-facilitation model to program evaluation, the evaluation is viewed as a cyclical process in which data are collected in a systematic fashion in order to facilitate decision making. This evaluation model emphasizes the importance of collaboration among program stakeholders.

The evaluation is a development-oriented evaluation, which aims to “improve the educational quality of a program... while it is in progress” (Weir & Roberts, 1994, p.7). It carries the qualities of both formative and summative evaluation since “it focuses on the ongoing development of the program” (Richards, 2001, p. 288), and since “it seeks to make decisions about the worth and value of the different aspects of the curriculum” (p.292).

The adopted program evaluation model is consistent with the constructivist paradigm, the underlying theoretical framework for the study. Constructivism emphasizes the relativity of knowledge. Dilthey argues that in constructivism paradigm “investigation should occur systematically and empirically but not with the aim of developing a mechanistic explanation... The process is circular; there is not obvious starting and end point; meaning is dynamic and developed in the very process of interpretation” (in Given, 2008, pp. 116-7). Weber states that “this understanding is essential for trying to explain why an action occurs” (in Given, 2008, p.117). The researchers aim to understand phenomena from the point of participants rather than passing judgments.

The research study has a constructivist methodology in the sense that multiple data collection strategies are used, including open-ended questions in the questionnaires, interviews and document analysis, which are the qualitative data collection techniques. Purposive sampling is used in the interviews in order to gain insights into perspectives of various stakeholders from different backgrounds. It is also taken into account that as the collected data is analyzed, the research focus can be expanded (Mertens, 2014).

Reliability and Trustworthiness

The present research study adopts a mixed method approach and includes both quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaires used for data collection consist of both Likert-Scale and open-ended questions. To establish reliability for the Likert-Scale, Cronbach’s Alpha was computed using SPSS Version 22. The Cronbach’s Alpha value for the quantitative parts in each questionnaire indicated high internal consistency (.88 for ENG 101 student questionnaire, .93 for ENG 211 student questionnaire and .95 for ENG 211 instructor questionnaire).

In order to establish the trustworthiness of the study, instead of using the conventional criteria which is mostly associated with quantitative research, alternative criteria were taken as a point of reference (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The criteria for trustworthiness are identified as credibility, transferability and dependability. Among the procedures Lincoln and Guba suggest to achieve credibility, prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer debriefing and referential adequacy were used. First, the researchers met the prolonged engagement criterion. All the researchers spent sufficient time in the context to

familiarize with the culture of the institution. Second, triangulation was achieved through collecting data from different stakeholders.

Another procedure used to achieve credibility was peer debriefing. MLD administration, ENG 101-102 and ENG 211 syllabus committee members read the study and commented on the trustworthiness of the conclusions. Finally, referential adequacy was achieved by archiving all the raw data for later recall.

The second criterion for trustworthiness was transferability, which is concerned with how outcomes discovered in one context can be transferred to another context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To this end, a thick description of the context and the participants is available for the readers. They can use this description to compare the context of the present study with their own context and decide how applicable the findings are to their own context.

To achieve dependability, the third criterion, a number of procedures were carried out. First, when the original data was translated, translations were checked by language experts for translation reliability. Second, in the analysis of the open-ended questions in the questionnaires, two raters were involved. Furthermore, direct quotations were provided to support the conclusions arrived. Finally, as explained above, various parties were asked to read the analysis and results parts to give feedback on the reliability of the conclusions.

The fourth criterion met for trustworthiness was confirmability. Among the procedures Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe for dealing with values and achieving confirmability, as explained above, data triangulation and reflective journal were used.

References

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- Given, L. (Ed.) (2008). *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Volume I. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
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- Weir, C. & Roberts, J. (1994). *Evaluation in ELT*. Massachusetts: Blackwell

Table of Contents

1. ENG 101 Student Questionnaire Report
2. ENG 211 Student Questionnaire Report
3. ENG 211 Instructor Questionnaire Report
4. Faculty Interview
5. ENG 211 Syllabus Design & The Process of Writing a Course Book

*Please note that the research study has not been completed yet. There is a joint introduction by MLD and DBE which gives information about the background, rationale and the project framework of the study. This joint report will be shared when the data analysis at DBE is completed.