

**AN EVALUATION OF MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TEACHING AT A TURKISH UNIVERSITY**

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JUNE 2015

**AN EVALUATION OF MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TEACHING AT A TURKISH UNIVERSITY**

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Rukiye Özlem ÖZTÜRK

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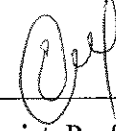
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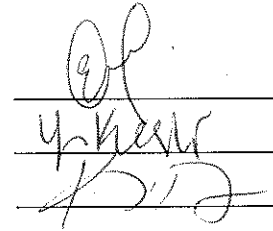
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ABSTRACT

AN EVALUATION OF MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT A TURKISH UNIVERSITY

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The purpose of this study is to evaluate the ELT master program offered by the Graduate School of Educational Sciences at a foundation (non-profit private) university in Istanbul, Turkey. It basically investigates the students' preferences about joining the master program and analyzes the perceptions of the students, instructors and program coordinator about the nature of the program regarding content, instruction, resources and expected outcomes as well as the role of instructors. Besides, the side effects (strengths and weaknesses) of the program were also examined to draw implications for improvement of it. Fifty students, five instructors and one program coordinator participated in this study. The quantitative data were obtained through a questionnaire administered to the students and metaphors while the qualitative data were gathered from reflective essays written by all participating groups. The findings of the study showed that certain aspects of the program such as instructors, content and contribution to professional development were found to be quite satisfactory although there are some weak aspects like range of elective courses and balance between course loads that should be considered for the redesign of the existing program.

Keywords: Evaluation, Program Evaluation, Master's Program Evaluation, English Language Teaching, MA ELT Program

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE’DE BİR ÜNİVERSİTEDEKİ İNGİLİZ DİLİ EĞİTİMİ YÜKSEK LİSANS PROGRAMININ DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

Öztürk, Rukiye Özlem

Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans Programı

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, İstanbul’da bir vakıf üniversitesinin Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü’ndeki İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans programını değerlendirmektir. Çalışma, temel olarak, öğrencilerin programa katılmadaki önceliklerini araştırmakta ve öğrenci, öğretim üyeleri ve program koordinatörünün; program içeriği, öğretim kaynakları, beklenen kazanımlar ve programda öğretim görevlisinin rolüne dair algılarını incelemektedir. Bunun yanında, programın geliştirilmesine yönelik çıkarımlar yapabilmek için, programın güçlü ve zayıf yönleri de ele alınmıştır. Bu çalışmaya; elli öğrenci, beş öğretim üyesi ve bir program koordinatörü katılmıştır. Nicel veriler öğrencilere uygulanan bir anket ve metaforlar aracılığıyla toplanırken, nitel veriler tüm katılımcı grupları tarafından yazılan yansıtıcı metinlerden alınmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları; bu programın, öğretim üyeleri, içerik ve profesyonel gelişime katkı gibi güçlü yönlerinin yanı sıra, seçmeli derslerin sınırlı olması ve dersler arasındaki ders yükü farklılıkları gibi, var olan programın tekrar düzenlenmesinde göz önüne alınması gereken noktaları da olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Değerlendirme, Program Değerlendirme, Yüksek Lisans Programı Değerlendirmesi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans Programı

To My Parents and My Brother

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview

Learning and teaching English language has been highly appraised all around the world, placing greater emphasis on the effectiveness of language teacher education programs and their share on raising qualified language teachers. As foreign language skills are profoundly important in any realm like education, industry, medicine, technology, or science; quality of language education programs plays a big role in keeping up with the worldwide advancements as it is actually a prerequisite to be on the same wavelength with others in international arena. One way of reaching required quality in existing language education programs is through systematic evaluation.

The field of program evaluation has evolved over the past half century, referring to the thoughtful process of focusing on questions and topics of concern, collecting appropriate information, and then analyzing and interpreting the information for a specific use and purpose (Brown, 1995; Lynch, 1996; Posavac & Carey, 2003; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007). As in other fields, program evaluation has an important role in teacher education programs showing the necessary steps to be taken to fix and enhance current programs besides helping program designers create safe guidelines for the future programs. According to Wallace (1991), teacher education programs should have steady and established principles which are followed throughout the implementation of the curriculum and any application done within the program. While defining these principles which basically constitute the goals of the program, program features and instructional setting should be taken into account as well as students' needs, preferences, characteristics and attitudes (Mede, 2012). Rea-Dickins and Germaine (1998) support and further this statement indicating that it is a very fundamental part of the program and takes place at the center of it. Briefly, any practice within instruction should be shaped accordingly, to reach wanted competence and proficiency level.

Since evaluation has gained attention in education, a great deal of evaluation studies that differ in terms of their purposes, emphasis and methodologies have been conducted in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). The primary emphasis of these studies was mostly on evaluating perceptions, needs, feelings and attitudes of the students and teachers engaged in undergraduate or language preparatory programs (Baştürkmen & Al-Huneidi, 1996; Ekici, 2003; Sarı, 2003; Mutlu, 2004; Erozan, 2005; Örs, 2006; Özkanal, 2009; Akyel & Özek, 2010; Tunç, 2010; Mede, 2012). However, as graduate studies are of upper degree and basically require the most contemporary and outstanding quality education, evaluation in these types of programs should not be ignored. As stated by Richards (2005), for an English language teaching master program to be effective enough, there are some points to be queried such as whether the goals are fulfilled, stakeholders in education are contented, it is compatible with setting in which teaching occurs, and it is any better than its equivalents.

Taking all these into consideration, there is an apparent need to conduct evaluative studies concerning graduate programs in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) since they play a crucial role in teacher education and preparing candidates to become more effective teachers or teacher educators. Therefore, the present study aims to evaluate an ELT master program at a foundation (non-profit private) university in İstanbul, Turkey by investigating the major preferences and the encouraging determinants of the students about joining the program, examining how far it addresses their needs in relation to program goals, content, instruction, resources and outcomes, teacher roles, major strengths and weaknesses of the program.

The results of this study are expected to provide in-depth information regarding the effectiveness of the program suggesting sound guidelines for further improvement. Finally, another significant aspect of this study is that it will contribute to the scant body of literature on graduate program evaluation in Turkish EFL context. By these means, the results of the study may be suggestive for other universities in understanding the effectiveness of their own graduate programs.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Evaluation, and particularly program evaluation in this case, is a rich and broad research area with various approaches and methods raised by researchers who adopt different perspectives. Brown (1995) mentions four approaches to program evaluation: “product-oriented, static-characteristic, process-oriented, and decision-facilitation”, respectively focusing on whether the goals of the program are fulfilled, whether or not it is effective, continuing process the program, whether it helps decision makers or administrators decide for the future of the program.

Furthermore, as stated by Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007), program evaluation approaches are categorized according to ten determinants:

- advance organizers,
- main purposes,
- sources of questions,
- characteristic questions,
- methods,
- pioneers,
- extensions,
- key considerations in deciding when to use which approach,
- strengths and weaknesses of the approach.

In accordance with those ten descriptors, program evaluation approaches are grouped as pseudo evaluations, question and/or methods oriented, improvement and accountability oriented, social agenda and advocacy oriented approaches, and lastly eclectic approach. While questions and methods oriented approach has an objective based nature, improvement and accountability oriented approach is consumer oriented and like in Stufflebeam’s (1983) CIPP model focuses on context, input, process and product in different steps. Social agenda and advocacy oriented approach take a responsive and client centered perspective.

This study does not adopt one specific approach or method; it is rather committed to eclectic approach which draws, selectively picks and applies ideas and

techniques from various approaches to accommodate needs and make purposeful use of findings in program evaluation (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007). Eclectic approach is the one that best fits this study, as it is defined by Patton (1997) to be feasible for any program evaluation, and aims to have a meaningful influence.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Evaluation is a crucial and must element in any program to keep it open to improvement and reinforcement. It has four primary purposes: “improvement, accountability, dissemination, and enlightenment” (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007, p.22). To ensure that the program has all these features, any changes and adjustments to the program curriculum should be done based on outcomes of a thorough evaluation. However, a greater part of program evaluation studies in Turkey only address undergraduate or preparatory classes. There is limited number of studies that evaluates ELT master programs in Turkish context, referring to overall goals and effectiveness of the program. As there is not adequate research regarding this field, there is an apparent gap to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of ELT master programs in Turkey.

To this end, this study aims to evaluate an ELT MA program offered at a foundation (non-profit private) university in Turkey comprehensively to discover the its strengths and weaknesses, and guide advancement through having feedback from the practical experience of stakeholders: students, instructors and program coordinator.

1.4 Purpose

As suggested by Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007), evaluators should include data from all sides to extend the use of results. In the light of this perspective, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the ELT master program offered by the Graduate School of Educational Sciences at a foundation (non-profit private) university in Istanbul, Turkey. Specifically, it attempts to find out effectiveness of the program and draw some implications for further improvement through inclusive data collected from all stakeholders namely, students, instructors and program

coordinator. The study principally investigates the ELT students' major preferences for joining the master program and examines their perceptions towards the nature of the program based on course content, instruction, resources and expected outcomes.

As the program at issue encourages independent and creative teachers who internalize reflective teaching and are capable of self-evaluation, another purpose of this research is to find out the roles of the instructors in this program.

Finally, the present study attempts to identify the side effects (strengths and weaknesses) of the program and provide further suggestions for the redesign of the existing program.

1.5 Research Questions

This study is conducted to find out the ELT students' preferences and encouraging determinants about joining the master program, to identify the perceptions of the students, instructors and program coordinator towards the nature of the program focusing on content, instruction, resources, expected outcomes, objectives, roles of instructors, and finally, strengths and weaknesses of the program. To this end, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What are the students' preferences and the encouraging determinants about joining the MA ELT program?
2. What is the nature of MA ELT program as perceived by students, instructors and program coordinator in terms of the following components:
 2. a. content
 2. b. instruction
 2. c. resources
 2. d. expected outcomes
3. To what extent do the MA ELT students think that the objectives of the following compulsory courses are attained in the program:
 3. a. Second Language Acquisition
 3. b. Research Methods

3. c. Teaching Language Skills

4. Which elective courses are perceived as the most important in the MA ELT program?
5. What are the most common metaphors that describe the roles of the instructors in the MA ELT program?
6. What are the side effects (strengths and weaknesses) of the MA ELT program?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study has its grounds on two basic assumptions. The first one is the necessity for teacher education programs to have a systematic evaluation of its own (Richards, 1990; Wallace, 1991; Reid, 1996; Lynch, 2003; Peacock, 2009) while in the second place, as suggested by Peacock (2009), evaluation studies on ELT master programs are saliently lacking. There is not satisfactory research on evaluation of MA ELT programs in Turkey, either. Program evaluation studies regarding English language teaching are mostly for undergraduate or preparatory programs. So, there is a need for studies that examine MA ELT programs comprehensively. To this end, present study aims to make a contribution to the field of ELT master program evaluations in Turkey.

Providing an extensive investigation in terms of content, instruction, resources and outcomes of the programs and having a focus on teacher's roles, this study intends to bring insight in the current state of the program as well as offering suggestions for the future decisions which will be benefited from for adjustments and changes in the existing program.

1.7 Overview of Methodology

This part provides general view of methodology giving information on research design, participants, setting, data collection instruments, and data analysis.

1.7.1 Research design. This study has a descriptive design which aims to find out if the program is working the way it has been arranged, get feedback about process and outcomes, and identify areas for improvement. It has a mixed method

consisting of analysis based on both qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the MA ELT program at a non-profit private university in Istanbul, Turkey. Specifically, the study attempts to investigate the perceptions of the students, instructors and program coordinator about the effectiveness of the program in relation to its content, instruction, resources, expected outcomes, objectives, roles of instructors, and finally, strengths and weaknesses of the program.

1.7.2 Participants. The participants of this study were 50 students, five instructors offering courses in the program and one program coordinator.

1.7.3 Setting. The present study was conducted at the Graduate School of Educational Sciences, MA ELT program, at a foundation (non-profit private) university in Istanbul, Turkey.

1.7.4 Data collection instruments. This study is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. While the questionnaire was a means of gathering quantitative feedback, the main methods for collecting qualitative data were reflective essays and metaphors. In the questionnaire, the items were addressed to the MA ELT students to identify their overall perceptions about the program. As for the qualitative data, the instructors and program coordinator offering courses in the program were asked to write reflective essays about the nature of the program followed by its major strengths and weaknesses. Finally, as for another qualitative aspect of this study, the participating students, instructors and program coordinator were asked to choose three metaphors that best describe the role the instructors should gain in the program.

1.7.5 Data analysis. This study is grounded on six research questions. For the first question, the data were gathered through a questionnaire and analyzed quantitatively on SPSS to find out the students' preferences and encouraging determinants about joining the MA ELT program. The second question investigated how the participants perceive the nature of the program in terms of content, instruction, resources and outcomes, for which data were collected through both the questionnaire and reflective essays and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively with content analysis. Data gathered from questionnaire for third research question on

students' opinions about the compulsory courses and fourth question about elective courses were analyzed quantitatively. Metaphors were used for fifth research question which was about instructors' role and data were analyzed through frequency count. Finally, for the last research question focusing on side effects (strengths and weaknesses) of the program, data were collected through both questionnaire and reflective essays and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

1.8 Basic Assumptions

It is assumed by the researcher that the participants gave honest responses to the questionnaire and in reflective essays. The researcher also assumes that the participants – the students, instructors and program coordinator- represent the general characteristics of intended population. And finally, it is assumed that the questionnaire, reflective essays, and metaphors used as data collection instruments in this study are reliable, relevant and convenient.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This thesis comprises of five chapters: introduction, literature review, methodology, results, and discussion and conclusion. This very first chapter addresses theoretical framework, statement of problem, purpose of the study, research questions along with significance of the study. It also provides an overview of the methodology giving information about research design, participants, setting, data collection instruments, and data analysis; and finally basic assumptions in the study. The second chapter aims to provide an overview of literature written on program evaluation in English Language Teaching programs. The next chapter describes the methodology of the research in detail. The fourth chapter presents the results of the data gathered through questionnaires, reflective papers and metaphors. The last chapter focuses on the discussion of the findings and conclusion, in addition to theoretical implications and recommendations for further research.

1.10 Operational Definitions of Terms

In this part, the terms used throughout the study is defined briefly to ensure a consistency and clarity.

Evaluation: “Systematic assessment of an object’s merit, worth, probity, feasibility, safety, significance, and/or equity” (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007, p. 13).

Program evaluation:

A collection of methods, skills, and sensitivities necessary to determine whether a human service is needed and likely to be used, whether it is sufficiently intense to meet the need identified, whether the service is offered as planned, and whether the human service actually does help people in need without undesired side effects (Posavac & Carey, 1989, p.3).

Curriculum: “The learning experiences and intended outcomes formulated through systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience, under the auspices of the school, for the learners’ continuous willful growth in personal-social competence” (Tanner & Taner, 1980, p. 102).

Master’s degree (MA): “A degree that is given to a student by a college or university usually after one or two years of additional study following a bachelor's degree” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

MA ELT program: Master’s degree program which provides students with a solid foundation in the English language, methodology, educational sciences, research and linguistics in order to make them fully qualified teachers of English, taking into consideration the latest developments in the field.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review of this study provides background information on program evaluation. The notions: evaluation, program evaluation, evaluation in language teaching programs, and evaluation of master level English Language Teaching programs are touched upon. Approaches to program evaluation, the need for program evaluation and benefits of it are discussed. And the program evaluation studies conducted both in Turkish and international context are reviewed.

2.2 Evaluation

Evaluation is a highly significant element to achieve and pursue quality and effectiveness in any field, and it is crucially and urgently important in education, as well. However, there is not one and only description of evaluation, mainly because there are different approaches to it.

Kiely and Rea-Dickens (2005) defines evaluation as “a form of enquiry ranging from research to systematic approaches to decision making” (p. 6), while the Joint Committee’s (1994) definition says “evaluation is the systematic assessment of the worth or merit of an object” Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007), extends the definition of evaluation as follows: “evaluation is the systematic assessment of an object’s merit, worth, probity, feasibility, safety, significance, and/or equity” (p. 13). adding more touchstones to be considered. According to Weiss (1998) “evaluation is the systematic assessment of the operation and/or the outcomes of a program or policy, compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards, as a means of contributing to the improvement of the program or policy”(p. 4). Finally, Worthen and Sanders (1973) describe evaluation as “the determination of the worth of a thing. It includes obtaining information for use in judging the worth of a program, product, procedure, or object, or the potential utility of alternative approaches designed to attain specific objectives” (p. 19).

In brief, as indicated in all definitions above, evaluation is an indispensable and necessary element in all programs and it is surely beyond doubt that this requirement also applies both to undergraduate and graduate programs to reach desired quality and efficiency.

2.3 Program Evaluation

Program is generally defined as “a series of courses linked with some common goal or end product” (Lynch, 1997, p.2). Within the realm of education, it means a whole of instruction, activities, tasks and materials which are combined and incorporated to reach certain predetermined goals and objectives. Therefore, an educational program can be named as program and should be evaluated systematically to see whether the goals of the program are achieved and whether the program is working as it was planned.

According to Posavac and Carey (1989) program evaluation is:

A collection of methods, skills, and sensitivities necessary to determine whether a human service is needed and likely to be used, whether it is sufficiently intense to meet the needs identified, whether the service is offered as planned, and whether the human service actually does help people in need without undesirable side effects (p.3).

They also differentiate between research and program evaluation pointing out that research is only theory oriented while evaluation takes needs into consideration and helps people increase the efficacy and accountability of the program.

Brown (1995) states that “program evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of a program and evaluate its effectiveness within the context of the particular institutions involved” (p.218). Worthen (1990), who looks at it from an educational point of view, describes program evaluation as “the determination of the worth of a thing consisting those activities undertaken to judge the worth or utility of a program (or alternative programs) in improving some specified aspect of an educational system” (p.42).

Finally, Patton (1997) who developed utilization focused approach to evaluation, defines program evaluation as “the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness and/or inform decisions about future programming” (p.23).

2.3.1 The need for program evaluation. Evaluation is generally considered to be a linchpin in a program. And curriculum evaluation is a vital element in education programs. As Nunan (1988) indicates, if there is no evaluation component in it, a curriculum would be incomplete. It is essential for quality and effectiveness of the program and also for continuity of those features. Lynch (1990) emphasizes that evaluation provides needed guidance while taking decisions about further development of the program. Administrators or any decision maker in the program have to refer to the outcomes of a systematic evaluation to agree on any change to be done to the program. It is a precise way to put forth the strengths and weaknesses of the program and shows which components work well and fit the goals and expectations and which do not.

2.3.2 Approaches to program evaluation. As its definitions vary a lot, there are different methods and approaches to program evaluation. They can basically be categorized into two: qualitative and quantitative. While quantitative evaluation is based on experimentation, qualitative approach has a look from a naturalistic perspective. Which approach to choose is a significant question in evaluation and best answer changes for each particular study. As indicated by Lynch (1992) both approaches make contributions with stress on different aspects in the process, so using them together makes the evaluation sounder and stronger. In this study, the two types are used hand in hand. While the questionnaire provides quantitative data, reflective essays and metaphors are supposed to give deeper understanding of program practices.

Formative and summative evaluation is another dimension of program evaluation, which in fact seems quite similar to product vs. process based evaluation in nature. The terms summative and formative were first used by Scriven (1991), while the former one conducted at the end of the program, the latter one is more process oriented and carried out during the implementation of the program. Summative evaluation, on contrary to formative evaluation, does not aim to come up with suggestions for improvements but just aims to show how efficient it was at the end of the program. In these two types of evaluation, functions, uses and purpose differ. However, it cannot be said that one is superior to the other and both of them are necessary for educational programs to be efficient.

This study is mainly formative in nature because it aims to better the program and remove the weaknesses. An internal evaluator conducts the research and the audience is program administrators and staff. And this study quite fits in the frame of formative evaluation because it tries to answer ‘whether the program is working well, which improvements are needed and how it can be done’ (Worthen & Sanders, 1998).

Posavac and Carey (1989) state that a program evaluation can be organized from different perspectives according to the questions asked and the purpose. The questions asked about program may have four different focuses: need, process, outcome, or efficiency. And they suggest that evaluation basically has one purpose and that is getting feedback. Brown (1984) also puts program evaluation in two categories: product and process evaluation. Although product based evaluation is the most commonly preferred one, using process based evaluation is more appropriate if it is aimed to apply any changes in the program, because it is more like formative evaluation. For that reason, for this present study, process based evaluation has a more important role because it tries to find out possible improvements and any implications of a change for the better.

Worthen (1990) reported five approaches to program evaluation. Performance-Objective Congruence Approach tries to determine if the objectives are reached, while Decision-Management Approach takes program managers’ decisions

as basis. Judgment-Oriented Approach is basically about observing a program and making some judgments about it. Adversarial Approach, on the other hand, collects different evaluation practices to show deficiencies in the program clearly. Finally, Pluralist-Intuitionist Approach considers needs and values of all people in the program important.

Similarly, Brown (1995) introduced four approaches for program evaluation. They are Product-Oriented which focuses on reaching objectives, Static-Characteristic Approach which is conducted by an external person and comprises analysis of records and characteristics of the program, Process-Oriented Approach which is descriptive, judgmental and dynamic in nature, and finally Decision-Facilitation Approach whose main aim is to help in decision making.

Finally, Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007), categorizes program evaluation approaches in line with ten elements: advance organizers, main purposes, sources of questions, characteristic questions, methods, pioneers, extensions, key considerations in deciding when to use which approach, strengths and weaknesses of the approach. Their program evaluation approaches are pseudo evaluations, question and/or methods oriented, improvement and accountability oriented, social agenda and advocacy oriented approaches, and lastly eclectic approach. While questions and methods oriented approach is more objective oriented, improvement and accountability oriented approach is consumer oriented and similar to Stufflebeam's CIPP model it focuses on context, input, process and product separately. Social agenda and advocacy oriented approach is responsive and client based.

This study does not stick to one specific approach or method only but it holds to eclectic approach that chooses and applies ideas and techniques from different approaches to meet needs and use findings to serve in program evaluation (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007). As it is feasible and easy to apply for any program evaluation, and intends for a significant effect, eclectic approach is chosen for this present study.

2.4 Program Evaluation in English Language Teaching

Program evaluation is essential to improve the effectiveness of educational programs and it is as crucial as for language teaching programs. Kelly (1999) states that program evaluation aims to find out how valuable and effective an educational practice is. To ensure this effectiveness, systematic evaluation is the fundamental key. Moreover, evaluation does the groundwork for future plans of action for improvement. Brown (1989) suggests that evaluation keeps the elements in the program together and without evaluation they cannot make a whole, it is the evaluation that links everything up in the program. In other words, if we think the program as a whole body, evaluation acts like a skeleton, carry all components and hold them together.

Evaluation in language education programs go in a line with program evaluation studies in five ways: “a shift from an exclusive focus on measurement of outcomes, increased attention to classroom processes, evaluation as the domain of professional practice, the development of teachers’ skills, and attention to baseline and formative evaluation” (Kiely & Rea-Dickens, 2005, p.56).

Program evaluation process may be for small groups in detail or on a larger scale to make comparisons. This present study aims to give an in-depth evaluation of a master program of English Language Teaching offered at a foundation (non-profit private) university in Turkey. This study on master level differs from other language teaching program evaluation because the scope of the goals in this program is larger; it does not only provide further teaching education but raises some researchers, prepares for PhD studies and to be academicians. That is why it is so important to evaluate language teaching master programs to see whether the goals are attained and program functions effectively.

2.5 Evaluation Studies on Language Teaching Programs in ESL and EFL Contexts

A number of studies aimed to evaluate language teaching programs both in ESL and EFL contexts which are briefly discussed in this part of the thesis.

Considering program evaluation studies in ESL contexts, although sufficient number of studies emphasized on evaluating preparatory or undergraduate language teaching programs (Henry & Roseberry, 1999; Tarnapolsky, 2000; Sawatpanit, Suthers & Fleming, 2003; Yıldız, 2004; Marcinkoniene, 2005; Nam, 2005), a limited number of studies were carried out to evaluate master programs in English Language Teaching (ELT) (Fradd & Lee; 1997; Kayla, Wheelless & Howard, 1981). Since the focus of this study is on the evaluation of a master program, only the theoretical background on these studies was discussed briefly.

To begin with, the results of the study on master program evaluation conducted by Fradd and Lee (1997) at a university in Florida showed including students' view in the evaluation considerably helped the betterment of the program. In this study, evaluation of the program was seen essential for continuing program advancement by focusing on teachers' reflections and analysis on program strengths and weaknesses. It was emphasized that teacher participants' view is quite significant for program evaluation as well, making the results and suggestions more applicable to the real life teaching environment.

In the study carried out by Kayla, Wheelless, and Howard (1981), student opinions were again in the center of the evaluation. They argued that existing program evaluation questionnaires were not enough for a comprehensive evaluation. And in order to measure the efficiency of the program, a Graduate Student Program Evaluation (GSPE) questionnaire comprising six parts namely, curriculum, academic advising, administrative procedures, faculty and teaching, university facilities, and learning environment was developed and administered to the participants. The questionnaire covered all aspects of the program and let students express their ideas about what they liked best and least and which elements should be kept or changed in the program. The results suggested that graduate students' evaluation was not multidimensional and they saw all the components in their programs as a whole in their learning experience. And the findings were basically used for program review and curriculum analysis and revision.

Apart from the program evaluation studies carried out in ESL contexts, majority of the evaluation studies were conducted in Turkish EFL context both in preparatory or undergraduate language teaching programs (Daylan, 2001; Çelik, 2003; Ekici, 2003; Mutlu, 2004; Örs, 2006; Payam & Sarıçoban, 2006; Taviş, 2006; Yılmaz, 2009; Akyel & Özek, 2010). However, only a few of them focused on master programs in English Language Teaching (Kanatlar, 1996; Kırmızı, 2011).

Firstly, Kanatlar (1996) conducted a study to evaluate an MA TEFL program at a private university in Ankara to check how far the goals were attained by collecting data from questionnaires along with interviews. Graduates of the program and administrators were the participants and they answered questions on whether the program met the students' needs in terms of course content, design and materials used. The results showed that education in the program contributed students' professional teaching life and the goals were generally reached. As a result, both alumni and administrators asserted that the program should be maintained.

There is only one more research study focusing on evaluation of master program in English Language Teaching in EFL context. Kırmızı (2011) implemented a study to evaluate MA ELT programs offered in Turkey, which presents a good model for this study. The study was intended to serve as a guide for necessary changes in MA ELT programs and made a comparison between equivalent programs in terms of program description, content, instruction, departmental support, atmosphere in the department and resources. Data gathered from 90 participants (students and graduates of the programs) through questionnaires and interviews revealed that further academic study and personal enrichment are the most important functions of the program as perceived by the participants; most of the programs under evaluation meet participants' expectations with a positive atmosphere and helpful professors. Although this study is comparative and summative in nature, contrary to present study, it can be defined as the first study in language teaching program evaluation in master's level in Turkey, so plays a crucial role for the present study as a main guide.

There is also a small-scale study conducted to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the very same program being evaluated in this study, with a focus of meeting the needs of prospective teacher trainers (Dollar, Tolu & Doyran, 2014) . The results of the study indicate that it has more strengths than weaknesses in terms of qualified instructors, theory and practice balance, and assignments. This study leads the way for the present study and suggestions for further studies are taken into consideration.

Based on these overviews, it is obvious that there is a need for evaluation studies focusing on master level programs particularly in Turkish EFL context. To fill in this gap, the present study is crucial for representing an example for evaluation of an MA ELT program. Specifically, it aims to find out what is adequate or which aspects are missing in the program, whether the program meets students' expectations and needs, what the strongest and weakest points are, and to draw implications for improvement and betterment of the program itself, providing a thorough examination of the nature and the side effects of the program.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Overview

This chapter aims to describe the methodology of the study and provides information on the research questions, philosophical paradigm, research design, setting, participants, data collection instruments and procedures, data analysis, and limitations of the study, respectively.

This study concentrates on the following research questions:

1. What are the students' preferences and the encouraging determinants about joining the MA ELT program?
2. What is the nature of MA ELT program as perceived by students, instructors and program coordinator in terms of the following components:
 2. a. content
 2. b. instruction
 2. c. resource
 2. d. expected outcomes
3. To what extent do the MA ELT students think that the objectives of the following compulsory courses are attained in the program:
 3. a. Second Language Acquisition
 3. b. Research Methods
 3. c. Teaching Language Skills
4. Which elective courses are perceived as the most important in the MA ELT program? What are the possible reasons behind their choice?
5. What are the most common metaphors that describe the roles of the instructors in the MA ELT program?
6. What are the side effects (strengths and weaknesses) of the MA ELT program?

3.2 Philosophical Paradigm

Paradigm is defined as “the basic belief system or world view that guides the investigation” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 105). Bogdan and Biklan (1982) describe paradigm as “a loose collection of logically held together assumptions, concepts, and propositions that orientates thinking and research” (p. 30). Rather than methodological concerns, it is the underlying philosophical basis that differentiates between qualitative and quantitative research methods and helps discerning according to which angle the research is conducted (Krauss, 2005). According to Creswell (1994), qualitative research has a complicated and comprehensive approach expressed through words and reports of people in their natural settings, while quantitative studies base their inquiries on tests, measurements, numbers and statistical analysis to be able to make anticipating generalizations.

In this study, mixed methods research paradigm which combines qualitative and quantitative methods in an individual study was adopted for pragmatic reasons and to utilize both methods’ strengths while diminishing the weaknesses (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Qualitative and quantitative methods do not replace one another but instead they complete, supplement and support each other, which enriches the results and analysis part of the study through an eclectic perspective and results in a more substantial research.

3.3 Research Design

Burke Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) define mixed method research as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (p.17). Tashokkari and Creswell (2007), on the other hand, describe mixed method research as “research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches” (p. 3).

Unavoidable challenges of program evaluation directed researchers to use multiple instruments and techniques in a single study (Cook, 1985; Mathison, 1988;

Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989). Creswell and Clark (2007), point out the main assertion of using qualitative and quantitative research methods together as a superior realization and appreciation of research questions rather than one or the other method alone. The use of mixed method research grounded on five purposes: “triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion” (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989, p.255). Therefore, in this study, qualitative and quantitative research methods work in cooperation to strengthen the findings of each other.

Moreover, mixed method research strategies are categorized basically into four groups namely, convergent, explanatory, exploratory and embedded design (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Convergent design collects and analyses quantitative and qualitative data all at once, but individually without prioritizing either. In explanatory design, qualitative data collection and analysis follow quantitative data, in other words they are carried out consecutively. As for exploratory design, quantitative data is handled first and then qualitative data endorse quantitative data. Lastly, in embedded design, qualitative or quantitative set of data play primary role and the other set is analyzed within the primary research design.

In the present study, convergent design mixed method research is adopted. The quantitative data were provided through questionnaires while qualitative data were obtained from metaphors and reflective essays from students, instructors and program coordinator. The two strands of data collection and analysis were conducted independently with equivalent precedence.

3.4 Setting

This study is carried out to evaluate MA ELT program, at the Graduate School of Educational Sciences, at a non-profit university in Istanbul, Turkey. The overall aim of the program is to enhance the quality of English language teaching providing novice and experienced teachers in the field with theoretical and practical support. It is a 2-year thesis master program offering must courses on Research Skills, Second Language Acquisition, Teaching Language Skills, and elective courses on ICT in Education, Curriculum Development for ESP, Personal

Development and Effective Communication Skills for Teachers, Teaching English to Young Learners, Sociolinguistics, and Cross-Cultural Communication & Language Education. By the end of the program, the graduates are expected to gain master level teaching skills in foreign language teaching with various techniques and have an ever-evolving understanding of professional development.

3.5 Participants

In the present study, data were collected from 50 participants who are currently enrolled in the MA ELT program. 40 female and 10 male students who had their undergraduate degree in English Language Teaching (30), English Language and Literature (10), American Culture and Literature (2), Translation and Interpretation Studies (2), and other departments (6) participated in the study. Their age range was 23-29 with at least 3 years of teaching experience.

In addition, 5 instructors and 1 program coordinator teaching and/or supervising in the program also took part in the study and provided supplementary data. They were all females with the age range of 34-40 years old. They all had their PhD in the field of English Language Education and had at least 9 years of teaching experience.

3.6 Procedure

This section provides detailed information about types of sampling, data collection instruments, data analysis procedures, trustworthiness, and limitations.

3.6.1 Types of sampling. Sampling refers to choosing participants to take part in and provide data for the research (Doherty, 1994). There are different techniques for sampling, and they can be categorized in two as probability and non-probability sampling. While probability sampling focuses on random selection, non-probability sampling has four types: convenience, sequential, quota and judgmental sampling. In random sampling, each individual of the target population has equal chance to participate. On the other hand, non-probability sampling makes researchers choose the respondents based on convenience, sequence, quota or any judgments

regarding the study. For the quantitative part of this study, random sampling was applied to reach as many participants as possible to be able to increase the opportunity to generalize the results to the population.

Since qualitative and quantitative research methods are quite different in nature and in terms of their aims, sampling techniques differs as well. Types of sampling used in quantitative research are barely convenient or applicable for qualitative research (Marshall, 1996). Denver and Fraenkel (2000) states purposive sampling enables the researcher to interrogate and examine data provided by the samples more thoroughly. As every person is not as good as others at noticing, understanding and expressing what is asked of them, purposive sampling helps researchers select the participants who will contribute more and come up with more comprehensive and detailed interpretations, which makes data collection process more productive and sound (Marshall, 1996). Therefore, in the qualitative part of the present study, purposive sampling was used, which means the participants were chosen according to certain benchmarks engaged in the particular part of the study (Balbach, 1999).

3.6.2 Data collection instruments. In this study, data were obtained through three sources. The questionnaires constituted the quantitative part while reflective essays and metaphors were used to get qualitative data.

3.6.2.1 Questionnaire. For the purposes of this study, the questionnaire was partially adapted from Kirmızı's (2011) dissertation which aimed to conduct a comparative evaluation study of 9 master programs in English Language Teaching in Turkey, in terms of program description, content, instruction, resources, outcomes and courses in the program curriculum.

The questionnaire comprised of 4 sections in total. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of questions regarding participants' personal information namely, gender, department of graduation and years of teaching experience.

As for the second section, it was allocated to identify the MA students' perceptions about joining the program. Specifically, it attempted to gain information concerning their future career plans, the reasons why they preferred to have a master degree and why they chose this particular program.

Furthermore, the third section was about the participating students' perceptions with respect to the nature of the program namely, program content, instruction, resources and expected outcomes which has based on a Likert type scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

In addition, the fourth section focused on the evaluation of courses (three must courses: second Language Acquisition, Research Methods and Teaching Language Skills, and elective courses) and program goals. To put it simply, the opinions of the participants considering to what extent the objectives were attained at the end of each must course were investigated. Then, the MA students were required to mark the three most important elective courses in the program based on their experiences and briefly state the reasons behind their preferences.

3.6.2.2 Reflective essays. A reflective essay illustrates what a person thinks on a certain subject or some experience, including reactions, feelings, thoughts and general understanding and analysis of an issue, in a personal way. Dewey (1993), is recognized to originate the concept of reflection. He considers it to be "a special form of problem solving, thinking to resolve an issue which involved active chaining, a careful ordering of ideas linking each with its predecessors (as cited in Hatton & Smith, 1995, p.33).

In this study, twelve of the students were asked to write a reflective paper in which they reflect critically on program content, instruction, resources, expected outcomes, objectives, instructors' role, and finally, the side effects of the program. The participants were asked to reflect their ideas as frankly and clearly as possible and give in depth understanding of their own, criticize and comment on the side effects of the program.

Similarly, for the purposes of this study and triangulation concerns, five instructors and one program coordinator were also asked to write reflective essays emphasizing on their overall perceptions regarding the nature of the program as well as its strengths and weaknesses.

3.6.2.3 Metaphors. Metaphors are generally defined as “giving to one thing a name or description that belongs by convention to something else, on the grounds of some similarity between the two” (Leary, 1994, p.4). They represent beliefs, attitudes or feelings towards a topic or case. Therefore, metaphors have been a research tool used especially in social and behavioral sciences since they reflect individuals’ thinking and reasoning. For this reason, metaphors were used in this study to find out the students’ instructors’ and program coordinator’s perceptions towards the role the instructors should gain in the MA ELT program. Specifically, the participants were asked to choose three metaphoric words that best describe the instructors in the program.

The following table provides an overview of the research questions and the corresponding procedures:

Table 1

Overview of Research Questions and Corresponding Procedures

Research Question	Data Collection Instruments	Data analysis
1. What are the students' preferences and the encouraging determinants about joining the MA ELT program?	Questionnaire	SPSS Descriptive Analysis
2. What is the nature of MA ELT program as perceived by students, instructors and program coordinator in terms of content, instruction, resources, expected outcomes?	Questionnaire Reflective Essays	SPSS Descriptive Analysis Content Analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994)
3. To what extent do the MA ELT students think that the objectives of the following compulsory courses are attained in the program: Second Language Acquisition, Research Methods, and Teaching Language Skills?	Questionnaire	SPSS Descriptive Analysis
4. Which elective courses are perceived as the most important in the MA ELT program?	Questionnaire	SPSS Descriptive Analysis
5. What are the most common metaphors that describe the roles of the instructors in the MA ELT program?	Metaphors	Frequency Count
6. What are the side effects (strengths and weaknesses) of the MA ELT program?	Questionnaire Reflective Essays	SPSS Descriptive Analysis Content Analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994)

3.6.3 Data analysis procedures. In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered and analyzed. The quantitative data were collected by the means of questionnaires and the percentages were estimated using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), which provided well founded and clear picture of the data.

As for the qualitative part, the reflective essays were analyzed through content analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The process began with the open coding of the data followed by inducing categories from these codes, which were then gathered under the aspects of the nature of the MA ELT program followed by its side effects. The categories and themes were subject to the checking of inter-raters. To identify the degree of inter-rater reliability, two experts in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) identified themes from the codes. It emerged that the raters achieved close agreement on the general themes apart from the different verbalizations of similar concepts.

Finally, the data obtained from the metaphors to identify the roles the instructors in the program should carry out was first analyzed by frequency count to come up with the number of times each metaphor related to the four predefined themes occurred and then, the explanations and elaborations behind those metaphors went through content analysis. The data were coded by hand due to the small number of participants. The researcher identified the metaphor used by each participant and grouped them according to the four categories that emerged from the data. This process was carried out with the help of a colleague who was blind to the aim of the study to ensure the reliability of the process.

3.6.4 Trustworthiness. To assess trustworthiness of a research study, Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggests a model with four essentials: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. The first requirement credibility is all about the truth value of the study which means it is quite important to know how confident the researcher is about the truth of findings and whether it displays the facts disclosed by participants (Krefting, 1991). To achieve credibility in this study, triangulation

played a part. With three different data collection instruments, the data obtained from any of them was subject to be confirmed by others. Correspondence and overlap between data were ensured to reach credibility.

Transferability means applicability of the research findings to other contexts and new studies. Whether it is possible to generalize the findings of the study to larger groups is a critical question to be answered in terms of assessing transferability. In this study, transferability has a greater role because there is only limited research in this specific area and this study aims to be a model for future ELT MA program evaluation studies. Therefore, each and every step taken is explained in detail so as not to leave other researchers with any question marks in mind. Dependability refers to consistency of the findings and whether they can be repeated or not. In other words, if a study is replicated with the same participants in the same context and the findings are same again, it means the study is dependable. For dependability purposes, data collection and analysis information from different instruments and resources was represented in an overarching way to make sure that the findings are consistent with each other.

Conformability is the last fundamental for trustworthiness. It is the degree of neutrality, fairness and being unbiased in analyzing and representing results (Sandelowski, 1986). As the researcher had prolonged interaction with informants and had chance to be in the setting in person, bias was avoided extremely and the researcher was scientifically distant to informants and didn't get involved in the answering process not to influence the participants.

3.6.5 Limitations. One of the main limitations in this study is the limited number of participants. As it is a very new program and dating back to only a few years ago, it is hard to reach high numbers of participants. The reliability of findings could be improved by including more participants in the study if it were possible. This limitation was minimized by using triangulation in data collection instruments, and including the data from the instructors and program coordinator as well.

Second limitation in the study is the lack of external evaluator. As the researcher herself is in the same program, the objectivity of the study might be influenced. In data collection process, the participants might have contributed to the study in a biased way, hiding real and honest opinions about the program. As a result, in terms of external validity, this present study is not sufficient enough.

Finally, as the study was conducted in a very specific context focusing on one single program, it is not possible to generalize the findings of it to different contexts.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Overview

This chapter covers the results regarding the evaluation of MA ELT program offered by the Graduate School of Educational Sciences at a foundation (non-profit private) university in Istanbul, Turkey, with an attempt to find out the effectiveness of the program and provide some suggestions for betterment of it. Data were collected respectively through questionnaires, reflective essays and metaphors. The following section discusses the findings related to each research question addressed in the study.

4.2 The Findings of the students' preferences and the encouraging determinants about joining the MA ELT program

Considering the first research question of the study, data were obtained through questionnaires.

To begin with, the students were asked questions regarding their future career plans after graduation, the reason why they chose to pursue a master's degree and why they preferred this particular program. Based on the obtained percentages, almost half of the participants (42%) chose this program for being a researcher in an academic setting as their future career plan while 34% of them stated they wanted to be English teachers in a private school.

Table 2

Future Career Plans after Graduation

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Researcher in an Academic Setting	21	42.0
Management or Administration	3	6.0
Other Non-academic Position	2	4.0
English Teacher in a State School	7	14.0
English Teacher in a Private School	17	34.0
Total	50	100.0

As for their reason to have a master's degree, 56% of participants marked an academic career as a primary career choice and intellectual enrichment (46%) as the second most marked options. Career change (10%) or increase in income (22%) was not among the primary reasons for the participants.

Table 3

Reasons to Start a Master's Degree Study

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Primary Career Choice	No	22	44.0
	Yes	28	56.0
Required Upper Degree	No	29	58.0
	Yes	21	42.0
Change of Career	No	45	90.0
	Yes	5	10.0
Increase in Income	No	39	78.0
	Yes	11	22.0
Personal Intellectual Enrichment	No	27	54.0
	Yes	23	46.0

Finally, when the participating students were asked why they preferred to join this particular program, job opportunities (60%), scholarship opportunities (38%), academicians in the program (40%) and program's reputation (32%) were among the main reasons that they marked as very important as shown in the table below:

Table 4

Reasons to Choose This Particular Master Program

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Opportunity to work with a Particular Faculty Member	Very Important	15	30.0
	Moderately Important	17	34.0
	Slightly Important	9	18.0
	Not Important	9	18.0
Graduate Program's Reputation	Very Important	16	32.0
	Moderately Important	23	46.0
	Slightly Important	6	12.0
	Not Important	5	10.0
Received Scholarship	Very Important	19	38.8
	Moderately Important	17	34.7
	Slightly Important	6	12.2
	Not Important	7	14.3
Recommendation of a Friend, Acquaintance or Colleague	Very Important	10	20.0
	Moderately Important	15	30.0
	Slightly Important	14	28.0
	Not Important	11	22.0
Recommendation of Undergraduate Advisor	Very Important	9	18.0
	Moderately Important	16	32.0
	Slightly Important	11	22.0
	Not Important	14	28.0

Job Opportunities for Graduates of This Program	Very Important	30	60.0
	Moderately Important	8	16.0
	Slightly Important	6	12.0
	Not Important	6	12.0
Academicians in the Program	Very Important	20	40.0
	Moderately Important	11	22.0
	Slightly Important	11	22.0
Location of Campus	Not Important	8	16.0
	Very Important	13	26.0
	Moderately Important	15	30.0
	Slightly Important	8	16.0
	Not Important	14	28.0

4.3 The Findings of the Perceptions of Students and Instructors and Program Coordinator about the MA ELT Program

In an attempt to answer the second research question and its sub-questions, data were gathered through questionnaires and reflective essays. The following part reports the results related to the nature of the program referring to the content, instruction, resources, and outcomes.

4.3.1 Content. In an attempt to evaluate the content of the program, the findings of the questionnaire reported in Table 5 below revealed that the majority of the students (86%) agreed the courses offered within the program follow a logical sequencing. Nearly all of them (90%) stated that the program is up to date. Besides, most of the participants thought that the program allocates sufficient time for each course (%70), gives adequate training in recent trends about teaching English and for the needs of the local context (%78) and provides a variety of master's level course and program offerings (%70).

One of the most remarkable points for content evaluation part was that all of the MA students (100%) shared the same viewpoint that the program teaches how to conduct a small scale action research and adding that the program provides them with adequate guidance to improve research skills (86%).

Furthermore, almost all of the participants (90%) affirmed that the program gives adequate training in teaching language skills and it encourages reflecting on past experiences as a language learner (%92). Majority of them also agreed that the program is relevant to their needs (%82), teaches how to teach English (%72) and avoids overlapping information between different courses (%82).

On the contrary the only two points that almost half of the participants disagreeing with were about the program not providing adequate guidance to improve classroom management (42%) and testing skills (44%). A possible reason behind these two findings might be that the program does not have any specific courses related to classroom management or testing which should be taken into consideration.

Table 5
Content

		Frequency	Valid Percent
a. The courses offered within the program follow a logical sequencing.	Strongly Agree	14	28.0
	Agree	29	58.0
	Disagree	6	12.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
b. The program is up-to-date.	Strongly Agree	16	32.0
	Agree	29	58.0
	Disagree	4	8.0
c. The program allocates sufficient time for each course.	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
	Strongly Agree	8	16.3
	Agree	27	55.1
	Disagree	13	26.5
d. The program gives me adequate training in recent trends about teaching English.	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
	Strongly Agree	16	32.0
	Agree	23	46.0
	Disagree	10	20.0
e. The program gives me adequate training for the needs of the local context (Turkish EFL context)	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
	Strongly Agree	9	18.0
	Agree	25	50.0
	Disagree	14	28.0
f. The program gives me adequate training in teaching language skills (reading, listening, writing, speaking).	Strongly Disagree	2	4.0
	Strongly Agree	18	36.0
	Agree	27	54.0
g. There is a variety of master's level course and program offerings.	Disagree	5	10.0
	Strongly Agree	11	22.0
	Agree	24	48.0
	Disagree	13	26.0
	Strongly Disagree	2	4.0

h. The program is relevant to my needs.	Strongly Agree	13	26.0
	Agree	28	56.0
	Disagree	9	18.0
i. The program encourages me to reflect on my past experiences as a language learner.	Strongly Agree	22	44.0
	Agree	24	48.0
	Disagree	4	8.0
j. The program teaches me how to teach English.	Strongly Agree	15	30.0
	Agree	21	42.0
	Disagree	11	22.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	6.0
k. The program teaches me how to conduct a small scale research (action research).	Strongly Agree	25	50.0
	Agree	25	50.0
l. The program avoids overlapping information between different courses.	Strongly Agree	10	20.0
	Agree	31	62.0
	Disagree	7	14.0
	Strongly Disagree	2	4.0
m. The program provides adequate guidance to improve classroom management skills.	Strongly Agree	11	22.0
	Agree	15	30.0
	Disagree	21	42.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	6.0
n. The program provides adequate guidance to improve research skills.	Strongly Agree	19	38.0
	Agree	24	48.0
	Disagree	7	14.0
o. The program provides adequate guidance to improve testing skills.	Strongly Agree	6	12.0
	Agree	14	28.0
	Disagree	22	44.0
	Strongly Disagree	8	16.0

Parallel to the questionnaire results, the qualitative analysis of the reflective essays given to the students, instructors and program coordinator showed that the content was one of the strongest aspects of the program. Specifically, they highlighted the importance of doing research and improvement of students' research skills as shown in the following excerpts:

As most of the courses had a final project based on research, these courses prepared me to research and learn related content of that course. Therefore, I improved my research skills and got ready to write my thesis (Student, Reflective Essay).

I like the way our Ma program handles two facets of offering an MA program. In other words, it both serves practitioners and more academic oriented individuals with a focus on research and application (Instructor, Reflective Essay).

The students should be able to conduct a small scale research (action research), combine theory with practices and become reflective practitioners and researchers as well (Program Coordinator, Reflective Essay).

Another important issue raised about the content of the program was that most of the participants believed that the number of elective courses should be increased and courses such as Assessment, Testing, ESP, Classroom Management, and the Use of Literary Texts in TEFL, Educational Psychology or Psycholinguistics should be added to provide students' with more variety. The following comments support this issue:

I think program content was quite satisfactory. However, courses based more on practice such as "Classroom Management" and literature related courses such as "The Use of Literary Text in TEFL" could have been added to the program as electives (Student, Reflective Essay).

I believe that compulsory courses have been identified very well, to the point. There may be variety in terms of elective courses. Department needs to offer more elective courses each year (Instructor, Reflective Essay).

I think that compulsory courses are ok but more elective courses such as Linguistics and Testing are needed to be added to the program. Shortly, the students should be provided with more variety (Program Coordinator, Reflective Essay).

Looking at these comments, it is obvious to see Classroom Management and Testing among others, because according to quantitative data collected through questionnaire, almost half of the participants suggested that the program lacks in improving classroom management and testing skills.

4.3.2 Instruction. In terms of instruction component of the MA ELT program, there were five outstanding points that the participating students (90%) agreed on namely, the program promotes flexibility in using different teaching practices for different situations, the program equips with the necessary instructional technologies and other resources, the program encourages reflective teaching, it promotes intellectual development and the students receive valuable feedback from instructors (see Table 6: Instruction).

Table 6

Instruction

		Frequency	Valid Percent
a. Quality of instruction in my courses is satisfactory.	Strongly Agree	12	24.0
	Agree	29	58.0
	Disagree	9	18.0
b. The program has good linkage between theory and practice.	Strongly Agree	12	24.0
	Agree	29	58.0
	Disagree	8	16.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
c. The program promotes flexibility in using different teaching practices for different situations.	Strongly Agree	11	22.0
	Agree	32	64.0
	Disagree	6	12.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
d. Teaching methods used in graduate courses (e.g., lectures, seminars, audiovisual aids) are well-tailored for our needs.	Strongly Agree	13	26.0
	Agree	22	44.0
	Disagree	14	28.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
e. The program balances teacher-centered and student-centered learning.	Strongly Agree	15	30.0
	Agree	26	52.0
	Disagree	8	16.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
f. The program equips with the necessary instructional technologies and other resources.	Strongly Agree	14	28.0
	Agree	30	60.0
	Disagree	5	10.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
g. The program encourages reflective teaching.	Strongly Agree	15	30.0
	Agree	30	60.0
	Disagree	4	8.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
h. The program promotes intellectual development.	Strongly Agree	21	42.0
	Agree	24	48.0
	Disagree	5	10.0
i. The program prepares me to teach English in the classroom.	Strongly Agree	12	24.0
	Agree	24	48.0
	Disagree	11	22.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	6.0

j. I receive valuable feedback from my professors.	Strongly Agree	22	44.0
	Agree	23	46.0
	Disagree	4	8.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0

Furthermore, the other two essences became evident in data analysis and the MA students mostly (82%) agreed on were that quality of instruction was satisfactory and the program had a good balance between theory and practice which helped students' with their professional development. Likewise, in the reflective papers, similar findings were gathered as shown in the comments below:

The program, comprised of solid theoretical framework supplemented with practical guidelines, has reflected fruitfully on my professional development along with compulsory and elective courses (Student, Reflective Essay).

In the program, I try to make a balance between theory and practice. I realize that the acquisition of knowledge depends on practice. I, therefore, want my students to be able to analyze, compare, contrast and discuss various materials (Instructor, Reflective Essay).

In the program, the instruction focuses both on theory and practice. The balance between the two is highly emphasized to aid with the professional development of the students (Program Coordinator, Reflective Essay).

4.3.3 Resources. Considering the adequacy of the resources in the program, most of the students (80%) agreed that the program had sufficient resources in terms of computer and internet support, university library holdings and any other equipment necessary for teaching (see Table 7).

Table 7

Resources

		Valid	
		Frequency	Percent
a. The institution offers sufficient computer and Internet support.	Strongly Agree	12	24.0
	Agree	26	52.0
	Disagree	11	22.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
b. University library holdings are relevant to the field.	Strongly Agree	9	18.0
	Agree	31	62.0
	Disagree	10	20.0
c. Specialized facilities, such as laboratories or studios, and equipment needed for teaching are satisfactory.	Strongly Agree	9	18.0
	Agree	31	62.0
	Disagree	9	18.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
d. Overall adequacy of financial resources in support of this master's program is satisfactory.	Strongly Agree	7	14.3
	Agree	31	63.3
	Disagree	10	20.4
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0

As for the analysis of the qualitative data, similar findings were found from the reflective papers written by the students, instructors and program coordinator as displayed in the excerpts below:

The library resources are sufficient and easy to reach. The possibility to connect to the library database at any place is a good chance (Student, Reflective Essay).

It is easy to access technology on campus, which is quite important to reach recent resources. Also, the course books were helpful and good resources to support knowledge (Instructor, Reflective Essay).

The resources in the program are up to date and easily accessible. They provide sufficient guidance for the students to follow their courses and do small-scale research as well (Program Coordinator, Reflective Essay).

4.3.4 Outcomes. According to the questionnaire results, the program had up-and-coming outcomes. Specifically, 94% of the participants agreed that what they had learned in the program would be valuable for their future, that the program increases power of self-evaluation (%92), and by the end of the program they felt that they would be able to carry out research on their own and/or continue to do PhD studies at any ELT-related program both in Turkey and abroad (%92).

Likewise, % 84 of the participants also acknowledged that they felt competent enough to teach effectively, they had developed the knowledge and necessary skills required for their chosen career (%88), and they were satisfied with the quality of their learning experiences in this institution (%82) as shown in the following table.

Table 8

Expected Outcomes

		Valid	
		Frequency	Percent
a. What I have learned in this program will be valuable for my future.	Strongly Agree	25	50.0
	Agree	22	44.0
	Disagree	3	6.0
b. The program increases my power of self-evaluation.	Strongly Agree	28	56.0
	Agree	18	36.0
	Disagree	3	6.0
c. By the end of this program, I feel competent enough to teach effectively.	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
	Strongly Agree	22	44.0
	Agree	20	40.0
d. I have developed the knowledge and necessary skills required for my chosen career.	Disagree	7	14.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
	Strongly Agree	18	36.0
e. By the end of this program, I feel that I will be able to carry out research in my field on my own, and/or continue to do my PhD studies at any ELT-related program both in Turkey and abroad.	Agree	26	52.0
	Disagree	6	12.0
	Strongly Agree	27	54.0
f. Overall I am satisfied with the quality of my learning experiences at this institution.	Agree	19	38.0
	Disagree	3	6.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
	Strongly Agree	18	36.0
	Agree	23	46.0
	Disagree	9	18.0

In a similar fashion, the findings of the reflective essays matched up with the quantitative data. In other words, the students, instructors and program coordinator stated that the program outcomes were satisfactory in terms of the professional development of the students who gained a repertoire of teaching strategies, became autonomous and more critical and reflective practitioners and researchers as seen in their comments below:

I developed a repertoire of teaching strategies and became a more critical and reflective researcher thanks to the assigned practical application projects and exercises (Student, Reflective Essay).

Program outcomes are very satisfactory in terms of professional development and gaining a scientific perspective. The students learned how to become more autonomous, critical and reflective practitioners and researchers (Instructor, Reflective Essay).

Outcomes of the program are closely linked to aims and objectives. As far as I see, our MA program has definitely some real life consequences such as professional development or academic career. A student who completes all their responsibilities and has autonomy can be a very good researcher in the field (Program Coordinator, Reflective Essay).

4.4 The Findings of the Extent to Which the MA ELT Students Think the Objectives of the Compulsory Courses Are Attained In the Program

As for the third research question regarding the extent to which the objectives of the compulsory courses are attained in the program, courses were subject to evaluation in the questionnaire. The following part discusses the findings related to each course.

4.4.1 Second language acquisition. Data gathered from the questionnaires revealed that the participants agreed that the Second Language Acquisition course reached its goals to a large extent. The findings showed that the course differentiated

the processes involved in first and second language acquisition (%92), discussed the critical period hypothesis, its merits and arguments against it (%92), discussed the importance of simplified input and how binding plays an important role in SLA (%90), integrated the complimentary roles of input and output based practice in L2 classrooms (%88), explained the difference between conscious and unconscious attention and awareness in SLA (%74), and designed an empirical study related to SLA for potential publication if carried out at a future date (%92).

Table 9

Second Language Acquisition

		Frequency	Valid Percent
a. Differentiate the processes involved in second vs. first language acquisition.	Very Much	27	54.0
	Much	19	38.0
	Little	4	8.0
b. Discuss the critical period hypothesis, its merits, and the arguments against it.	Very Much	28	56.0
	Much	18	36.0
	Little	4	8.0
c. Discuss the importance of simplified input and how binding plays an important role in SLA.	Very Much	23	46.0
	Much	22	44.0
	Little	5	10.0
d. Integrate the complimentary roles of input- and output-based practice in L2 classrooms.	Very Much	23	46.0
	Much	21	42.0
	Little	6	12.0
e. Explain the difference between conscious and unconscious attention and discuss some of the issues related to awareness in SLA.	Very Much	17	34.0
	Much	20	40.0
	Little	10	20.0
	Very Little	3	6.0
f. Design an empirical study related to SLA for potential publication if carried out at a future date.	Very Much	18	36.7
	Much	23	46.9
	Little	8	16.3

4.4.2 Research methods. For the Research Methods course, the MA students signified the course fulfilled its goals fairly, but some thought certain parts of it should be improved. Most of them marked very much (40%) and much (28%) for how much the course demonstrate knowledge of quantitative and qualitative approaches to research in applied study of language. Very close percentage of the participants chose very much and much, for other four items which are: to articulate research questions for the purpose of developing a thesis or project (%64), plan the elements of a thesis or research project, including literature review, methodology and data analysis (%74), identify major types of data collection, and issues associated with analysis and interpretation of data (%66), and finally, to address ethical concerns in relation to language research (%66).

Table 10

Research Methods

		Frequency	Valid Percent
a. Demonstrate knowledge of quantitative and qualitative approaches to research in applied study of language (with a particular focus on English).	Very Much	20	40.8
	Much	14	28.6
	Little	10	20.4
	Very Little	5	10.2
b. Articulate research questions for the purpose of developing a thesis or project.	Very Much	17	34.0
	Much	15	30.0
	Little	13	26.0
	Very Little	5	10.0
c. Plan the elements of a thesis or research project, including literature review, methodology and data analysis.	Very Much	20	40.0
	Much	17	34.0
	Little	8	16.0
	Very Little	5	10.0
d. Identify major types of data collection, and issues associated with analysis and interpretation of data.	Very Much	20	40.0
	Much	13	26.0
	Little	12	24.0
	Very Little	5	10.0
e. Address ethical concerns in relation to language research.	Very Much	18	36.0
	Much	15	30.0
	Little	11	22.0
	Very Little	6	12.0

4.4.3 Teaching Language Skills. As obtained from the questionnaire data, the objectives in the Teaching Language Skills course were accomplished profoundly. Specifically, more than 80% of the participants thought the six course objectives were attained and marked the items much and very much. According to Likert scale findings, the following objectives were achieved: to analyze recent research on teaching language skills in EFL classrooms (%92), apply first and second language acquisition research to teaching language skills in EFL classrooms (%86), develop assessment activities related to four language skills (%78), incorporate process writing, including peer and self-assessment into classroom instruction (%88), use scaffolding approaches to teach pre-reading, during reading and post-reading strategies (%84), and model for students language learning strategies appropriate to various learning tasks (%82).

Table 11
Teaching Language Skills

		Frequency	Valid Percent
a. Analyze recent research on teaching language skills in EFL classrooms.	Very Much	12	24.0
	Much	34	68.0
	Little	4	8.0
b. Apply first and second language acquisition research to teaching language skills in EFL classrooms.	Very Much	18	36.0
	Much	25	50.0
	Little	7	14.0
c. Develop assessment activities related to four language skills in EFL classrooms.	Very Much	17	34.0
	Much	22	44.0
	Little	11	22.0
d. Incorporate process writing, including peer and self-assessment into classroom instruction.	Very Much	17	34.0
	Much	27	54.0
	Little	6	12.0
e. Use scaffolding approaches to teach pre reading, during-reading, and post-reading strategies.	Very Much	17	34.0
	Much	25	50.0
	Little	8	16.0
f. Model for students language learning strategies appropriate to various learning tasks.	Very Much	17	34.0
	Much	24	48.0
	Little	9	18.0

4.5 The Findings of the Most Important Elective Courses in the MA ELT Program as Perceived by Students

For the fourth research question of this study, the participants were asked to choose 3 elective courses they had taken in the program which they thought were the most important ones. Based on the gathered findings reported in Table 12 below, Course and Materials Evaluation and Development in ELT course (54%) was the most important elective course in the program as seen by the participants followed by 52% ranked for the Curriculum Development for ESP and Personal Development and Effective Communication Skills for Teachers (42%) courses . A possible reason behind this finding might be the fact that these three courses are directly relevant to what most of the ELT instructors are asked to do in their institutions. In other words, they are actively engaged in the process of course, materials and curriculum design and evaluation, which in turn help their personal development and effective communication skills.

The other elective courses identified by the MA students were as follows: ICT in Education (36%), In-service Teacher Education (34%), Cross-Cultural Communication and Language Education (30%), Teaching English to Young Learners (24%), and Sociolinguistics (16%).

Table 12

Elective Courses

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Course and Materials Evaluation and Development in ELT	No	23	46.0
	Yes	27	54.0
Cross-Cultural Communication and Language Education	No	35	70.0
	Yes	15	30.0
Curriculum Development for ESP ICT in Education	No	24	48.0
	Yes	26	52.0
In-service Teacher Education	No	32	64.0
	Yes	18	36.0
Personal Development and Effective Communication Skills for Teachers	No	33	66.0
	Yes	17	34.0
Sociolinguistics	No	29	58.0
	Yes	21	42.0
Teaching English to Young Learners	No	42	84.0
	Yes	8	16.0
	No	38	76.0
	Yes	12	24.0

4.6 The Findings of the Most Common Metaphors that Describe the Roles of Instructors in the MA ELT Program

In an attempt to find out prevalent instructors' role in the program, the participating students, instructors and the program coordinator were asked to choose 3 metaphors describing the role the instructors should gain during the program. According to the findings of questionnaire, the three metaphors chosen most by the students were: "scaffolder"- 48% (simplifies concepts and teaches through building on concepts), "challenger"- 42% (makes us interested in taking new challenges), and "missionary"- 40% (simplifies and transfers the concepts presented in the books for the students' better understanding) (see Table 13).

Table 13
Metaphors

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Robot (works automatically and is controlled by pre-programs)	No	45	90.0
	Yes	5	10.0
Writer (generates and transfers original ideas)	No	46	92.0
	Yes	4	8.0
Scaffolder (simplifies concepts and teaches through building on concepts)	No	26	52.0
	Yes	24	48.0
Power-plant (generates original ideas which students then receive)	No	42	84.0
	Yes	8	16.0
Missionary (simplifies and transfers the concepts presented in the books for students' better understanding)	No	30	60.0
	Yes	20	40.0
Sun (provides light when you are confused with materials)	No	37	74.0
	Yes	13	26.0
Artist (moulds students into works of arts through a high degree of skill and creativity)	No	47	94.0
	Yes	3	6.0
Projector (reflects exactly what the materials are written about)	No	37	74.0
	Yes	13	26.0
Cook (picks bits and pieces of different materials to find the perfect fit for student understanding)	No	41	82.0
	Yes	9	18.0
Spring (constantly projects his/her own original ideas)	No	46	92.0
	Yes	4	8.0
Summarizer (summarizes what is provided by materials)	No	36	72.0
	Yes	14	28.0
Challenger (makes us interested in taking new challenges in learning)	No	29	58.0
	Yes	21	42.0
Molasses (sticks the materials while adding a little sweetness)	No	45	90.0
	Yes	5	10.0
Window to the world (creates challenges and brings about change)	No	36	72.0
	Yes	14	28.0

Moreover, the findings of instructors' and program coordinators' questionnaire quite overlapped with the students' responses. Specifically, different from the students' choices, they chose challenger (%100) as one of the best metaphors for their roles in the program. Window to the world (%87.5) was the second most preferred, while half of the instructors picked scaffolder (%50) to describe their roles.

A possible reason underlying these findings might be that the instruction in the program is mostly student centered and instructors play a role as a facilitator, which brings about more challenge on the part of students and raise awareness. Moreover, in the study, the instructors were described as being very supportive by the students, which lead them to choose scaffolder as the metaphor describing the instructor role best.

4.8 The Findings of the Side Effects (Strengths and Weaknesses) of the MA ELT Program

For the last research question of the present study, all of the participants namely, students, instructors and the program coordinator were asked to state their opinions about the side effects namely, strengths and weaknesses of the program. After the content analysis of the reflective essays, the findings showed that the program has outstanding strengths related to the instructors of the program, content, and the professional development of the students. However, only few aspects such as lack of variety in elective courses and more collaboration between instructors in relation to the course load should be improved. The excerpts from reflective papers support these issues:

The program content and experienced instructors enabled me to develop professionally by understanding learners better, and it also guided me to evaluate myself as a teacher and my students effectively (Student, Reflective Essay).

Aligned with the program's outcomes, preparing needs analysis questionnaires, interacting with the other teachers and devising solutions to problems enhanced my skill of problem solving, critical thinking, as well as time management and researching. Overall, all the courses raised my consciousness about problem identification and providing a solution in my teaching practice (Student, Reflective Essay).

I think that more collaboration among the instructors is needed for the assignment load of each course to ensure fairness among the courses. We also need more elective courses in the program so that we can be given a variety to choose from based on our interest (Student, Reflective Essay).

Besides, the instructors' and program coordinator's comments corresponded to the students' opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the program. In other words, they see instructors in the program as one of the most important strengths, emphasize on the flexibility of the content and expected outcomes, agree that more elective courses should be included in the program and course load should be balanced. The following passages from instructor reflective papers prove it:

One of the strengths of our program is its being flexible in terms of courses, and means of instruction. It appeals to both K12 teachers and higher education instructors. Both academicians and teacher trainers are coming out of the program as products of the program. One of the weaknesses is not being able to offer different elective courses which can be solved by hiring more faculty members (Instructor, Reflective Essay).

I think I can list the strengths as dynamicity not just in the program/courses but the academic staff; tendency to maintain a certain level of quality; and support from the Graduate School of Educational Sciences. To me, maybe one weakness is lack of collaboration with respect to course load which requires clear balance. (Instructor, Reflective Essay).

The biggest strength of the program is the well qualified and supportive instructors and the positive atmosphere. However, the weakness is that more elective courses should be included and more collaboration between the instructors is needed while deciding on the course load (Program Coordinator, Reflective Essay).

In brief, the obtained results revealed that the ELT MA program being evaluated has quite strong features and a few aspects that should be improved on which all three stakeholders namely, students, instructors and program coordinator had overlapping beliefs and judgments.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion of Findings for Research Questions

The aim of this study was to evaluate ELT MA program offered in a foundation (non-profit private) university in Istanbul, Turkey to find out side effects, show how far the program reaches its aims and objectives, and draw implications for betterment of it. Specifically, the program was evaluated in the side effects of the program. In this study, data were collected both qualitatively and quantitatively; and a mixed method research design was adopted for analysis. The following sections discuss the findings of each research question delicately.

5.1.2 Discussion of the findings of RQ 1: What are the students' preferences and the encouraging determinants about joining this MA ELT program? The first research question attempted to investigate what the students' preferred for their careers and why they chose this particular MA ELT program. According to the findings, in terms of career plans after graduation; most of the participants want to carry out a master's degree to further their studies in academic settings as a researcher. The percentage of those who want to be an English teacher in a private school was also remarkably high, showing that they want to improve their knowledge and skills in language teaching in practice.

Other important finding in this section was about participants' reason to have a master degree in the first place. The most important factor in deciding to have a MA degree for participants was to pursue an academic career as a primary career choice. The second most important determinant was intellectual enrichment the participants expected to get after graduation which shows that even if not in academic settings, they are open to new ideas and innovations and try to keep pace with ever-growing knowledge in the field. These findings are quite parallel to the findings of a previous study by Kırmızı (2011) which argues that the students want to improve themselves intellectually besides continuing a further academic study, while deciding to start a master program.

The last section addressed by this research question was related to factors which led students to prefer this particular ELT MA program among others. The most important factor was found to be the anticipated job opportunities after having graduated. Academicians in the program, scholarship opportunities and program's reputation are the next most important factors in preferring this program, which indicates that the program has a favorable name and qualified faculty members are quite important in graduate level education. However, the factors like location of the campus or recommendation from others do not seem to be considerably important for enrolling in this program.

To sum up, it is possible to conclude that students see the MA program both as a primary step for further academic studies and a requirement for better job opportunities while considering it a way of personal enrichment and improvement. When it comes to determinants for them to choose this program, job opportunities and what is offered in the program like quality of academicians and scholarships are upmost importance.

5.1.3 Discussion of the findings of RQ 2: What is the nature MA ELT program as perceived by students, instructors and program coordinator in terms of content, instruction, resources and outcomes? For this research question, the participants were asked to share their perceptions and opinions about the nature of the program specifically in terms of content, instruction, resources and outcomes. The results obtained from questionnaires and reflective essays by students and instructors are discussed below in detail.

5.1.3.1 Content. Program content is one of the most important parts within the scope of this evaluation study. In this section, the questions such as whether the program gives adequate training in sufficient time, whether it is up to date or follow a logical sequence, or whether it is relevant to students' needs were addressed. The most outstanding finding was that the participants all agreed that the program teaches how to conduct a small scale research, which indicates the program, has graduate level features and is scientific in nature allowing students to perform and improve

research related skills. Other most prominent and noteworthy findings in this section are that almost all the participants stated the program gives adequate training in teaching language skills, it is relevant to their needs and it encourages for reflection on past experiences as a language learner. That shows the program has a practical characteristic and provides students with what they need, make them have real life connections and supply them with knowledge and skills which they apply in their profession.

On the other hand, it seems that the program lacks in terms of providing guidance in classroom management skills and testing skills. This is also obvious from the fact that in the section about courses in the program, it was revealed the participants want to have elective courses in classroom management and language testing skills. Therefore, it may be suggested that the list of elective courses should be revised and electives focusing on classroom management and testing skills should be considered to add to the program to meet student needs.

5.1.3.2 Instruction. The next part in this section focuses on the evaluation of program instruction which covers issues like quality of instruction, linkage between theory and practice, teacher or student centeredness, and feedback from instructors. The highest point in this section was merited to three items: the program encourages reflective teaching, instructors give valuable feedback, and the program promotes intellectual development. This finding is in line with the expectations of the participants because as mentioned in the discussion of the first research question, intellectual enrichment was among the most important factor that led the participants have a master's degree. The findings show that the program is good at meeting student expectations and needs in terms of intellectual development. The participants also highly valued feedback from instructors which also overlaps with the findings of the last research question that is about side effects of the program, and the participants emphasized that instructors are the strongest aspect of the program and they have good rapport with the students and are very supportive. The findings of two questions completely confirm and support each other, indicating a consistency.

5.1.3.3 Resources. In this section, it was inquired whether the computer and internet support, library holdings and other equipments are satisfactory for the students' needs. Both students and instructors were quite satisfied with resources provided, especially the internet access all over the campus and the library holdings which are up to date and the fact that they can reach them online whenever and wherever they need.

5.1.3.4 Outcomes. In terms of outcomes, the findings revealed that the students and the instructors in the program were quite satisfied and hopeful about the future educational attainments. Majority of the participants agreed that what they had learned in the program would be valuable for their future, that the program increases power of self-evaluation, and by the end of the program they felt that they would be able to carry out research on their own and/or continue to do PhD studies. As their needs are met in general, the participants are pleasant about the learning experience in this institution and they feel competent to teach effectively with the contribution of the program to their knowledge and skills in language teaching. The instructors also believe that the program brings in scientific perspective with a focus on research and contributes to personal development of the students resulting in real life consequences.

The findings of second research question are consistent with Mede (2012)'s argument which asserts that program characteristics and instructional setting as well as students' needs and preferences should be taken into account in a program evaluation study. These findings also echo the findings by KIRMIZI (2011) which comparatively evaluates ELT MA programs in Turkish EFL context and claims that the participants think content is relevant to their needs and there is a good balance between theory and practice.

5.1.4 Discussion of the findings of RQ 3: To what extent do the MA ELT students think that the objectives of the compulsory courses are attained in the program? For the third research question, the topic was three compulsory courses in the program (Second Language Acquisition, Research Methods, and Teaching Language Skills). The participants reflected on how far they think the objectives of

these courses are attained. The results gathered from questionnaire are discussed separately for each course below.

5.1.4.1 Second language acquisition. This particular course in the program seems to achieve its goals fairly on the basis of results obtained from questionnaire. The objectives of the course were first and second language acquisition theories, critical period hypothesis, simplified input and binding, integrating complimentary inputs of input and output based practice, conscious and unconscious attention and awareness, and designing an empirical study related to SLA. The participants substantially agreed that the six main objectives were attained during the course. Being one of the compulsory courses in the program and reaching its goals to a great extent, it can be said that SLA course provides the students with basic theories and concepts in its scope and sets ground for other knowledge in language teaching.

5.1.4.2 Research methods. According to the findings obtained from the questionnaire, it is possible to deduce that more than half of the students are fairly satisfied with the course and think objectives are attained. Quantitative and qualitative approaches, articulating research questions, planning a thesis or project, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and ethical concerns in relation to language education were the main objectives of the course. In such a research based program and being a compulsory course, Research Methods course plays a crucial role for students. Especially considering that students expectations are mostly based on academic career, this course is highly important to provide students with necessary skills to conduct a research. As mentioned in content evaluation, the item merited highest was that the program teaches how to conduct a small scale research, which indicates the strength and more importantly significant role of the course in the program.

5.1.4.3 Teaching language skills. The findings of the questionnaire shows that Teaching Language Skills course achieves its goals to a large extent and students can get what they need to teach four skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing in English. This finding is also supported by the results of content evaluation because almost all of the participants agreed that the program gives adequate training in

teaching language skills. The most valued item was analyzing recent research on teaching language skills, which emphasizes the research based aspect of the program. Once more, the findings in the study correspond to and support each other.

Query of these aspects is in line with statements of Richard (2005) which argues that attainment of goals and objectives, contentedness of stakeholders in education, and teaching and setting compatibility should be questioned in an English language teaching master program. The findings of third research question also resound the findings of Kırmızı (2011) in which the methodology and research components were found to be the most successful and Second Language Acquisition and Approaches to English Language Teaching were valued highly.

5.1.5 Discussion of the findings of RQ 4: Which elective courses are perceived as the most important in the MA ELT program? The fourth research question in this study attempts to find students' perceptions about the most important elective course in the MA ELT program and they were asked to choose three elective courses in the list consisting of all the electives offered so far in the program. Course and Materials Evaluation and Development in ELT was found to be the most important course by students, which may indicate that students find courses with educational attainments that they can apply to their own teaching practice more valuable and meaningful. The next most chosen course was Curriculum Development for ESP, the reason for which might also be practicality of the course content because the students in the program teach different groups in various levels. As curriculum plays a role like skeleton in teaching context, the students may see it crucial for a better teaching practice. Both of the courses serve the purposes of teachers at any level, especially Course and Materials Development can address the needs of a teacher in a kindergarten, at a primary school, high school or a university.

The next most rated course was Personal Development and Effective Communication Skills for Teachers showing that the students highly value improving themselves and keeping up with the innovations in the field and communication with their students and anyone in a teaching context. As education

greatly depends on effective communication in nature, it is quite expectable for the participants to mark this item highly.

The other electives such as In-service Teacher Education, Cross Cultural Communication and Language Education, Teaching English to Young Learners and Sociolinguistics are more specific in content and do not appeal to all the participants' needs, so this may be the reason behind why these courses were not seen among the most important electives by the participants.

5.1.6 Discussion of the findings of RQ 5: What are the most common metaphors that describe the roles of the instructors in the MA ELT program? In an attempt to answer fifth question regarding instructors' role in the program, both students and instructors were asked to choose three metaphors that they think describe the roles of the instructors in the program best, from a list of fourteen metaphors. Most chosen three metaphors by students were scaffolder, challenger, and missionary. Provided with a short explanation in parentheses, the participants were informed what they were meant to be, not to give rise to misunderstandings or different interpretations of the words in the list. The reason for scaffolder and missionary to be the most marked items by students, may be the word 'simplify' in their explanations written in parentheses, because both in reflective essays and the last part of the questionnaire regarding strengths and weaknesses of the program, the students stated that the instructors were always supportive and competent in the field. The reason why the metaphor 'challenger' was picked by the participants may be due to the fact that, as stated in the findings instruction component, the instruction is mostly student centered in the program and students are required to be actively involved. Therefore, in each learning experience, they need to take sound steps and find their way with the help and guidance of instructors.

Challenger and scaffolder were also among the three most ranked metaphors by instructors, which show that students and instructors agree to a great extent in terms of instructor roles in the program, making this finding stronger and grounded. The second most preferred metaphor by the instructors was window to the world which meant creating new challenges and bringing about change. This finding

indicates that the instructors in the program have a broader and more far-reaching philosophy regarding their roles. However, the student participants see their helpful and simplifier attitudes more salient than their role of creating change.

5.1.7 Discussion of the findings of RQ 6: What are the side effects (strengths and weaknesses) of the MA ELT program? The last research question of the study addresses the side effects of the program to identify the strongest and weakest aspects of it. The findings based on the analysis of reflective essays from students, instructors and the program coordinator indicate that the program is very strong at certain points while it has some weaknesses that need to be improved, which all participants mostly agreed on.

According to the results, the most important strength of the program seems to be the instructors. Majority of the student participants repeatedly stated that the instructors in the program were very supportive and understanding as well as being very competent and experienced in the field. This shows instructors in a program play a very crucial role because they determine the quality of education in essence. And being the ones supplying the fundamental input for students and guiding their learning process, basically they shape the nature of the program. Therefore, having determined and diligent instructors, the program seems to have a strong basis. This finding quite overlaps with the results of a previous study (Dollar et.al, 2014), which indicates the instructors in the program are highly qualified and accessible.

Other outstanding strengths of the program are content and professional development of the students. As for the content, research and teaching skills included in the curriculum seem to satisfy students' needs and they had chance to apply what they learned in the program to the real life teaching practices of their own. The program provides both theoretically and practically satisfactory input for students to teach effectively. Professional development as a strong aspect in this program is very important; because as discussed with the findings of the first research question, intellectual enrichment is one of the most significant determinants for students to have a master's degree, and the findings show that the program can meet their expectations.

As for the weak aspects of the program, insufficient list of elective courses and inequality among course loads come first. In this master's program, it is without doubt that there are practitioners who work with different level students and their needs differ accordingly. Their interests and the subjects they want to study also change. Therefore, they want to choose different elective courses to improve themselves in the aspects they want to or need to. For instance, some of them want to have Classroom Management course, while others strongly state that they would like to have a course about testing and assessment. For this reason, the courses offered in the program should be diversified and if there is any need more faculty members should be employed. Inequality between course loads is a weakness that can be improved with more collaboration between instructors. It is for sure that every instructor has different teaching philosophies and uses different methods, prefers different types of assignments; however, for the fairness on the side of students, the course loads should be balanced.

To summarize, the findings of last research question showing the strong and weak aspects of the program, confirm the argument of Wallace (1991) and Brown (1995) with which both claim program evaluation is necessary to find out the essential and required steps to be taken for improvement of the program and for creating a guideline for future programs.

5.2 Implications

This study has strong practical implications for program evaluation in language teaching master programs. As discussed before there is limited number of studies on program evaluation in the language teaching field and this study aims to contribute to insufficient literature in its specific context. As argued by most researchers (Wallace, 1991; Brown, 1995; Lynch, 1996; Posavac & Carey, 1997; Rea-Dickins & Germaine, 1998; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007), all programs should go through a systematic evaluation to keep up with the changes and innovations, besides reaching its main goals such as meeting students' expectations and providing adequate quality education. Therefore, it is important to know what the strong and weak points of the program are, for its betterment and improvement.

That's why the findings of this study are significant and crucial for effectiveness of the program itself and it also aims to serve as a model study for other master programs' evaluation. In this sense, this study which employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods can be taken for granted in future studies for a comprehensive and critical evaluation of language teaching master programs.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

This study has several recommendations for further research. First of all, systematic evaluation is a very crucial element in all programs and evaluation of language teaching master programs is much neglected in this sense both in EFL and ESL contexts. Therefore, it is recommended to replicate the present study in different programs to compare the differences across different institutions.

Second, future research should also be conducted in the very same program with more participants, because it is a very new program and as the number of graduates and students increase the needs and expectations may vary and reach a wider range.

Finally, as this study was conducted in a local and specific context, future research can be conducted to compare and contrast different programs within or out of Turkish EFL context to see the differences and stronger and weaker points which may better help draw implications for the improvement of programs.

5.4 Conclusions

The results of this study indicated that evaluation of language teaching master programs has very beneficial gains to see how effective the program is and what the strengths and weakness of it are. The data collected through questionnaires, reflective essays and metaphors show that all stakeholders –students, instructors and program coordinator- are quite contented with certain components of the program such as instructors, content and contribution to professional development while they all agree that there are some weak aspects of the program, such as range of elective courses and imbalance between course loads that should be improved.

To conclude, the aim of this study was to evaluate an English Language Teaching master program at a private (non-profit foundation) university in Turkish EFL context. Therefore, the study focused on a very specific and local program to find out its effectiveness in terms of content, instruction, resources, outcomes, compulsory and elective courses, instructor's role and side effects of the program from the perspective of students' preferences, perceptions and expectations as well as instructors' and program coordinator's opinions. With the obtained findings, this study identifies certain aspects of the program that are satisfactory or should be improved and provides sound basis for designing an effective program evaluation in language teaching master programs.

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APPENDICES

A: QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE

MA STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear colleague,

I am pursuing my Master's degree in English Language Teaching Program at Graduate School of Educational Sciences, at a foundation (non-profit private) university in Turkey. The aim of my thesis is to evaluate MA ELT program at this university.

This questionnaire has been prepared to serve as a data collection instrument for my study and your ideas are of utmost importance. The questionnaire consists of four main parts. The first part aims to get some personal data which is important for the research, while the other parts attempt to identify your personal preferences, perceptions towards program content, instruction, resources, outcomes, teacher roles and your ideas about the courses included in your program curriculum. There are 54 items in total and it will not take more than 20 minutes. Please answer all the questions.

Frank and sincere answers will affect the results of the study positively. The information will be coded, remain confidential and used for research purposes only. I appreciate your contribution and hope you will seriously consider taking part in this study.

Please feel free to contact me via email address written below if you have any questions.

Thank you for your kind cooperation!

Rukiye Özlem Öztürk

Contact info: r.ozlem.ozturk@gmail.com

SECTION 1. PERSONAL DATA

Please tick the appropriate choice that applies to you.

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Department of Graduation:

- a. English Language Teaching
- b. English Language and Literature
- c. American Culture and Literature
- d. Translations and Interpretation
- e. Linguistics
- f. Other

3. Teaching Experience (in general)

- a. 0-1 year
- b. 2-3 years
- c. 4-5 years
- d. 6-10 years
- e. 11 years and more

SECTION 2. MASTER'S STUDENTS' PERSONAL PREFERENCES ABOUT JOINING THE PROGRAM

1. Which one below defines your future career plans after master's graduation?
<input type="checkbox"/> Researcher in an academic setting <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher in a non-academic setting <input type="checkbox"/> Management or administration <input type="checkbox"/> Other non-academic position <input type="checkbox"/> English teacher in state school <input type="checkbox"/> English teacher in private school

2. Circle the option that reflects your reason to decide to start a master's degree study. (You can choose more than one option.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Primary career choice <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced degree required for career advancement <input type="checkbox"/> Change of career <input type="checkbox"/> Increased income-earning potential <input type="checkbox"/> Personal intellectual enrichment

3. Circle the option that reflects your reason to start this master's program.	1 Very Important	2 Moderately Important	3 Slightly Important	4 Not Important
a. Opportunity to work with particular faculty member	1	2	3	4
b. Graduate program's reputation	1	2	3	4
c. Received fellowship, assistantship, or scholarship	1	2	3	4
d. Recommendation of friend, acquaintance, or colleague	1	2	3	4
e. Recommendation of undergraduate advisor or faculty member in your field	1	2	3	4
f. Job opportunities are good for graduates of this program	1	2	3	4
g. Encouragement of program faculty while deciding	1	2	3	4
h. Location of campus	1	2	3	4

SECTION 3. MASTER’S STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Program Content	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly Disagree
1. The courses offered within the program follow a logical sequencing.	1	2	3	4
2. The program is up-to-date.	1	2	3	4
3. The program allocates sufficient time for each course.	1	2	3	4
4. The program gives me adequate training in recent trends about teaching English.	1	2	3	4
5. The program gives me adequate training for the needs of the local context (Turkish EFL context)	1	2	3	4
6. The program gives me adequate training in teaching language skills (reading, listening, writing, speaking).	1	2	3	4
7. There is a variety of master’s level course and program offerings.	1	2	3	4
8. The program is relevant to my needs.	1	2	3	4
9. The program encourages me to reflect on my past experiences as a language learner.	1	2	3	4
10. The program teaches me how to teach English.	1	2	3	4
11. The program teaches me how to conduct a small scale research (action research).	1	2	3	4
12. The program avoids overlapping information between different courses.	1	2	3	4
13. The program provides adequate guidance to improve classroom management skills.	1	2	3	4
14. The program provides adequate guidance to improve research skills.	1	2	3	4
15. The program provides adequate guidance to improve testing skills.	1	2	3	4

Program Instruction	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly Disagree
16. Quality of instruction in my courses is satisfactory.	1	2	3	4
17. The program has good linkage between theory and practice.	1	2	3	4
18. The program promotes flexibility in using different teaching practices for different situations.	1	2	3	4
19. Teaching methods used in graduate courses (e.g., lectures, seminars, audiovisual aids) are well-tailored for our needs.	1	2	3	4
20. The program balances teacher-centered and student-centered learning.	1	2	3	4
21. The program equips with the necessary instructional technologies and other resources.	1	2	3	4
22. The program encourages reflective teaching.	1	2	3	4
23. The program promotes intellectual development.	1	2	3	4
24. The program prepares me to teach English in the classroom.	1	2	3	4
25. I receive valuable feedback from my professors.	1	2	3	4
Program Resources	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly Disagree
26. The institution offers sufficient computer and Internet support	1	2	3	4
27. University library holdings are relevant to the field.	1	2	3	4
28. Specialized facilities, such as laboratories or studios, and equipment needed for teaching are satisfactory.	1	2	3	4
29. Overall adequacy of financial resources in support of this master's program is satisfactory.	1	2	3	4

Program Outcomes	1 strongly agree	2 agree	3 disagree	4 strongly disagree
30. What I have learned in this program will be valuable for my future.	1	2	3	4
31. The program increases my power of self-evaluation.	1	2	3	4
32. By the end of this program, I feel competent enough to teach effectively.	1	2	3	4
33. I have developed the knowledge and necessary skills required for my chosen career.	1	2	3	4
34. By the end of this program, I feel that I will be able to carry out research in my field on my own and/or continue to do my PhD studies at any ELT-related program both in Turkey and abroad.	1	2	3	4
35. Overall I am satisfied with the quality of my learning experiences at this institution.	1	2	3	4

SECTION 4. EVALUATION OF COURSES AND PROGRAM GOALS

<i>1. To what extent do you think the following objectives are attained at the end of Second Language Acquisition course?</i>	1 Very Much	2 Much	3 Little	4 Very Little
1. Differentiate the processes involved in second vs. first language acquisition	1	2	3	4
2. Discuss the critical period hypothesis, its merits, and the arguments against it	1	2	3	4
3. Discuss the importance of simplified input and how binding plays an important role in SLA	1	2	3	4
4. Integrate the complimentary roles of input- and output-based practice in L2 classrooms.	1	2	3	4
5. Explain the difference between conscious and unconscious attention and discuss some of the issues related to awareness in SLA.	1	2	3	4
6. Design an empirical study related to SLA for potential publication if carried out at a future date.	1	2	3	4

<i>2. To what extent do you think the following objectives are attained at the end of Research Methods course?</i>	1 Very Much	2 Much	3 Little	4 Very Little
1. Demonstrate knowledge of quantitative and qualitative approaches to research in applied study of language (with a particular focus on English).	1	2	3	4
2. Articulate research questions for the purpose of developing a thesis or project.	1	2	3	4
3. Plan the elements of a thesis or research project, including literature review, methodology and data analysis.	1	2	3	4
4. Identify major types of data collection, and issues associated with analysis and interpretation of data.	1	2	3	4
5. Address ethical concerns in relation to language research.	1	2	3	4

3. <i>To what extent do you think the following objectives are attained at the end of Teaching Language Skills course?</i>	1 Very Much	2 Much	3 Little	4 Very Little
1. Analyze recent research on teaching language skills in EFL classrooms.	1	2	3	4
2. Apply first and second language acquisition research to teaching language skills in EFL classrooms.	1	2	3	4
3. Develop assessment activities related to four language skills in EFL classrooms.	1	2	3	4
4. Incorporate process writing, including peer and self-assessment into classroom instruction.	1	2	3	4
5. Use scaffolding approaches to teach pre reading, during-reading, and post-reading strategies.	1	2	3	4
6. Model for students language learning strategies appropriate to various learning tasks.				
4. <i>Choose 3 elective courses you have taken in your MA program, which you think are the most important ones.</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Course and Materials Evaluation and Development in ELT <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-Cultural Communication and Language Education <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum Development for ESP <input type="checkbox"/> ICT in Education <input type="checkbox"/> In-service Teacher Education <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Development and Effective Communication Skills for Teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Sociolinguistics <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching English to Young Learners				

B: REFLECTIVE ESSAY TEMPLATES

MA STUDENT REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Please think of your MA TEFL program and reflect critically on the following components (350-550 words):

- a. Program content
- b. Program instruction
- c. Program resources
- d. Program outcomes
- e. Courses (compulsory and elective)
- f. Teachers' roles
- g. Strengths and weaknesses

INSTRUCTOR REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Think of the following components related to the nature of the MA TEFL program:

- a. Content (aim, objectives)
- b. Methodology (Instruction)
- c. Resources
- d. Courses (compulsory, elective, any courses to be added or removed)
- e. Outcomes
- f. Side effects (strengths and weaknesses)

Please, reflect critically on these components in 450-550 words.

D: METAPHORS

METAPHORS FOR MA STUDENTS

Choose 3 metaphors that best describe the instructors teaching in your program.

The instructors teaching in my program are like a _____ .

- Robot (works automatically and is controlled by pre-programs)
- Writer (generates and transfers original ideas)
- Scaffolder (simplifies concepts and teaches through building on concepts)
- Power plant (generates original ideas which students then receive)
- Missionary (simplifies and transfers the concepts presented in the books for students' better understanding)
- Sun (provides light when you are confused with materials)
- Artist (moulds students into works of arts through a high degree of skill and creativity)
- Projector (reflects exactly what the materials are written about)
- Cook (picks bits and pieces of different materials to find the perfect fit for student understanding)
- Spring (constantly projects his/her own original ideas)
- Summarizer (summarizes what is provided by materials)
- Challenger (makes us interested in taking new challenges in learning)
- Molasses (sticks the materials while adding a little sweetness)
- Window to the world (creates challenges and brings about change)

METAPHORS FOR INSTRUCTORS

Choose 3 metaphors that best describe you as an instructor in MA TEFL program.

I am like a/an _____ .

- Robot (works automatically and is controlled by pre-programs)
- Writer (generates and transfers original ideas)
- Scaffolder (simplifies concepts and teaches through building on concepts)
- Power plant (generates original ideas which students then receive)
- Missionary (simplifies and transfers the concepts presented in the books for students' better understanding)
- Sun (provides light when you are confused with materials)
- Artist (moulds students into works of arts through a high degree of skill and creativity)
- Projector (reflects exactly what the materials are written about)
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- Window to the world (creates challenges and brings about change)

E: CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Öztürk, Rukiye Özlem

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	Bahcesehir University	2015
BA	Bogazici University	2012
High School	Akhisar Teacher Training Anatolian High School	2007

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2012-	Bahçeşehir University	Research Assistant

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Intermediate Russian, Beginner Spanish

HOBBIES

Reading, Literature, Languages, Travelling

TURKISH SUMMARY

İngilizce öğrenmenin her geçen gün daha fazla önem kazanmasıyla birlikte, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi programlarının ve kaliteli öğretmen yetiştirme eğitiminin önemi de artmıştır. Eğitim, endüstri, teknoloji, bilim ve daha birçok alanda yabancı dil bilmek büyük rol oynadığı için, dil eğitimini hedefleyen programlar da uluslararası düzeyde bir standardı yakalayabilmek ve dünya çapındaki gelişmelere ayak uydurabilmek adına önemli bir alan olmuştur. Bu şekilde kaliteli bir yabancı dil eğitimini sağlayabilmek ise ancak sistematik bir değerlendirme süreciyle mümkündür.

Son yarım yüzyılda program değerlendirme alanında, veri toplamadan analize, kullanım amaçlarından ilgi alanlarına kadar birçok noktayı içeren gelişmeler olmuştur. Diğer alanlarda olduğu gibi, öğretmen eğitiminde de; var olan programları geliştirmek ve yeni oluşturulacak programlar için ilkeler belirlemek adına program değerlendirme önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Öğretmen yetiştirme programları da müfredatın uygulanmasından öğretim içinde yer alan her türlü etkinliği içeren düzenli ve yerleşmiş bir değerlendirme sürecinden geçmelidir. Değerlendirmenin ilkeleri belirlenirken programın amaçları, özellikleri, öğretim ortamının yanında, öğrencilerin ihtiyaçları, tercihleri, karakterleri ve tutumları da göz önüne alınmalıdır. Program değerlendirme çok temel bir unsur olmakla birlikte programın merkezinde yer almaktadır. Kısaca, istenen yeterliliğe ulaşmak için, öğretim içinde yer alan her uygulama değerlendirmeye göre şekillendirilmelidir.

Eğitimde değerlendirmeye önem verildiğinden beri, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi alanında da amacı ya da yöntemleri konusunda farklılıklar gösteren birçok çalışma yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmaların öncelikli odağı, lisans ve hazırlık programlarında öğrencilerin ve öğretmenlerin algıları, ihtiyaçları ve tutumları olmuştur. Ancak, lisansüstü programlar daha üst düzeyde ve en modern ve iyi kalitede eğitim gerektiren programlar olarak, değerlendirme bu alanda da göz ardı edilmemelidir. Bir İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programının yeterince etkili olabilmesi için gerekli, amaçlara ulaşılması, eğitim içerisinde yer alan tarafların memnuniyeti, öğretimde uygulanabilirliği ve benzerlerinden ne derece üstün olduğu gibi bazı noktalar vardır.

Tüm bunlar göz önüne alındığında, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi programlarında daha etkili öğretmen adayları yetiştirmek adına, bir değerlendirme çalışması yapılması için bariz bir açık vardır. Bu yüzden, bu çalışma İstanbul'da bir vakıf üniversitesindeki İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programını değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu değerlendirme, öğrencilerin programa katılmasını etkileyen faktörler ve tercihler, programın amaçları, içeriği, öğretimi, kaynakları ve kazanımları, öğretmenin rolü, ve temel güçlü ve zayıf yönleri üzerine oluşturulmuştur.

Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, programın etkililiğine dair derinlemesine bilgi sağlamak ve geliştirilmesi için sağlam öneriler ve ilkeler sunmayı amaçlamıştır. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışmanın bir diğer amacıysa, lisansüstü programların değerlendirmesini içeren alanyazına katkıda bulunmaktır. Bu sebeple, çalışmanın sonuçları diğer üniversitelerin lisansüstü programlarını değerlendirmede yol gösterici olabilir.

Değerlendirme, bu durumda özellikle de program değerlendirmesi, farklı bakış açılarına sahip araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen farklı yaklaşım ve methodlarla zengin ve geniş bir alandır. Temel amaçlar, soru kaynakları, yöntemler, öncüler, güçlü ve zayıf yönler açısından farklı şekilde gruplanan yaklaşımlar olsa da, bu çalışmada tek bir yaklaşım ya da yöntem benimsenmemiştir. Bu çalışma, eklektik bir yaklaşımla, program değerlendirmesinde ihtiyaçların karşılanması ve amaca ulaşılması adına farklı yaklaşımların fikir ve tekniklerinden yararlanmıştır.

Programın yeniliklere ve geliştirmeye açık olması için değerlendirme olmazsa olmaz bir unsurdur. Ve programın gelişim, hesap verilebilirlik, yaygınlaştırma, ve aydınlatma gibi öğeleri barındırması adına, program üzerinde yapılacak tüm değişiklik ve yenilikler bir değerlendirme süreci sonrasında yapılmalıdır. Ancak, Türkiye'de yapılan program değerlendirme çalışmalarının çoğu lisans ve hazırlık okulları seviyesinde kalmıştır. İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programını değerlendiren ve programın etkililiği ve amaçlarına yönelik çok sınırlı sayıda çalışma yapıldığı için, bu alan araştırmaya fazlasıyla açıktır ve kapsamlı bir değerlendirme çalışması yapılması uygun bulunmuştur.

Tüm bu sebeplerle, bu çalışma Türkiye’de bir vakıf üniversitesindeki İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programının güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini bulmak için, tüm katılımcılardan alınan geri dönütlerle kapsamlı bir değerlendirmesini yapmaktadır.

Program değerlendirmesi yaparken, tüm tarafların çalışmada yer alması sonuçların genişletilebilmesi açısından kritiktir. Bu açıdan, söz konusu çalışma; bir İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programını değerlendirmektedir, ve öğrenciler, öğretim görevlileri ve program koordinatöründen toplanan verilerle, özellikle programın etkililiğini tartışmak ve gelişmelere yönelik öneriler ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Temel olarak, öğrencilerin programa katılmasındaki teşvik edici unsurlar ve programın yapısına, içeriğine, öğretimine, kaynaklarına ve kazanımlara dair algıları ele alınmaktadır.

Ayrıca, bu program yansıtıcı öğretim, özdeğerlendirme gibi elementlerle bağımsız ve yaratıcı düşünmeyi temel aldığı için, programdaki öğretmen rolü de incelenmiştir. Son olarak da, programın geliştirilebilmesi ya da yeniden düzenlenmesi adına programın güçlü ve zayıf yönleri üzerinde durulmaktadır.

Çalışmanın araştırma soruları şu şekilde sıralanmaktadır:

1. Öğrencilerin bu İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programını tercih etmelerinin altında yatan faktörler nedir?
2. Programın yapısı (içerik, öğretim, kaynaklar, beklenen kazanımlar); öğretim üyeleri, öğrenciler ve program koordinatörü tarafından nasıl algılanmaktadır?
3. Öğrenciler, programdaki zorunlu derslerin (İkinci Dil Edinimi, Araştırma Yöntemleri, Dil Becerileri Öğretimi) amacına ne kadar ulaştığını düşünmektedir?
4. Programda öğrenciler tarafından en önemli olarak görülen seçmeli dersler nelerdir?

5. Programdaki öğretmen rollerini tanımlamak için en çok kullanılan metaforlar nelerdir?

6. Programın en güçlü ve zayıf noktaları nelerdir?

Bu çalışma iki nokta üzerine temellenmektedir. Birincisi, öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının sistematik bir değerlendirmeden geçmesi gerekliliği; ikincisi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programlarının değerlendirilmesine yönelik çalışmaların sayıca çok az olmasıdır. İngiliz Dili Eğitimi alanındaki program değerlendirmeleri çoğunlukla hazırlık programları ve lisans programları seviyesinde kalmıştır. Bu yüzden de yüksek lisans programlarını değerlendirmeye yönelik çalışmalara dair alanyazında bariz bir açık vardır.

Bu çalışma betimleyici bir tasarıma sahip olup programın istendiğini yönde ilerleyip ilerlemediğini görmek, süreç ve kazanımlar hakkında yeterli geri dönüt almak ve gelişime açık alanları belirlemek amacındadır. Bu çalışmada hem nitel hem nicel analizler yer almaktadır. 50 öğrenci 5 öğretim görevlisi ve bir program koordinatörünün katılımıyla gerçekleştirilen bu çalışma İstanbul'da bir vakıf üniversitesinde bulunan İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programını değerlendirmek üzere tasarlanmıştır. Nicel veriler öğrencilere uygulanan bir anket ve metaforlar aracılığıyla toplanırken, nitel veriler tüm katılımcı grupları tarafından yazılan yansıtıcı metinlerden alınmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın sonuçları göstermiştir ki yüksek lisans seviyesindeki dil eğitimi programlarında değerlendirmenin; programın etkililiğini ve güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini görmek adına çok büyük katkıları vardır. Öğrenciler, öğretim üyeleri ve program koordinatörü olmak üzere tüm katılımcılardan toplanan verilere göre; öğretim üyeleri, içerik ve profesyonel gelişime katkı açısından program neredeyse herkesi tatmin ederken, seçmeli derslerin sınırlı olması ve ders yüklerinin farklılık göstermesi gibi konular eksik ve gelişime açık yönler olarak ortaya çıkmıştır.

