

# **Evaluating the ELT Master's Program at Eastern Mediterranean University**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the present research is evaluating the English Language Teaching Master's program at EMU (Eastern Mediterranean University). To fulfill this purpose, the program's strengths and weaknesses were determined as they were perceived by different participants (instructors, students and alumni). In addition, the participants presented some suggestions and recommendations that would contribute to improving the evaluated program. At the end, the findings of this evaluation study revealed the ELT Master's program's level of success in fulfilling the students' needs.

This case-study was designed as a mixed methods research and followed Peacock's (2009) framework of evaluation in its overall design, where data were collected through the use of qualitative as well as quantitative data collection tools. The perceptions of the instructors, students and alumni were collected through instructor interviews, student questionnaire and alumni questionnaire. A total of 34 participants agreed to take part in this study, five of whom were the instructors teaching in the program, 15 were students and the rest (14 participants) were the graduates (alumni) of the evaluated program.

The study's overall results revealed that the English Language Teaching Master's program at Eastern Mediterranean University has more strong than weak points. The strongest points revealed through the evaluation are that this program teaches and trains students to conduct well organized and well written research; provides students with adequate theoretical knowledge; and promotes the students' reflective practice. Other strengths that were mentioned are the qualified instructors and the general

structure and content of the program. As for the weaknesses, it was revealed that the program lacked the necessary practical aspects of teaching; some instructors' performance was unsatisfactory; guidance and training for thesis writing was insufficient; the requirements were overloaded and there was a lack of coordination and communication among students and instructors.

According to the results obtained from this study, it was concluded that the English Language Teaching Master's program at Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) does meet the students' needs to some extent. Furthermore, the suggestions provided by the participants for improving the program include the addition of some practical training in teaching; the addition and reorganization of several courses; improving the used materials; increasing the involvement of instructors in the classroom activities and improving communication between the staff themselves and between them and students. Based on the findings, some implications and suggestions for further studies were also provided.

**Keywords:** Program evaluation, English teacher education program evaluation, MA in ELT program, Peacock's (2009) program evaluation model

## ÖZ

Bu araştırmanın amacı Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi'nde İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Öğretmenliği Yüksek Lisans programını değerlendirmektir. Bu amaçla, programın güçlü ve zayıf yönlerinin, farklı katılımcılar (eğitmenler, öğrenciler ve mezunlar) tarafından nasıl algılandıkları belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca, katılımcılar programın geliştirilmesi için bazı önerilerde bulunmuşlardır. Değerlendirme sonucunda, çalışma İngilizce Öğretmenliği Yüksek Lisans programının öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını karşılamada ne ölçüde başarılı olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Bu vaka çalışması, verilerin nitel ve nicel veri toplama araçlarıyla toplandığı karsık yöntem yaklaşımına ve Peacock'un (2009) değerlendirme modeline göre tasarlanmıştır. Eğitmenlerin, öğrencilerin ve mezunların tutunları, eğitmen görüşmeleri, öğrenci anketi ve mezun anketi yoluyla toplanmıştır. Çalışmaya beşi programda öğretim üyesi, 15'i programa kayıtlı öğrenci, 14'ü mezun olmak üzere toplam 34 katılımcı katılmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın genel bulguları, DAÜ'deki İngiliz Dili Öğretimi yüksek lisans programının zayıf noktalardan daha fazla güçlü yanlarının olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Programın en güçlü noktaları, öğrencileri iyi organize edilmiş ve iyi yazılmış araştırmalar yürütmeleri konusunda iyi ve eğitmesi; öğrencilere yeterli kuramsal bilgi verilmesi ve yansıtıcı uygulamaların teşvik edilmesi olarak sıralanabilir. Bahsedilen diğer güçlü yönler kalifiye eğitmenler ve programın genel yapısı ve içeriğidir. Programın zayıf yönlerine gelince, öğretimde pratik yönlerin eksikliği; bazı eğitmenlerin tatmin edici olmayan performansı; tez yazımı için yetersiz rehberlik ve

eđitim; đrencilerin sorunluluk bađlanında aşırı yklenmesi ve đrenciler ve eđitmenler arasında koordinasyon ve iletiřim eksikliđi gibi zayıf noktalar sayılabilir.

Ayrıca, katılımcıların programın geliřtirilmesine ynelik bazı nerileri'de bulunmaktadır: uygulanalı eđitimin programa eklenmesi; birkaç dersin eklenmesi ve derslerin dzenlenmesi; kullanılan malzemelerin geliřtirilmesi; sınıf iindeki alıřmalarda đretimi uyelerinin daha fazla etkin olmaları ve đretim yeleri arasındaki ve đretim yeleri ile đrenciler arasındaki iletiřimin iyileřtirmesi.

alıřmanın sonuları, Dođu Akdeniz niversitesi'ndeki (DA) İngiliz Dili đretimi Yksek Lisans Programının bir dereceye kadar đrencilerin ihtiyalarını karřıladıđını gstermiřtir. Bulgulara dayanarak, daha ileri alıřmalar iin bazı ıkarımlar ve neriler de yapılmıřtır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Program deđerlendirme, İngiliz đretmeni eđitimi programı deđerlendirmesi, İngiliz Dili đretimi, Yksek Lisans programı, Peacock'un (2009) deđerlendirme modeli

*To My Family and Friends*

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

The first chapter presents a general view of the study's background, its problem statement, its aim, its four research questions, in addition to its significance.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The use of English language has spread beyond the boundaries of the countries which speak this language. As a matter of fact, the non-native speakers of English outnumber native speakers. English language has become what is known as a lingua franca that people use for many aspects of their lives. The teaching and learning of English language have grown very popular globally and been considered very important, and this encouraged the improvement of language programs. The role of teachers in the education process cannot be overlooked; since they are the ones who have the ability to build learning communities and create the knowledge society (Hargreaves & Lo, 2000, p. 1). The realization of the crucial role that teachers play in facilitating the learning process contributed to shifting the focus toward training well qualified English language teachers to guarantee good quality learning, and therefore to improve English language teacher education programs. Programs including the language programs, as Weir and Roberts (1994) define, are the organized educational activities that are offered in a regular manner. Lynch (1996) also defined a program as “a series of courses linked with some common goal or end product. A language education program generally consists of a slate of courses designed to prepare students for some language related endeavor” (p. 2). Therefore, to prepare student teachers, the language

teacher education programs not only have to be well planned and organized, but also they have to be well evaluated, as stressed by different scholars like Richards (1990), Wallace (1991), Reid (1996), Rea-Dickins and Germaine (1998) and Lynch (2003),

Various definitions were presented regarding the term ‘evaluation’, so it is important for the researcher to determine the type of evaluation that will be followed so that the results would be satisfactory. In Longman dictionary of applied linguistics, Richards et al. (1985) stated that evaluation is the systematic collection of data or information for the purpose of decision making, which was seen as a very broad definition of the term. On the other hand, Popham (1975) defined evaluation as the systematic examination which consists of an assessment of certain educational phenomena’s worth. Popham’s definition was seen as somehow restrictive though. Later on, Brown (1989) provided a more suitable definition for evaluation, he stated that evaluation is “the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of a curriculum, and assess its effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the participants’ attitudes within the context of the particular institution involved” (p. 223).

Program evaluation, according to ACGME (2018), is “systematically collecting and analyzing information related to a program’s design, outcomes and implementation in order to monitor and improve the evaluated program’s effectiveness and quality” (p. 7). According to Lynch (1990), evaluation is the systematic examination of language programs on which judgments and decisions regarding these programs are based. One major point that was emphasized in all the provided definitions is the systematic approach to evaluation. A systematic evaluation of programs increases the levels of success and effectiveness of the evaluation. As it was mentioned by Fitzpatrick,

Sanders, and Worthen (2004), program evaluation ensures the accountability and quality of the evaluated program.

For the purpose of systematically evaluating English language teacher education programs, several evaluation frameworks were designed to address the various goals of different stakeholders. Evaluators and researchers should consider and be familiar with the model that most suits their aims (Eseryel, 2002). Different approaches under which the various frameworks fall are presented by Worthen and Sanders (1987), such as Stufflebeam's (1983) Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) framework which falls under the 'Decision-Management Approach'.

One of the offered to facilitate the evaluation process and make it more systematic is Peacock's (2009) model of evaluation. The purpose of this model is to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of EFL teacher training programs and to evaluate the extent to which the evaluated programs are able to fulfill the needs of the learners. English language teacher education programs, their evaluation and attempts for improvement have gained much attention in various contexts around the world because of the importance of the English language. In the Turkish context, Peacock's (2009) Evaluation Framework, which was specifically designed for the purpose of evaluating English language teacher education, was used in several research studies (Omer, 2017; Salihoglu, 2012; Zorba, 2015).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Change is needed in any educational setting so that the trends of the world and the different needs of stakeholders can be met by applying some adaptations to the current setting or situation (Macalister & Nation, 2010). Evaluation is considered an extremely

important component that can contribute to the success of any program. Through evaluation, the researchers or teachers can gain awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the examined program and would be able to focus on improving or removing certain aspects and make the needed changes. Knowing the problem is a part of solving it. The ELT Bachelor Program in Eastern Mediterranean University was evaluated through several research studies. For instance, in her study, Erozan (2005) aimed at evaluating only the language improvement courses, while Zorba (2015) evaluated the overall B.A. program. However, to the knowledge of the reader, the English language teaching Master's Program in Eastern Mediterranean University has never been evaluated before. For the success of any educational program, it is important for it to be up to date and to address the goals and aims of the instructors and the needs of the learners. For this reason, this study aims at examining the strengths and weaknesses of the English Language Teaching Master's Program in EMU for the purpose of its improvement.

### **1.3 Aim of the Study**

Bearing in mind how important evaluation is to guarantee the success of a program, the current study aims to evaluate the ELT Master's Program in Eastern Mediterranean University from the perspectives of students, instructors and alumni. The main concern of this study is to examine the perceptions of instructors, students and alumni regarding the M.A. in ELT Program in order to identify the program's perceived strengths and weaknesses and therefore, to examine whether the program has achieved the needs and expectations of the stakeholders. In addition, some suggestions will be put forward for the purpose of improving the program.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This research study seeks to find answers to the questions that follow:



- 1) What are the strengths of the English Language Teaching Master's Program from the perspectives of instructors, students and alumni?
- 2) What are the weaknesses of the English Language Teaching Master's Program from the perspectives of instructors, students and alumni?
- 3) To what extent does the English Language Teaching Master's Program meet the students' needs from the perspectives of instructors, students and alumni?
- 4) What suggestions can instructors, students and alumni give that would contribute to the improvement of the English Language Teaching Master's Program?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Despite the growing research related to language teacher education programs and the growing concern regarding the improvement of the field, there are still not enough research studies to cover the various aspects of language teacher education programs. Even though different contexts have been examined in different studies, most of them were concerned with the examination of the undergraduate ELT programs and much fewer studies were concerned with the master's or doctoral programs. Ever since the establishment of the M.A. in ELT program in Eastern Mediterranean University, not once has it been systematically evaluated. Teacher education has to stay up to date to keep up with the rapidly changing world and individual needs (Yavuz & Topkaya, 2013). Therefore, the evaluation process can be crucial for the endurance, effectiveness and success of those programs. Taking into consideration the gap found in the literature, and considering the need for improvement, the Master's in ELT program at EMU is systematically evaluated using Peacock's (2009) model for program evaluation for the sake of uncovering the strong and weak aspects of the program in an attempt to promote and emphasize the good and eliminate the weak areas.

One of the significances of this study is that it includes the opinions of different stakeholders in order to reach various viewpoints. The opinions of alumni are also considered which can provide further insight about the effectiveness of the program regarding students' actual practice or application of the knowledge learnt and whether their actual needs were met. The opinions of instructors, students and alumni are used and sought to be addressed by applying some modifications to the program which may ultimately contribute to the program's success and the students' practice in their later professional career.

## **1.6 Summary**

This chapter has presented and explained the background of the study, its problem, aim, research questions and significance. The next chapter introduces the literature review including the definitions of the concepts related to program evaluation, a review of relevant research on language program evaluation as well as research on the evaluation of teacher education programs.

## **Chapter 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The aim of this chapter is to provide a review of the related literature. This chapter presents the definitions of the main concepts of evaluation and program evaluation. The purpose of evaluation and different evaluation frameworks are then presented. In addition, this chapter presents and reviews various research papers conducted on language program evaluation and teacher education program evaluation.

#### **2.1 Evaluation and Program Evaluation**

Evaluation has been recognized as an important component of program improvement, development and long-term success (Rovai, 2003). To conduct a successful and beneficial evaluation, it is crucial to be clear about what evaluation or program evaluation is. Yet, it is not very easy to provide a clear-cut definition of such terms, for their definition is strongly affected by the way and the purpose of their use. As Goldie (2006) says, “evaluation is a practice driven field” (p: 211); this means that this field keeps changing and keeps including more diversity because of the various experiences of those practicing it. That is the reason behind having some general and other more specific definitions when it comes to defining the concept of evaluation.

Scholars like Oerman and Gaberson (2009, as cited in Stavropoulou & Stroubouki, 2014) provided one of the general definitions; they defined evaluation as the process in which judgments, based on assessment data, are made about clinical performance, employee competence, learning achievement of students and educational programs.

Similarly, Kiely and Rea-Dickins (2005) define evaluation as “a form of enquiry, ranging from research to systematic approaches to decision-making” (p: 6). Evaluation in Weir and Roberts’ (1994) opinion is a means for the systematic gathering of information for the purpose of identifying a project or a program’s qualities and values.

Evaluation, in another general definition, is described as the process that includes obtaining the areas of interest for which decisions must be made, the selection of the needed and useful information, and the collection and analysis of information for the purpose of reporting a summary of the findings that would help decision makers to select the best choice available (Alkin, 1969). Lynch (1996) suggests that evaluation is the systematic process of collecting information through different methods. He explains that the purpose behind evaluation is to be able to make decisions and judgements using the collected information.

Posavac and Carey (2002) define evaluation as the collection of skills and methods that contribute to the ability to determine usefulness of a certain human service and whether it is needed or not. They also stated that the evaluation includes determining whether the evaluated service is well planned and conducted and whether it actually provides help to the targeted people. In short, evaluation, according to Trochim (2002), “... is the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback about some object” (p. 1).

Before presenting some of the definitions of ‘program evaluation’, we must keep in mind the scholars and researchers’ emphasis on the significance of and the need for having a systematic evaluation for any program (Beretta & Davies, 1985; Lynch, 2003; Peacock, 2009; Rea-Dickins & Germaine, 1998; Reid, 1996; Richards, 1990; Sullivan,

2006; Wallace, 1991; Yang, 2009). In fact, Willis (1993) suggests that any course or program, no matter how well designed it is, will most probably need revision, therefore evaluation.

According to Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007), program evaluation is the process involving the collection of information about a certain program. This process uses the collected information for the purpose of making decisions and judgments regarding the evaluated program, which may lead at the end to its development and/or improvement. Similarly, Tunç (2010) defines program evaluation as the systematic investigation that contributes in providing the needed data and information to people who have interest in a specific program and also to decision-makers.

Lang (2003), along with others, believes that program evaluation is a systematic information collecting process that aims at assessing a program's strong and weak points to provide the needed suggestions for the program's improvement. In other words, Razi and Kargar (2014) state that it is not possible to improve a program without evaluating it, emphasizing its strengths and illuminating its weaknesses.

Program evaluation as described by Brown (1995) 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 institution involved" (p. 218). Moreover, Patton (2008) defines the term as the systematic evaluation of different aspects in a program for the aim of developing its quality and effectiveness and to be able to make decision and judgments about it.

Through the provided definitions, some aspects have been given extra emphasis. One aspect is the fact that the reason behind program evaluation is not to show that the program has failed in fulfilling its outcomes nor is it about making random criticism, but the main focus is on improving the educational program's quality, the thing that can be achieved through knowing its strengths and weaknesses (Rea-Dickins & Germaine, 1992). The other aspect that has been repeatedly mentioned in various definitions is the systematic approach to evaluation. This systematic-manner of approaching evaluation is a prerequisite for any evaluation process as Salihoglu (2012) suggests.

## **2.2 The Purpose of Evaluation**

Program evaluation serves as a means of gauging the extent to which a program is functioning with correspondence to how it was planned. Evaluation assures the quality of a program; if weaknesses are spotted, the evaluation of the program contributes to its improvement, and on the other hand, if the program is proven to be successful the evaluation encourages the keepers to proceed in the same manner (Rosenbusch, 1991).

Program evaluation contains various purposes that can determine the approach to be used through the evaluation process (Lynch, 2003). Since the process of program evaluation has grown popular among scholars after realizing its importance, many of them have defined various purposes that may underlie the evaluation process.

One of the contributions was introduced by Worthen and Sandres (1987). In their study, they listed six purposes of evaluation: to assess student's achievements, to provide a basis for making decisions and forming policies, to observe the expenses of

public funds, to evaluate the curricula, to accredit schools, and to improve educational materials and programs.

Similarly, in their study, Posavac and Carey (2003) also propose a list of six purposes for conducting an evaluation study: to assess unmet needs, to provide decision-makers with the needed information to preserve and improve quality, to document implementation, to measure results, to predict any negative side-effects, and to compare between different programs.

Puett (2000), on the other hand, suggests that program evaluation intends to: identify the program's effectiveness, develop the program's processing, manage limited resources more effectively, accomplish program documents, legitimize the program's funding, maintain the need for higher levels of funds, fulfill the moral responsibilities toward the customer to determine the effects of program participation whether it be positive or negative, and record the program's and activities' improvement in order to contribute to an effective increasing.

Robinson (2003) states that evaluation aims to provide information related to perceptions of the value of a program, to measure the extent to which the program's objectives have been met, and to provide the course or program providers with the feedback needed for improving the program.

Another way to approach the purpose of evaluation is shown by Weir and Roberts (1994). They propose that there are two general types of purposes for program evaluation. The first type is concerned with program development, where the evaluation process occurs as the program is being implemented; and the second type

is concerned with program accountability, which occurs at the end of the program and aims at determining the effectiveness of the program. Summative and formative evaluation are the terms introduced by Scriven (1967), where the summative evaluation is meant to correspond to program accountability while formative evaluation is meant to correspond to program development (Cohen, 1994; Weir & Roberts, 1994).

In a similar fashion, Worthen (1990) also mentions that there is consensus between most evaluators on the two roles that can be played by program evaluation. He states that the evaluation can have either a ‘formative purpose’ in which the evaluation helps in improving the program, or a ‘summative purpose’, in which the evaluation helps decision-makers decide on whether the program should continue or not. The evaluators who perform formative evaluations assist program developers and planners through providing them with help and advice, identifying possible problems, and identifying weak aspects that can be improved in a program; while the role of evaluators who perform summative evaluations is to describe the program and observe whether it has achieved its goals (Fitz-Gibbon & Morris, 1987). Furthermore, Alkin (1969) identifies five categories under which the aims of evaluation can be classified: the assessment of systems, the planning, implementation, certification, and improvement of the program.

### **2.3 Frameworks for Program Evaluation**

Similar to the fact that various definitions of evaluation could be found, the models of evaluation are also viewed differently and mean different things to different people. From the point of view of Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007), evaluation models represent the ideal frameworks that researchers or theorists follow which determine the way in which they should conduct the evaluation. In other words, Emarievbe



(2013) explains that evaluation models therefore can be defined as the series of procedures or steps that a researcher follows for the purpose of measuring or assessing the worth of a certain program as well as for obtaining the data necessary for the program's improvement and development. Evaluation models as Hansen (2005) states, clarify the questions that different forms of evaluation aim to answer. Various models for program evaluation have been introduced to the literature in the field of evaluation research in order to serve the different purposes of evaluation. According to Erden (1995), researchers have the ability to choose the model or the approach that they find the most suitable and compatible with their purpose of evaluation and they also have the choice of referring to an existing model to adapt a new one.

Based on the different purposes of conducting an evaluation, several approaches to evaluation are proposed by Worthen and Sanders (1987). These approaches are categorized into 6 groups:

1. *Objectives-Oriented Evaluation Approach*: In this approach, the evaluation purposes are designated. In other words, the outcomes of the activities performed in the course or program indicate, through evaluation, to what extent were those outcomes or purposes met (Worthen & Sanders, 1987). This approach can be considered suitable for the evaluation of the program's outcomes, goals and assessment methods used. Thus, the objectives of the program or course form the basis of the evaluation. Some of the models that are listed under the objectives-oriented evaluation approach and that several scholars including Worthen and Sanders (1987) themselves considered important are the following: Tyler's (1942) behavioral objectives evaluation model or the Tylerian Evaluation Approach,

Metfessel and Michail's (1967) model, Provus's (1971) discrepancy model and Hammond's (1973) evaluation approach or model.

2. *Management-Oriented Evaluation Approach*: The main aim in this approach is the collection and revealing of the information that can be utilized to facilitate decision making. In this approach, the information provided through evaluation is considered essential for making effective decisions regarding "... input, processes and output" as stated by Worthen and Sanders (1987, p.77), and it greatly aids and enhances the role of decision makers like the policy makers, administrators, school board and teachers. The management-oriented evaluation model can be used so that the existing situation is examined which leads to the identification of the needed changes. Some of the prevalent evaluation models that come under this approach are: the UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles) evaluation model coined by Alkin (1969) and Stufflebeam's (1971) evaluation model known as CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) model.

3. *Consumer-Oriented Evaluation Approach*: This approach aims at providing information regarding the products offered to the students or the consumers to assess their degree of satisfaction regarding the effectiveness of the program. With his evaluation model, Scriven (1967) has contributed greatly to this approach especially through the distinction he made between summative and formative evaluation.

4. *Expertise-Oriented Evaluation Approach*: Professional expertise plays a major role in this approach; the expertise-oriented approach to evaluation is considered the oldest and the most utilized approach for evaluation. In the expertise-oriented evaluation approach, the program's content, activities and effectiveness are evaluated and possible judgments are made (Worthen & Sanders, 1987).

5. *Adversary-Oriented Evaluation Approach:* When conducting an evaluation using this approach, the evaluated program's general framework is drawn and the focus is shifted towards identifying the program's positive and negative points (i.e. its strengths and weaknesses). Later, the strengths and weaknesses are examined for the purpose of program improvement. An example of a model under this approach is the judicial evaluation model developed by Owens (1973) and Wolf (1975).

6. *Naturalistic and Participant-Oriented Evaluation Approach:* This approach aims at gaining an understanding about different information concerning the learners, including their problems, concerns and values, in their natural situation. As a part of this approach, the evaluators get to participate with other stakeholders in the process of problem solving (Hogan, 2007). Two models that fall under this approach are the countenance model (Stake, 1967) and the illuminative model (Parlett & Hamilton, 1976).

Under each of the six categories proposed by Worthen and Sanders (1987) fall different evaluation models, some of which will be presented and explained. Tyler's (1942) behavioral objectives model can be considered one of the earliest evaluation models presented in the field. The main focus of this model is based on the objectives of the program. Through his model, Tyler (1942) thinks that the objectives of the program should be clearly identified and then, the evaluation is meant to reveal whether those objectives have been met through the program or not. Tyler's (1942) model (cited in Guskey, 2000; Worthen & Sanders, 1987), includes seven steps he believes should be applied in the evaluations: 1) to have broad objectives; 2) to categorize these objectives; 3) to identify the objectives in times that are observable;

4) to find conditions to manifest the achievements in; 5) to create or choose methods for measurement; 6) to gather information about the performance; and, 7) to make a comparison between the previously determined objectives and the actual performance. The process of evaluation in this model is summative since it measures the achievement of students, in other words, the product. Two conclusions can be reached at the end of the evaluation: the first conclusion, in case the objectives were not learned, is that the program has failed to meet the intended objectives; on the other hand, the second conclusion is that the program is considered successful in attaining the objectives in case they were learned. At the end of the evaluation, if a gap was found between the intended and the actual objectives, changes and modifications can be made in order to compensate for the deficiency found and ultimately increase the program's effectiveness (Guskey, 2000; Worthen & Sanders, 1987).

In the 'goal-free model' introduced by Scriven (1967) (cited in Beretta, 1992; Guskey, 2000; Worthen & Sanders, 1987), the evaluators try to shift their attention away from the goals intended by developers of a program, rather, they aim to address the program's actual outcomes. Focusing on the intended goals of a given program may limit the evaluation process and may be the reason behind missing the actual significant outcomes; those unanticipated outcomes are the ones that should be observed and evaluated. This approach to evaluation in Scriven's (1967) opinion broadens the scope of the evaluation, increases its objectivity and allows the evaluation to be less bias. He also stresses that the evaluation should include not only the observation of whether the goals were met, but also observing whether the goals themselves are important or not. In this regard, Beretta (1992) says that "the value of

a program resides in the extent to which a program's effects are congruent with the perceived needs of the students" (p. 17).

Stufflebeam's (1971) context-input-process-product (CIPP) evaluation model (cited in Beretta, 1992; Guskey, 2000; Worthen & Sanders, 1987) mainly serves the decision makers, where the focus is not on the goals of a program but on the process of decision making (Guskey, 2000). The evaluation process in this model is seen as "the process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives" (Stufflebeam, 1973a, p. 129, cited in Guskey, 2000). The CIPP evaluation model presents four types of evaluation that decision makers need for making suitable decision:

1. Context evaluation, that would help in decision planning
2. Input evaluation, that would help in decision structuring
3. Process evaluation, that would help in decision implementing
4. Product evaluation, that would help in decision recycling. (Worthen & Sanders, 1987)

Another model is presented by Bellon and Handler (1982). Carrying out this type of evaluation through the use of this model mainly aims at improving the educational programs. Bellon and Handler (1982) include four elements that are the base of their model. Those elements are:

1. *The four focus areas:* Goals (mainly include the intended and expected outcomes); organization (all resources in the organization, processes that are considered essential for the program's organizational functioning and the programs that were created to fulfill significant educational objectives; operations

(curriculum and instruction); and program outcomes (intended and unintended outcomes).

2. *The Status Descriptions*: Include information related to the four focus areas that clear out the program's current state.

3. *The Analysis Activities*: Include activities that are used for the analysis of the program through the analysis and evaluation of the four focus areas to gain knowledge of the needed procedures to be taken for the improvement of the program.

4. *The Curriculum Improvement Components*: As Bellon and Handler (1982) state, are considered as the action plans and the development of the suggestions. They further state that a clearer vision of the wanted curriculum is attained with every major area of the analysis.

Nunan (1992) presented a program evaluation model that deals with the outcomes that the students attained from the program and with judging the reasons for the evaluated program's effectiveness. In his model, Nunan (1992) identifies eight questions on which the design of any evaluation should be based:

1. What is the purpose of the evaluation?
2. What principles of procedure should guide the evaluation?
3. Who is the audience for the evaluation?
4. What tools, techniques, and instruments are appropriate?
5. Who should carry out the evaluation?
6. When should it be carried out?
7. How should the evaluation be reported?
8. What is the time frame and budget for the evaluation? (p. 196)

The context-adaptive model (CAM) developed by Lynch (1990, 1996) is meant to be applicable in various settings. In his model, Lynch (1996) includes seven steps that serve as a guide for the evaluators where the different issues, information and design elements regarding the evaluation are taken into consideration. Those steps are:

*1<sup>st</sup> step:* determining the audience and examining their goals

*2<sup>nd</sup> step:* creating a context inventory through taking into consideration the audience and their goals

*3<sup>rd</sup> step:* introducing a preliminary thematic framework formed on aspects that make the foundations of the specific context

*4<sup>th</sup> step:* establishing a design by considering the information gathered in the previous steps (i.e. the audience and their goals, the context and the thematic framework)

*5<sup>th</sup> step:* collecting the data focusing on steps 3 and 4

*6<sup>th</sup> step:* analyzing the data focusing on steps 3 and 4

*7<sup>th</sup> step:* reporting the evaluation results

For the purpose of evaluating the efficiency, quality and effectiveness of training programs, Kirkpatrick (1998) suggests a model consisting of four levels. The first level is the reaction evaluation, which collects the students' or participants' opinions about and satisfaction regarding the training program, of which they are the main audience. The second level is the learning evaluation. In this level, the skills, knowledge and attitude of students are measured with the aim of observing whether attending the training program has contributed to their change or improvement. The third level, behavior evaluation, focuses on the effect the training had on the participants' performance when they get back to their job. The results evaluation, which is the fourth

level, mainly focuses on evaluating aspects like the improved morals and productivity and enhanced quality. In other words, it focuses on the final effects the training program had on the participants (Kirkpartick, 1998, cited in Guskey, 2000, p. 55).

Posavac and Carey (2003) introduced another evaluation model that consists of three steps to be followed in order to effectively plan the evaluation. The steps they suggested are:

1. identify the program and its stakeholders,
2. become familiar with the needed information,
3. plan an evaluation.

The last model to be presented in this section, and one of the most recent ones, is Peacock's (2009) model for evaluation. The aim of the model he proposes is the evaluation of language teacher education programs and the provision of information related to their strengths and weaknesses and whether the students' needs are met through the goals of the program. Peacock (2009) suggests a number of questions that should be taken into account when evaluating language teacher education programs, and which then leads to the development of his model of evaluation. Peacock (2009) listed the steps he used in developing his model and that any researcher can follow in their evaluation process:

1. The revision of the related literature and the production of a set of questions
2. The establishment of suitable sources of information in the given setting or context
3. The selection and design of the data collection tools and instruments
4. The collection and analysis of data in relation to the established research questions
5. The construction of a report in which the interpretations of the results are related to each other



In addition to the five steps, Peacock (2009) develops several data collection tools that can be used to collect information from students (interviews, questionnaires and essays), instructors (interviews), and alumni (questionnaires) and to evaluate materials. Peacock's (2009) evaluation framework has been applied and proven to be successful in evaluating programs in different studies in the Turkish context (Coşkun & Daloğlu, 2010; Omer, 2017; Salihoğlu, 2012; Zorba, 2015).

## **2.4 Research on Language Program Evaluation**

For the ultimate purpose of improving language programs, the field has witnessed various attempts to evaluate different language programs. The aim of the evaluation is mostly concerned with measuring the programs' effectiveness by identifying their strong and weak aspects in order to know what changes should be made to improve the language programs. This section reviews a number of research papers conducted on language program evaluation.

In the study conducted by Erdoğan (2005), the researcher evaluates the English curriculum of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> grades in a primary school in Turkey, where the perspectives of both teachers and students were considered through the evaluation. On the one hand, the general findings of this study revealed that the students were satisfied with the program. On the other hand, teachers thought that even though the program's content and objectives were suitable, their effectiveness was not guaranteed.

Also, in his study, Yel (2009) evaluates the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades' English language courses taught in the Anatolian high schools located in Sivas. The research design was based on the adapted versions of Bellon and Handler's (1982) and Brown's

(1989) evaluation models. Data were collected from 200 students and 20 instructors through the questionnaire proposed by Bellon and Handler (1982). Several weaknesses were determined through the findings of the study. For example, it was found that the program's objectives were not reached through the courses, the materials and content were not interesting, the materials did not provide enough activities that foster communication and student-centeredness, no variety was provided regarding teaching and learning processes, and the objectives of the program were not attained through the assessment procedures. Based on the weaknesses found through evaluation, several suggestions (related to materials and content revision, provision of variety, and appropriateness of methods of assessment) were then made for the improvement of the course.

Another study was conducted by Tunç (2010) to examine the effectiveness of the English preparatory school at Ankara University from the teachers and students' perspectives. The study employed Stufflebeam's (1971) CIPP evaluation model as a overall research design. The study included a total of 418 participants, and data were collected using a self-reported questionnaire gathered from 406 students participating in the language program, and through interviews conducted with 12 instructors. In addition, documents were analyzed to gather information regarding the preparatory school. The findings of this study showed that the language program matched the desired outcome, to a certain extent. Suggestions for the improvement of the program included making some adjustments to aspects related to the program's content, assessment methods and to the physical environment.

In a different study, Topkaya and Küçük (2010) examine the effectiveness of new 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade language program. A total of 72 teachers selected from 26 different

schools participated in this study through a questionnaire that aimed to gather information about their opinions regarding the program's content, goals and characteristics. The collected data showed that the opinions of the teachers participating in the study were to some extent positive when it comes to the program's content, goals and characteristics, but on the other hand, they still thought that there is a need for revising and developing some aspects in the program.

The study carried out by Gunal and Demir (2012) investigates the perspectives of both students and teachers regarding the execution of the new 8<sup>th</sup> grade English language curriculum and regarding the difficulties that were faced in the process. The data were collected through the use of interviews from 73 8-graders from different schools along with 10 English language teachers. And content analysis was used for data analysis. The results of the study showed that several reasons interfered in the effective implementation of the new curriculum such as insufficient materials and class hours; big class sizes; absence of support and guidance for the teachers, gradual execution of the curriculum and proficiency exams.

Another study evaluating an English language program is conducted by Alhuqbani (2014). This case study evaluates the program provided to Saudi police cadets at King Fahd Security College, Riyadh. The data were collected from 6 teachers, 16 former police cadets and 122 current ones through questionnaires and observations. According to the findings of the collected data, the offered English language course was considered to be inappropriate and ineffective, since it neither identified nor manifested the needs of the students through its methodology. Moreover, each of the teachers, former and current police cadets turned out to be dissatisfied with the timing and duration of the course. Finally, some suggestions were made at the end of the

evaluation as an attempt to improve the pedagogical instruction and the course in general.

Mede and Uygun (2014) carried out a study with the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of a language preparatory program in addressing the language needs of students in the departments of Translation and English Language and Literature. The participants in this study were a total of 64 students, from which quantitative and qualitative data were collected using a needs assessment questionnaire along with semi-structured interviews respectively. It was found that the programs were successful in meeting the students' needs through improving their language skills and strategies.

In another study, Alkan and Arslan (2014) evaluated the second grade English language curriculum from the teachers' perspective. A questionnaire was utilized to collect information from 163 teachers. This program had been evaluated before, and although the teachers' evaluation of the current program was positive, several limitations and weaknesses were also found, some of which resembled the weaknesses reported in the previous evaluation. The problems reported in this study are linked to the need of revising the course's goals and objectives, familiarizing the teachers with the program, and the insufficient facilities, in addition to the mismatch between the objectives of the program and the course-book used. After identifying the problems of the program, the researchers suggested a number of procedures to compensate for the limitations. Those suggestions are: familiarizing teachers and different stakeholders with the program, enhancing the schools' physical conditions and providing guidance concerning purposeful testing methods.

Finally, Chang, Kim and Lee (2017) conducted a study to evaluate the English language program provided for Korean students to equip them with the language, presentation and communication skills they need, in order to prepare them for English medium instruction courses. For this purpose, a mixed methods research design was adopted in this study where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from students through questionnaire and surveys. Although the findings of the study showed no considerable improvement in language skills, the students found the program useful in preparing them for attending English medium instruction courses. To improve the program's effectiveness, some considerations related to the program's timing and environment and student majors were emphasized. Moreover, it was suggested that a program for language support could be offered as a possible solution for the limited language proficiency various students may have.

## **2.5 Research on Language Teacher Education Program Evaluation**

This section aims to present and review various studies conducted on the evaluation of language teacher education programs. The first study in this section is the one conducted by Erozan (2005). In her study, Erozan (2005) aims at evaluating the language improvement courses of the undergraduate English Language Teaching program at Eastern Mediterranean University from the perspectives of the students and instructors. Erozan (2005) adapted Bellon and Handler's (1982) evaluation model and used it as the research overall design. The participants were the students taking the language improvement courses along with 6 of their instructors. The data were collected through questionnaires, observations, interviews, and document analysis. After the data were analyzed, the reached findings revealed that the language improvement courses were positively perceived by both participant groups. However, some suggestions were provided by the participants related to increasing the practical

aspects, the use of none-readily made materials (in other words, authentic materials), using a variety of methods and activities while teaching, and creating more coherence between the different courses in the curriculum.

Another study was carried out by Peacock (2009), in which he first proposed his framework for English teacher education program evaluation. In this study the TEFL program at the City University in Hong Kong was evaluated for the purpose of revealing its strengths and weaknesses and to know whether the student's needs were addressed. Triangulation was achieved in this research, since quantitative and qualitative data were collected through different data collection tools (questionnaires, interviews, essays and analysis of materials) developed by Peacock (2009). Moreover, data were collected from different sources or stakeholders (students, instructors and alumni). The participants consisted of 166 students in their third year of the program. In addition to the minimal weaknesses revealed through the evaluation, several strengths were also found. The strengths included: Providing the student teachers with useful pedagogic skills, fostering their reflective practice and promoting self-evaluation. Peacock's (2009) model of evaluation has gained the attention and admiration of various researchers and has been used in many studies in different contexts.

One of the studies that followed Peacock's (2009) evaluation model is conducted by Salihoglu (2012). In this research study, the pre-service English language teachers' and their instructors' beliefs and attitudes regarding the effectiveness of the educational program at a Turkish university were examined. A total of 200 senior students along with 21 instructors from the ELT Department participated in this study. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires, while qualitative data was

collected through a focus group discussion, and semi-structured interviews that were conducted with three of the instructors. The general findings of this study showed that the areas that mostly concerned the pre-service teachers were the practice, the needs and language proficiency components. Other than that, the student teachers were satisfied with the program. The instructors, on the other hand, showed different attitudes, where some of them agreed with the student teachers and others did not.

Zorba (2015) also used Peacock's (2009) evaluation framework to evaluate the undergraduate ELT program at EMU. The evaluation study was conducted to identify the program's strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, the evaluation aimed at investigating whether the program was able to meet the needs of students. The needed information about the program was reached by collecting quantitative and qualitative data from the students enrolled in the program (26), their instructors (8) and the program's graduates (33). The data collection tools employed in this study were student questionnaire, interviews and essays, teacher interviews, alumni questionnaire and document analysis. In relation to the strengths of the program, the findings revealed that it provides balance between teaching skills, classroom management and the teaching of English; trains qualified teachers; and has a clear philosophy that is portrayed in the practice. However, the weaknesses were: the dispensable courses and the insufficient academic events and practice. In general, the evaluation showed that the undergraduate ELT program was successful in fulfilling the needs of the students. And for the program's improvement several suggestions were made.

Using Peacock's (2009) evaluation model, Coskun and Daloglu (2010) conducted another study that emphasized the importance of program evaluation for teacher education programs. The pre-service English teacher education program was evaluated

to discover the components that need improvement or maintenance. The perspectives of teachers and students in a Turkish university were examined about the program's effectiveness using a questionnaire and interviews. The findings showed that the teachers believed that the program did not improve student teachers' linguistic competence, while the student teachers thought that the pedagogic components needed improvement.

Yavuz and Topkaya (2013) carried out a study to explore teacher instructors' perceptions of the changes in the ELT Program provided by the Turkish Higher Education Council in 2006. Qualitative data were collected through open-ended questionnaires. The participants in this study consisted of teacher instructors from 5 different universities. After the data were collected and analyzed, the findings showed that the teachers had both positive and negative thoughts concerning the changes that were made. Positive responses included some aspects of the program where some courses were added; on the other hand, the teacher's negative responses mainly targeted the changes that occurred in the content, the structure, sequences and the removing of some courses. One important issue that was the center of criticism was the fact that the experiences and opinions of important stakeholders who were the actual essence of the program (i.e. teachers and students) were completely neglected when the decision of changing the program was made.

Furthermore, for the purpose of evaluating the PhD English language teaching programs in the Turkish context, Küçüköğlü (2015) carried out a study. The areas investigated in this research were the components of the research, methodology, linguistics, educational sciences, and literature and culture courses. The intended goal behind conducting this research was to use its results to end up with a suitable syllabus



for the program, and to provide the program developers with the necessary information for the program's improvement. In order to get a gist of the program's current state, data were collected from the students and the alumni of the PhD ELT program, through the use of a questionnaire. At the end of the evaluation, the results from the questionnaire were used and syllabus was proposed to be applied for the evaluated program.

Uzun (2016), in another study, evaluated the English Language Teacher Training Program (ELTTP) at Uludag University in Turkey based on the perceptions of students. The participants in this study, a total of 90 students in their last year in the program, were asked to complete a questionnaire that was used as a data collection tool. The questionnaire focused on three main aspects; whether the course contributed to the students' personal development, professional development and whether it provided them with adequate and useful practical and theoretical knowledge. In addition to a questionnaire, interviews were conducted with the students to investigate their views regarding the courses and the instructors. The findings of this study showed that the program was not very successful in addressing the students' interests and needs. Moreover, it was proposed that the program should be designed with the purpose of providing the students with a content that is useful and practical.

Lastly, Omer (2017) conducted a study in which Peacock's (2009) framework for evaluation was employed to evaluate the ELT program in the University of Sulaimani. The strengths and weaknesses of the program were investigated along with obtaining some suggestions from the different stakeholders (146 students, 15 instructors and 50 alumni), the data were collected using a questionnaire and interviews. The findings of the study showed that the strengths of the program can be summarized as the success

in equipping student teachers with the needed teaching and classroom management skills. The weaknesses, on the other hand, were the lack of opportunities for practicing the learned information, having underqualified teachers and unnecessary courses. Some of the suggestions provided by the students basically included the elimination of the weak areas found in the program and providing students, especially the ones with the least experiences, with language improvement courses if needed.

## **2.6 Summary**

The first section of this chapter has presented and explained the concepts of evaluation and program evaluation. In the second part, a review of several program evaluation approaches and models have been introduced. Then, the last two sections have reviewed and discussed various studies conducted on the evaluation of language program as well as on language teacher education programs.

The upcoming chapter includes the present study's overall research design, research questions, participants, tools and procedures of data collection and data analysis.

## **Chapter 3**

### **METHOD**

This chapter discusses the method followed in the study. First, the employed research design is explained. The second part of this chapter consists of the context description. The third part presents the study's research questions. The fourth part presents the participating stakeholders. The tools used for data collection in the study are described in the fifth part of this chapter followed by the data collection procedures in the sixth part. The seventh part includes the procedures for data analysis, and lastly a summary of the chapter is presented.

#### **3.1 Overall Research Design**

This study is a case study that follows a mixed methods research design where both qualitative and quantitative data are collected and analyzed. The aim of this study is to internally evaluate the English Language Teaching Master's Program at Eastern Mediterranean University in North Cyprus. The motive of this descriptive case study is to provide some suggestions for the improvement of the evaluated program.

A case study, as Simons (2009) proposes after her examination and revision of various definitions provided by different scholars, is a thorough investigation of a certain policy, program, institution, project or system in a real situation from several perspectives. Moreover, Simons (2009) views case study as a research design in which several methods can be incorporated, and he stresses that it is not a method in itself.

Similarly, Stake (2005) defines a case study as the decision on what to study and what methods will be used to study the case with. Another definition of a case study is provided by Gerring (2004), who defines it as the "...intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units" (p. 342). Puett (1987), on the other hand, emphasizes the significance of the use of a case study saying that it is useful for providing a thorough understanding of a given situation or a problem, explaining that case studies provide various information from a number of examined situations.

This study aims to achieve triangulation through the collection of data from different stakeholders (students, instructors, alumni), and through the use of mixed data collection methods. Triangulation as defined by O'Donoghue and Punch (2003), is a "method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data" (p. 78). Mixed methods, according to Casey and Murphy (2009) is the utilization of more than one research method for the examination of a certain case or situation.

Morse (2016) states that: "Mixed methods design refers to the use of two (or more) research methods in a single study, when one (or more) of the methods is not complete in itself" (p. 9). In other words, Morse (2016) says that mixed methods is the integration of more than one method in a research study for the purpose of compensating for one of the methods' inability to access a certain examined situation or phenomenon.

In a similar vein, Sharif and Armitage (2004) suggest that triangulation or mixed methods use can contribute to the increase in the value of the results of a study through filling in the limitations of one method by using another.

Using triangulation in the research design provides more complete, valid and comprehensive data makes the findings more reliable and provides a better understanding of the case that's being examined (Casey & Murphy 2009; Morse, 2016; Redfern & Norman, 1994).

Moreover, the use of mixed methods, according to Wilson (2014), helps the researchers "...get richer, fuller data and/or... help confirm the results of the research" (p. 74).

In the present study Peacock's (2009) evaluation model was employed. Peacock's (2009) framework was developed for the purpose of filling the gap in the literature regarding the evaluation of English Language Teacher Education programs. Peacock's (2009) evaluation framework addresses the aim of the current study, thus it was adapted and used as an overall research design. Peacock (2009) emphasized on the importance of teacher training programs having constant internal evaluation.

For the evaluation of the program, Peacock (2009) proposed several questions that would help the researcher in obtaining the general evaluation of the examined program. In addition to the questions, Peacock (2009) developed a set of data collection tools that would be used to answer his proposed questions, those tools include teacher and student interviews, student and alumni questionnaire, student

essay and materials evaluation. In this study, only materials evaluation and student interviews are not employed.

As various studies in the literature in general and in the Turkish context specifically have used Peacock's (2009) program evaluation model (Omer, 2017; Salihoglu, 2012; Zorba, 2015), this study has also used this framework as its research design.

### **3.2 Context**

The context of this study is the Foreign Language Education (FLE) Department at Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU), which is one of the first established international universities in North Cyprus. The study was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2018-2019.

According to its official web-page (<https://www.emu.edu.tr/tr>), the main aim of the Faculty of Education at EMU is to prepare modern and well-qualified teachers who are able to function properly in different contexts and are able to make the necessary adaptations in themselves and their instruction in order to keep up with the latest trends and developments in the field of education.

The FLE Department at Eastern Mediterranean University offers three programs: the undergraduate program, the masters of arts program and the doctor of philosophy program. The postgraduate programs in the FLE Department are considered to be very well-established. The MA in the ELT program is meant to provide its candidates with the needed training and academic background in practice and theory related to English language teaching (<https://www.emu.edu.tr/tr>). For acceptance into the ELT postgraduate programs, the candidates must have a bachelor degree in a relevant discipline.

Students enrolled in the MA program are required to complete a total of eight courses, four of which are compulsory and four are electives, a seminar, and are required to submit a Master's thesis so that they can obtain their ELT MA degree (Appendix A). The period of the MA studies ranges between a minimum of one and a half years and more. (<https://www.emu.edu.tr/tr>).

The diploma obtained from EMU is accredited in both the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Turkey and in many other countries around the globe.

### **3.3 Research Questions**

Since this study follows Peacock's (2009) research design, the research questions attempt to be consistent with the aims of the used framework. This study aims to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the ELT MA program and tries to examine whether this program meets the needs of the concerned stakeholders. In addition, for the purpose of improving the evaluated program, the study attempts to identify some suggestions. Following these aims, the current study attempts to find answers to the following questions:

- 1) What are the strengths of the English Language Teaching Master's Program from the perspectives of instructors, students and alumni?
- 2) What are the weaknesses of the English Language Teaching Master's Program from the perspectives of instructors and alumni?
- 3) To what extent does the English Language Teaching Master's Program meet the students' needs from the perspectives of instructors, students and alumni?
- 4) What suggestions can instructors, students and alumni give for improving the English Language Teaching Master's Program?

### **3.4 Participants**

For the purpose of internally evaluating the English Language Teaching Master's program at EMU, the participants in this study consist of three groups of stakeholders: the department's instructors, the students currently enrolled in the program, and the program's graduates or alumni.

#### **3.4.1 Instructors**

This group of participants consists of the instructors of the English Language Teaching Master's program. There are five instructors in this department, all of whom took part in this evaluation research study.

Only one of the instructors was a professor, two of them were associate professors and the rest two were assistant professors. One of the associate professors participated in the study as both the head of the department and as an instructor. Three of the participating instructors were female while the other two were male. Their ages ranged between 45 to 56+, and their years of experience ranged between 15 to 30 years. One instructor was from Turkey, another one was from Azerbaijan and three instructors were from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Four of the instructors had Turkish as their mother language while the fifth instructor's mother language was Azerbaijani.

#### **3.4.2 Students**

The second group of participants is the students enrolled in the English Language Teaching Master's Program. The overall number of students enrolled in the ELT MA program in the academic year 2018-2019 was 23 students, but 15 of them (3 males, 12 females) agreed to participate in the study by filling in the questionnaire. The ages of the students ranged between 23 to 35+. Six of the students came from different Arab



countries, three were Turkish Cypriots, three were Iranians, three were Kurdish and only one participant was Turkish. Six participants had Arabic as their mother tongue, four of them spoke Turkish as their mother language, three spoke Kurdish and three spoke Persian as their mother tongue.

### **3.4.3 ELT Alumni**

To examine the program's effectiveness and whether it was able to meet the students' needs, the graduates of the English Language Teaching Master's program were the third group of participants in this study. The total number of alumni participating in this study is 14, 12 of whom are teaching in the EMU preparatory school. The alumni participants were equally divided into males and females. Only two of the graduate participants stated that they are not working as teachers, and the years of experience of the rest of the teachers ranged between 9 and 28 years.

## **3.5 Data Collection Instruments**

The current study follows a mixed methods research design. In other words, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using several data collection tools. The quantitative data were collected from students and alumni, through a questionnaire consisting of 31 closed items. The qualitative data, on the other hand, were collected from the current students through 3 open-ended questions and from the alumni through 5 open-ended questions in the questionnaires, moreover, qualitative data were also collected from the instructors through semi-structured interviews.

As it was mentioned previously, this study is designed according to Peacock's (2009) framework for program evaluation. Thus, some of the instruments proposed by Peacock (2009) and which were used in various studies in the Turkish context (Coşkun & Daloğlu, 2010; Omer, 2017; Salihoglu, 2012; Zorba, 2015) were adapted and used

as the study's data collection tools. Those tools include: instructor interviews, student essays, student questionnaire and alumni questionnaire.

### **3.5.1 Instructor Interviews**

This instrument (Appendix C) consists of three parts. In the first part the instructors are required to provide some demographic information (age, gender, nationality, mother tongue, years of experience). The second part includes a total of 19 semi-structured interview questions. The questions were adapted from the original 15 questions developed by Peacock (2009) and were used in an attempt to gain information about the instructors' perceptions on whether the program has a clearly stated philosophy and whether this philosophy is reflected through the program, whether the program is up-to-date, whether it promotes student-centeredness and teacher-centeredness in a balanced manner, whether there is balance between practice and theory, whether the program promotes the continuous professional development, and whether it promotes the students' research skills as well as their teaching skills.

The third part of the instructor interviews includes three questions that require the interviewees to provide a general evaluation of the program, providing information on the strengths and weaknesses of the program, in addition to some suggestions for the improvement of the program.

### **3.5.2 Student Essays**

The first part of this tool seeks demographic information of the participants. The second part of this tool, also taken from Peacock's (2009) model, was designed to obtain the perceptions of the students concerning the program's philosophy. Moreover, this tool was adapted by adding another question asking about the general evaluation of the program. The participating students were required to complete this task by

writing a one-page essay for each of the two questions. The students were given a period of two weeks to complete this task.

### **3.5.3 Student Questionnaire**

This tool (Appendix E) was distributed to all the students enrolled in the ELT MA program in the second semester of the academic year 2018-2019 as a hard copy (to students who were still taking courses), and as a soft copy, using e-mail and Facebook messenger (to students who have finished their courses).

In the first part of this tool, the students were required to provide some demographic information. As for the second part, it consists of 31 close-ended items adapted from Peacock's (2009) framework for evaluation, and demands information about the students' internal evaluation of the MA in ELT program through the use of a five-point Likert scale, where students express their level of agreement with regards to the provided items. The adaptations of the questionnaire were based on the observation of the differences between the undergraduate English Language Teaching program's philosophy on which Peacock's (2009) evaluation framework was mainly based, and that of the Master's program, which focuses more on the aspects related to research and professional development. In addition, the third part of this tool includes three more general questions that demand the general evaluation and suggestions regarding the program and its improvement.

### **3.5.4 Alumni Questionnaire**

This questionnaire (Appendix G) was administered to the graduates of the English Language Teaching Master's program, working in the university's preparatory school, as hard copies, and to the others as soft copies (through emails). The first part of this tool requires some demographic information (age, gender, nationality, mother tongue,

years of experience and whether the participating alumni is currently working as a teacher and the reason they are not). This tool is very similar to the tool used with students regarding the second part (the 31 close-ended items). In the third part, the same general questions used with students are also asked to the alumni. In addition to two more questions, the first one asking about the problems caused by a weakness in the evaluated program and which the graduates faced while teaching, and the other question asking how were these problems overcome.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedures**

The data were collected after obtaining the permission of the FLE Department and the ethical committee in the university to complete the study. When collecting the data, the consent of the participants was obtained after informing the participants that their identities and responses will be kept anonymous and that the collected data will only be used for research purposes. Moreover, the participants were provided with some information regarding the purpose of the study. In addition, the approval for collecting data from the alumni members working at the English Preparatory School at EMU was also obtained from the Prep. School's director.

For conducting the interviews, the instructors were contacted through email and appointments were taken according to their convenience. The instructors' consent letters included asking for the permission for recording the interviews. In addition to the recording, the researcher also wrote down notes for the key information mentioned by the interviewees. The researcher provided the interviewees with a copy of the questions to be asked, and provided some follow up questions to make sure that the interviewees did not deviate from the intended subjects. The interviews lasted around 20 to 40 minutes and took place in the instructors' offices.

Student essays questions were distributed along with the student questionnaire. The researcher provided the students with the program's philosophy, and the instructions stated in the consent form stated that the essays are to be returned in a two-week period during which students were asked to complete a one-page essay for each question asking about the program's philosophy and the overall or general evaluation of the English Language Teaching Master's program.

As for the student questionnaire, the researcher distributed them, along with the essay writing task three weeks before the final exams. The student questionnaire and essay writing task were distributed using email and Facebook messenger to students who have finished their courses, and they were handed to the current students at the beginning of their course sessions, after emailing the instructors and taking their permission.

The alumni questionnaire was distributed to the graduate teachers working at the university's preparatory school as a hard copy and the teachers were asked to leave the completed questionnaires at the prep-school's secretary's office, while the rest of the alumni were sent the questionnaire through email.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

Since both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in this case study, different data analysis procedures were followed for each method. The researcher analyzed the qualitative data collected through the open-ended items in the student and alumni questionnaires and from the student essays by categorizing and grouping the similar answers provided by students and alumni and then coding the responses. As for the instructor interviews, they were transcribed and then analyzed by grouping the

instructors' common answers. Other than using the descriptive analysis, cross-case analysis strategy proposed by Patton (1990) was also used, this strategy includes collecting different responses under one unit or under one question.

For analyzing the quantitative data, the 22<sup>nd</sup> version of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used to determine the frequencies, means and standard deviations of the collected data.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter has presented the method used to conduct the current study. The study's overall design was described, along with the context in which this study was conducted, the research questions, a description of the participants, the used data collection tools, and data collection procedures and data analysis procedures.

## Chapter 4

### RESULTS

This chapter aims to introduce the study's results which were obtained from the data collected through instructor interviews, student questionnaire and alumni questionnaire. These findings will be presented in this chapter.

#### 4.1 Instructor Interviews

The main purpose behind conducting the instructor interviews is to be able to collect information regarding the perspectives and opinions of the instructors about the ELT MA Program in which they are teaching. Once again, the interview questions are an adapted version of the original 15 questions used in Peacock's (2009) evaluation model. The adapted version used in this study consists of 19 questions, in addition to three questions that require the instructors' perceptions on the program's overall or general evaluation: stating the program's strong and weak points and providing some suggestions for the program's improvement. In order to analyze the instructors' responses obtained through the interviews, the responses are categorized and are presented in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1: Instructor Interviews Responses.

<i>Does the program...</i>		Yes	To some extent	No
1 ...	have a clearly stated philosophy?	5	-	-
2 ...	reflect program philosophy?	4	1	-
3 ...	promote student flexibility in using different teaching approaches for different situations?	5	-	-

<b>4 ...</b>	promote student ability to conduct research?	5	-	-
<b>5 ...</b>	promote the ability to evaluate and adapt foreign-language-teaching materials?	2	3	-
<b>6 ...</b>	incorporate and encourage student reflection on the experiences and values they have when they enter the program? In particular, does it encourage student reflection on their ‘apprenticeship of observation’?	3	2	-
<b>7 ...</b>	introduce student to adequate theoretical background in the field of ELT?	5	-	-
<b>8 ...</b>	promote the skill of reflection and self-evaluation as a teacher?	2	3	-
<b>9 ...</b>	promote reflective practice in teaching?	2	3	-
<b>10 ...</b>	promote the ‘long-term, developmental nature of learning to teach’ – does it promote post-qualification teacher growth and development?	4	1	-
<b>11 ...</b>	have good linkage among courses, avoiding overlaps?	2	3	-
<b>12 ...</b>	balance teacher- and student-centered learning?	4	-	1
<b>13 ...</b>	prepare students to function in the sociocultural context in which they will work?	2	3	-
<b>14 ...</b>	prepare students to conduct research in different contexts and for different purposes?	5	-	-
<b>15 ...</b>	prepare students to write an academic article?	2	2	1
<b>16 ...</b>	incorporate and balance teaching and research skills to an appropriate degree?	2	2	1
<b>17 ...</b>	enable students to critically analyze and evaluate different sources in the literature?	5	-	-
<b>18 ...</b>	is the program up-to-date?	3	2	-
<b>19 ...</b>	do students believe the program meets their needs, is relevant to their needs, and adequately prepares them for better classroom teaching and for conducting research?	2	3	-

Answering the first question, all five instructors answered ‘yes’. All the instructors believe that the English Language Teaching Master’s Program at Eastern Mediterranean University has a clearly stated philosophy. Instructor 1 explained:

Yes, there is a clearly stated philosophy...or mission perhaps... and it is stated in a sentence in the department's website saying that the MA graduate



program in ELT is designed to provide candidates with academic background and thorough training in the theory and practice in English language teaching.

And instructor 5 further explained that he does think that the program has a clear philosophy, because such programs need to have clear philosophies in order to get approved.

Concerning the second question, four out of five instructors answered ‘yes’ and one instructor answered ‘to some extent’. The majority of the instructors think that the philosophy of the program is reflected through the courses and through the instruction.

For example, instructor 1 stated:

Regarding the question of whether the program reflects the philosophy, the offered courses in the MA curriculum do reflect the philosophy as the program accommodates both theoretical and practical courses. Therefore, the answer is yes.

Furthermore, instructor 2 also stated:

Because program, started many years ago. In fact, it started in 1993. So, we started with a specific philosophy idea, we had. And the program reflects because when you compare the program that we had in early 90s, and the program that we have they are absolutely different, in other words, you have to change your philosophy depending on the circumstances we have, since circumstances change, we also change our philosophy.

Instructor 4, on the other hand, believed that the program reflects the philosophy to some extent and she explained this as follows:

Maybe not hundred percent, but to a large extent, I believe that the, the program reflects this philosophy. So we are trying to put it into practice.

With regard to question 3, all of the instructors believe that the program promotes the flexibility to utilize a variety of teaching approaches for different situations. Instructor 1 mentioned that the course entitled ‘Approaches, Methods and Techniques in ELT’ along with different information provided in different courses plays a great role in

promoting flexibility in using different approaches in different situations. She also stated that the reflective thinking introduced in many courses also helps in choosing different methods and in being flexible. She stated:

I think the program fulfills this expectation, I mean students flexibility in choosing the right teaching technique in different context. So, my answer is yes.

Instructor 4 said that, through the courses, the students:

...Read about different approaches, and how to apply different approaches in different contexts. But we do not provide them with an opportunity to put all this knowledge into practice.

Responding to the fourth question, again all the instructors responded with 'yes'. Most of the instructors mentioned that research is included and required in all courses as projects and as a means of assessment, which makes it a good practice for the MA students and that their thesis writing and the guidance students receive from their supervisors through the process is one-evidence of promoting the ability to conduct research. For instance, instructor 1 explained:

Again, the program outline shows that we have a course on the research methods in ELT which addresses this need. So, of course, learners should be prepared before they start writing the theses, because theses writing process necessitates some good research skills. So, there is a compulsory course about research methods plus in other elective courses, in some paper assignments, for example, we expect our students to develop some research skills... plus the thesis itself, I mean, the thesis itself will be the outcome of this ability... the ability to conduct research.

Similarly, instructor 5 stated:

This (research) is a part of the program. So, as you know, this is called MA with thesis. So, the thesis is a reflection of some well-designed research. So, research is part of it, but research does take place within the coursework as well. So, you may be given research projects to do in different courses as teamwork projects or as part of the general assessment of the course.

He added:

I've been teaching this 'research methods in ELT' course, for some years...my observation is after taking this course, they (students) become more aware of the major components of research, including research design, research methodology, data collection is to data analysis and so on. So they, they are better able to conduct research after this course, as part of their coursework, or eventually, their theses.

Instructor 4 also answered as:

Yes, because in some courses as a project, we give them a research task. Okay. So especially, you know, reviewing the literature and writing and reflection time on paper, but also in some courses, they need to conduct mini research. In order to complete the program, they have to conduct a complete, comprehensive research.

For the fifth question asking whether the program promotes the evaluation and adaptation of materials, two of the instructors responded with 'yes' and the other three instructors responded with 'to some extent'. The majority of answers provided by the instructors included the fact that the courses that offer the skills of adaptation and evaluation of materials are elective courses and whether students will learn those skills depends on whether they will take the elective courses or not. Commenting on this,

Instructor 1 explained that:

This is something very specific... if those students will take this course 510 Materials Development for ELT, they will learn and go deeper into this issue. In other courses, I don't know... maybe...

In a similar manner, instructor 4 further stated:

We have materials development and adaptation course. So if students take this course, we focus on evaluation of the materials, adaptation of the materials and design, designing materials. So I teach this course. You know, but we do not offer it every year. So those who take the course yes, they are equipped with this ability.

In response to question 6 asking if the program encourages students to reflect on their previous experiences as teachers, three of the instructors responded with 'yes' and two responded with 'to some extent'. The majority of the responses provided by the

instructors included that it depends on the instructors themselves and the way they guide the discussions made and the sharing of experiences. Instructor 1 for example said that it is a pedagogical issue.

It's up to the instructors, if instructors are interested in triggering students' earlier experiences. So in the discussions this can be done. So for every discussion point, the learners, the students can be asked how they had this when they were a student, for example. So it's a pedagogical attitude.

Instructor 4, on the other hand, believed that the program encourages the students to practice reflection on their observation to some extent. She thought that although the program provides the opportunity for students to go back and reflect on their previous experiences as teachers through discussions, which is similar to what most instructors mentioned. concerning the students with no teaching experience, she added:

This is one of the, if I can say, weaknesses. But this is something that we do not focus much in the MA program, I mean, practicing or practice teaching, okay, so therefore, so maybe take, because they are not teaching, they're not doing teaching practice or micro teaching. So there is no practice teaching, so they can't reflect on their experience.

When the instructors were asked the seventh question, they all answered 'yes'. All the instructors seemed very confident with the program's ability in providing the students with adequate theoretical background in the field of ELT and many of them mentioned that all the students will have to take the compulsory courses that introduce a great deal of theoretical information in English language teaching like Second Language Acquisition and General Linguistics etc. Moreover, instructor 4 answered "Yes, a hundred percent. Okay. So and I think our program is very successful in providing students with necessary adequate theoretical background".

Instructor 1 also answered:

I believe so. Because we have some courses in the program, like (SLA) Second Language Acquisition course, for example, or General Linguistics

course. And also among the elective ones we have some other courses which provide this theoretical framework. So my answer is yes.

When it comes to questions 8 and 9, the instructors were asked both questions combined, where two of the instructors responded with 'yes' and the other three responded with 'to some extent'.

Instructor 1, for example answered that the program does promote reflection, reflective practice and self-evaluation to some extent, explaining that "It's up to the teachers, the course instructors' delivery method".

Instructor 4, on the other hand, answered 'yes' to the question and said:

They (students) are given a chance to reflect on what they have been doing. Okay, so um, and when they are learning the theory, they have a chance to re-evaluate themselves. As teachers, they start to ask this question, am I doing it in the right way? So is what I am doing the right thing? Okay. So they start to think about such things.

Question 10 asks whether the program promotes the professional development, the majority of the instructors (four instructors) answered 'yes' it does, stating that there is an entire course in the program entitled 'Professional Development in ELT'; that, along with the inclusion of this topic in different courses in the program. Instructor 1 even mentioned that: "this (professional development) is the aim of the program... and all MA students should realize that it is a kind of a lifelong developmental process." Instructor 4 also believed that the MA program itself is a means of promoting professional development, she stated: "completing our MA program really helps our students, students who are teachers, to develop professionally".

Concerning question 11 asking whether the program has good linkage between courses, two instructors thought that it does, while three instructors thought that to

some extent it does. Most of the answers provided by the instructors stated that the courses do have good linkage but there might be some overlaps. Instructor 5, said: “We don’t go through the syllabus for every single course analytically and identify any such overlaps”.

Similarly, we can see that instructor 4 also stated: “Sometimes we don't know what other instructors are doing. So there can be overlaps”.

On the other hand, instructor 2 explained:

There is a difference between overlapping which is speaking about the same thing again and again, and recycling which is speaking about the same thing from different contexts or perspectives.

And he emphasized the importance of recycling which, is occurring in many courses, which in a way links the courses together and makes the courses more meaningful.

When question 12 concerned with whether the program balances teacher- and student-centered learning was asked, four of the instructors replied ‘yes’, The majority of the instructors believed that there is balance. Instructor 1, for example, stated:

There are of course, lectures provided by the course instructors, also students are involved in conducting the class together, I mean, they also take responsibility for moderating a discussion, for example, by presenting something and then, you know, conducting the discussion. So I think there is a good balance in that sense.

On the other hand, one of the instructors replied to this question with ‘no’, where she believed that the program is more student-centered than teacher-centered.

With regard to question 13, two of the instructors’ answers expressed agreement with the questions and three instructors thought that the program is able to prepare students

to some extent. When asked this question, most of the instructors mentioned that the program has a very rich cultural or a ‘multi-cultural’ context since it has students from different countries, cultures and backgrounds which provides a rich environment to teach students about different contexts. Instructor 5, for example stated:

We do have a very rich socio-cultural context... I do encourage my students to contribute...to ask them what they would do in their own culture... it is a good way of raising awareness...

Another answer provided by instructor 4 was:

Yes, because... have very good discussions in the classroom and we are very lucky because we have really multicultural international classes. So, we have people you know, everyone in the class is from a different country. So, they have a chance to share their experiences in these different contexts. So, each student has a chance to hear about how things are going on in different contexts. So they gain this awareness, okay. So, so, I think this really prepares them to function in different socio-cultural contexts...

However, other instructors see that they cannot be familiar with all the contexts of different students from different background and what the program provides may not always be applicable in all of the students’ contexts, thus the program may not be able to fully address the needs of all students, rather, as instructor 3 explained: “we prepare students to teach globally”.

All five instructors answered ‘yes’ to question 14 asking whether it prepares students to conduct research. The responses of the instructors regarding this question seemed very confident that the program equips the students with good research skills that would allow them to conduct research in different contexts and for different purposes.

One of the reasons for this positive response, instructor 5 explains, is because the program offers a compulsory course that aims at teaching research methods in ELT, and through this course, the students get to review different research studies and get to

learn about different types of research and become aware of identifying good and bad research. He said that after taking the ‘research methods in ELT’ students become more aware, better able to conduct research.

Moreover, instructor 4 explained that the program prepares students to conduct research in different contexts and for different purposes because through the courses students read articles and book chapters and they read case studies conducted in different parts of the world, which increases their awareness regarding the different types and purposes of conducting a research. Another answer provided by instructor 1 was:

My answer is yes. Because now when we compose our reading list, for the courses, we choose, research studies conducted in different parts of the world so that, you know, they can compare and contrast the different research contexts and different purposes that research can be conducted in. I think through reading the articles, journal articles, and by discussing them... I think this helps.

The responses to question 15 asking whether the program promotes the students’ ability to write an academic article, were different. Two instructors responded to this question with ‘yes’, one instructor responded with ‘to some extent’ and two instructor responded with ‘no’. The instructors that believed that the program prepares students to write an academic article explained that this ability is developed when students are exposed to and are reading a great deal of journal articles, reading and analyzing these articles is seen as a practice than could enable students to produce their own academic article. Instructor 4 added:

Yes. Because they write a thesis. Okay, if they can, if they were in front of their pieces, they can change it into a, you know, an article format.

On the other hand, Instructor 1 does not think that the program enables students to write an academic article and she explained that:



They (students) are expected to analyze an academic article from the writers' perspective, and also the readers' perspective, but this may not guarantee that they will be able to write an academic article.

Similarly, instructor 5 said:

Honestly, we don't at least at the MA level we don't provide such guidance for the students.

When asked question 16 (does the program incorporate and balance teaching and research skills to an appropriate degree?), two out of five instructors answered that it does, two instructors answered that it does 'to some extent'. Instructor 4, for example, stated that she thinks that "the teaching skills are going to precede the researcher skills, but research skills are not going to fall behind". And one instructor stated that 'no' it doesn't balance between teaching and research skills, where instructor 4 believed that the program "is more research based".

Concerning question 17, all the instructors answered with 'yes'. With regard to this question, instructor 2 introduced a term that he would like to call 'academic democracy' where the students are given the chance to read, review, analyze and criticize different sources in the literature. He stated:

We have to give students a chance to see... to see that there can be different approaches different ideas, different areas, different criteria.

In addition, most of the instructors mentioned that most, if not all, courses include the preparation of a literature review task in which students have to evaluate, read, review and analyze different sources (books, articles, dissertations etc.) in the literature. Instructor 5, for example, said that: "All project work requires some literature review writing".

Furthermore, when asked whether the program follows the latest developments in the field, or in other words whether it is up-to-date, (question 18), three instructors answered ‘yes’ and the rest two answered ‘to some extent’. For instance, instructor 1 thought that the program is up-to-date and said:

I think it is, because if you analyze the other programs that have similar programs, all over the world, you can see almost the same kind of courses.

Similarly, instructor 5 thought:

There is ‘some’ updating going on considering the new developments and needs of the students.

The last question in the second part of the instructor interviews asks instructors about their opinion on whether students believe the program meets their needs (question 19). Two of the instructors believed that the students are satisfied with the program saying that they get good feedback from students, while the other three instructors did not seem to be sure about the students’ opinion regarding the program and stated that it would be better to ask the opinions of students themselves.

Following the 19 questions asked to the five instructors, the third part of the interviews included three more questions that aimed at obtaining the instructors’ general evaluation of the program, which is, asking them about the strengths and weaknesses they think the program has. The third question asked the instructors to provide some suggestions that can be useful for the improvement of the program.

In relation to the strengths of the program, the instructors expressed their satisfaction with the curriculum and program as a whole and seemed to be satisfied with the status of the program in comparison with other prestigious universities in Turkey and the world. Instructor 3, for example, stated that “this is the program that follows the

requirements of the major programs in the United States and England, including major programs in major universities in Turkey”. And instructor 2 confirmed and added by saying that “If you take Cyprus context, I believe that... that our program... is one of the most effective programs here... and compared to other universities in Turkey, we are okay”. And speaking about the curriculum, instructor 1 said that “Of course, curriculum is not something below the other institutions’ curriculum” and added that “the curriculum is also good, yes, but it needs to be improved”.

Moreover, instructor 5 described the MA in ELT Program as “a compact program”, and went deeper to mention the quality of the courses offered, where he mentioned that “It (the program) introduces various courses related to our discipline” and added that “The variety of the courses is one of the strengths” the program has.

Similarly, instructor 4 also believed that the program offers useful courses, and stated that through these courses the program “equip(s) them (students) with necessary theoretical knowledge regarding the field of ELT. So, they have Language Acquisition, they have Linguistics, they have Methodology. So, we really equip them with all this various, let's say theoretical knowledge about different fields”.

Other than the program and courses, the instructors believed that the academic staff, that is the instructors themselves, also adds a lot of value and strengths to the program through their expertise and variety. Instructor 1 expressed this belief by saying that “the staff is really qualified in terms of their, you know, degrees and their expertise”. Instructor 5 added that “the expertise of the staff, staff having expertise in different fields is also a big strength”. Moreover, instructor 3 mentioned that one of the strengths that the staff or the professors of the program have is that “they are coming from

diverse backgrounds”. Stating her opinion, instructor 4 stated that the good quality that the staff in the department have is the fact that they actually try to help their students throughout their studies.

Another strength that all the instructors agreed on is the multicultural international body of students. The instructors perceived this as a major advantage of the program, and saw that this quality constantly introduces both students and instructors to different contexts, cultures, and norms of English teaching and learning and English use. Instructor 1, for instance, made a statement that was very similar to what the other interviewees expressed:

The international body of the students coming from different nationalities and different...with different backgrounds, different experiences etc. so it's a kind of advantage with us, because in class discussions, including the course instructors, all the students benefit from hearing each other's teaching contexts, their concerns, and how they deal with the socio-cultural issues and etc.

Other points of strength that the instructors mentioned are:

- The rejection rate of the program is pretty high (two instructors),
- The program is research oriented (one instructor),
- The classroom procedures; the courses are in the form of discussion (one instructor),
- The program prepares the MA candidates for their higher education requirements really well, whether it would be in the same university or in other universities around the world (one instructor).

When asked about the weaknesses of the program, on the other hand, the instructors did not provide as many points as they did in relation to the strengths of the program. One of the weaknesses that the instructors mentioned is related to program's current status. Most instructors had the belief that, although “the system is working smoothly”

as expressed by instructor 5, and “although the curriculum is good, it still needs to be improved” (instructor 1).

In terms of the courses, the instructors also agreed that they need to be updated. Instructor 5 stated that “There is ‘some’ updating going on considering the new developments and needs of the students, but...” he added “... in terms of creating new courses altogether, this hasn’t been done yet”. He also mentioned that:

The program is old and has been going on for a long time...There is always space for improvements. Nothing is static. The world is changing, and considering that this program is a very old one, why shouldn’t it be improved? why shouldn’t it be updated?

Moreover, another weakness that was brought up is, in a way, concerned with students and how they perceive the program. Instructor 4 stated that:

Another weakness, maybe some students may think of it as a weakness, is the number of courses... eight courses in minimum two years. So, this can be a long period, okay. Because in England, for example, in one year, they finish it.

Instructor 3, on the other hand, mentioned that the requirements of the courses might be overwhelming for students and she stated that “sometimes some of the students are having difficulty to keep up with requirements”.

Furthermore, the instructors considered having students who have no previous teaching experience as a weakness, explaining that when involved in classroom discussions and when triggered to reflect on their previous experiences, those students are not able to refer to any tangible or related knowledge and experience and their contributions will only be based on “hypothetical situations”, as instructor 1 stated, that may or may not be applied in real life. And in relation to this point, instructors 1 and 2 spoke of a weakness in the criteria of admission followed in the department, in

other words, not enough attention is paid to the criteria followed when accepting the applications of students.

Other weaknesses that were mentioned by the instructors are as follows:

- There is very little coordination between instructors regarding the program as a whole and the courses in specific. The instructors did not seem to have knowledge of each other's course content or instruction (3 instructors),
- There is a lack of teaching practice in the program, thus the candidates who have no teaching experience are left behind in certain discussions and don't get to be as fortunate in training or in applying the received knowledge (1 instructor),
- Some students seem to "struggle with the language", and instructors were not able to help them throughout the course of the program (1 instructor),
- Many aspects and issues in the field may not reach many students because they are only introduced in some elective courses, thus, if students do not take these courses they will miss a lot of information (2 instructors).

Regarding the third question in the interview's third part, the instructors were required to give some suggestions that can be useful for the improvement of the program. The first suggestion to which all the instructor agreed, is the need to add more courses.

Instructor 3 suggested the addition of courses, saying that:

Maybe more courses can be taken and this will be an opportunity for students to... you know, look at the profession from a wider angle.

The instructors saw the need for courses that are more consistent with the latest issues and developments in the field of ELT and some of them suggested some of the courses that can be added to the curriculum as electives. For instance, instructor 1 suggested a

course entitled: “Corpus Linguistics in ELT” and another one entitled “Critical Pedagogy” and she added:

Critical Pedagogy is very important, because then I mean, if students learn how to become critical in everything, then it means they can make some adaptations, they can make some adjustments, and they can also become agents of change.

Another suggestion for course addition was made by instructor 4, who suggested:

One course can be about technology. The other one can be about world Englishes or something related with culture. Okay. So, these courses can be added as elective courses.

Moreover, since the MA program seemed to be more “research oriented” as instructor 4 described it, she suggested that a course that deals with the practical side of teaching, or (practicum), can be added to the program in order to provide the opportunity for students to apply the knowledge that is being taught and to create the chance for students with no teaching experience to actually practice teaching. She added that:

I think maybe some practical aspect can be integrated maybe in one of the courses we can get them to... you know, to do some teaching... we can focus a little bit more on the teaching.

To compensate for the problem that some important elective courses may not be available for students whenever they want or that there is a great chance that many students may not choose certain important elective courses, instructor 5 suggested that some elective courses can be made compulsory, saying that: “Otherwise you cannot be sure that all students will take the same courses”.

Other suggestions and recommendations that were made by the instructors were:

- The curriculum needs to be updated regularly (three instructors),
- There should be more meetings among instructors to share syllabus, discuss each other’s instruction and content and to avoid overlaps among courses (two instructors),

- The duration of the program can be shortened (one instructor),
- There should be a continuous and periodic evaluation of the program (one instructor),
- Admission criteria can include an online interview part for the applicants to make sure that the applicants have the minimal levels of linguistic and pedagogical competence (one instructor),
- The program can be made into a ‘hybrid program’ that can function on and off campus to make the learning journey easier for students (one instructor).

## **4.2 Student Questionnaire**

The main purpose of using this instrument for data collection is to collect information about the students’ perceptions related to the MA in ELT Program in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses observed by the students and to obtain their suggestions that would contribute to the program’s improvement. Demographic data about the participants were collected through the first part of the questionnaire, the second part was used to collect quantitative data (through close-ended items) and the third part collected qualitative data (through open-ended items).

### **4.2.1 Quantitative Data**

For quantitative data collection, the researcher distributed a questionnaire to the students. The second part of this questionnaire consists of 31 close-ended items concerning the MA in ELT Program. The researcher provided some instructions for the completion of this task, where students were required to express their perceptions regarding the program on a five-point Likert scale where the options ranged between ‘strongly agree’ as ‘1’ and ‘strongly disagree’ as ‘5’. The percentages of the collected quantitative data were obtained and presented where the statements of agreement (Agree and Strongly Agree) and the percentages for the statements of disagreement



(Disagree and Strongly Disagree) were combined. Table 2 shows the results of the data collected in this part. The percentage of the statements of agreement seems to have ranged from 93.3% to 40% while the percentage for the statements of disagreement ranged from 46.7% to 0%, as for the percentage of the neutral answers, it ranged from 40% to 0%.

Table 2: Student Questionnaire Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 A/SA</b>	<b>2 U</b>	<b>3 D/SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>1 ...</b> has good linkage between different courses.	66.7%	20%	13.3%	1.47	0.743
<b>2 ...</b> avoids overlapping information between different courses.	46.7%	13.3%	40%	1.93	0.961
<b>3 ...</b> gives me adequate training in teaching skills.	40%	13.3%	46.7%	2.07	0.961
<b>4 ...</b> gives me adequate training in research skills.	66.7%	13.3%	20%	1.53	0.834
<b>5 ...</b> is up-to-date.	73.3%	6.7%	20%	1.47	0.834
<b>6 ...</b> encourages me to reflect on my past experiences as a language learner.	93.3%	6.7%	0%	1.07	0.258
<b>7 ...</b> encourages me to reflect on my past experiences as a language teacher.	73.3%	20%	6.7%	1.33	0.617
<b>8 ...</b> encourages me to relate my practice to relevant theoretical knowledge.	73.3%	13.3%	13.3%	1.40	0.737
<b>9 ...</b> promotes the ability to deal effectively with teaching in different contexts.	46.7%	26.7%	26.7%	1.80	0.862
<b>10 ...</b> promotes the ability to deal effectively with teaching for different purposes.	53.3%	26.7%	20%	1.6	0.816
<b>11 ...</b> promotes the ability to conduct research in different contexts.	66.7%	20%	13.3%	1.47	0.743
<b>12 ...</b> promotes constant teacher professional development.	73.3%	20%	6.7%	1.33	0.617

<b>13 ...</b> balances teacher-centered and student-centered learning in its courses.	80%	6.7%	13.3%	1.33	0.724
<b>14 ...</b> teaches me how to teach English.	40%	20%	40%	2.00	0.926
<b>15 ...</b> teaches me how to evaluate myself as a teacher.	66.7%	13.3%	20%	1.53	0.834
<b>16 ...</b> teaches me how to design and conduct a research.	73.3%	20%	6.7%	1.33	0.617
<b>17 ...</b> teaches me how to evaluate and adapt foreign language teaching materials.	80%	13.3%	6.7%	1.27	0.594
<b>18 ...</b> teaches me how to critically evaluate and analyze research articles.	80%	13.3%	6.7%	1.27	0.594
<b>19 ...</b> teaches me how to synthesize information from literature.	73.3%	26.7%	0%	1.27	0.458
<b>20 ...</b> teaches me how to review literature.	80%	20%	0%	1.20	0.414
<b>21 ...</b> familiarizes me with various concepts related to English language teaching.	86.7%	6.7%	6.7%	1.20	0.561
<b>22 ...</b> helps me develop an understanding of current issues in English language teaching.	73.3%	13.3%	13.3%	1.40	0.737
<b>23 ...</b> helps me clarify my beliefs about language teaching and learning.	80%	6.7%	13.3%	1.33	0.724
<b>24 ...</b> increases my power of self-evaluation.	80%	6.7%	13.3%	1.33	0.724
<b>25 ...</b> equips me with foreign language testing and evaluation skills.	53.3%	26.7%	20%	1.67	0.816
<b>26 ...</b> is relevant to my needs.	53.3%	20%	26.7%	1.73	0.884
<b>27 ...</b> has a good balance between teaching skills and research skills training.	46.7%	13.3%	40%	1.93	0.961
<b>28 ...</b> teaches me to write an academic research paper.	60%	13.3%	26.7%	1.67	0.900
<b>29 ...</b> meets my needs.	53.3%	40%	6.7%	1.53	0.640

<b>30 ...</b> gets me to be able to teach English more effectively.	53.3%	26.7%	20%	1.67	0.816
<b>31 ...</b> gets me to be able to conduct research in English Language Teaching more effectively.	86.7%	0%	13.3%	1.27	0.704

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree  
M = Mean Std. = Standard deviation

As it is observed in Table 2, the 6<sup>th</sup> item in the questionnaire which states that the English Language Teaching Master's program encourages students to reflect had the highest percentage of agreement (93.3%), while the other 6.7% were uncertain of this statement (mean: 1.07; standard deviation: 0.258).

The statements that have the second highest percentages of agreement are items 21 and 31, where 86.7% of the participants agreed that the English Language Teaching Master's program familiarizes students with concepts related to their field (item 21) and enables them to conduct research in English Language Teaching more effectively (item 31). On the other hand, 6.7% of the participants did not agree with the statement in item 21 and the other 6.7% were not certain (mean: 1.2; standard deviation: 0.561), while 13.3% disagreed with the statement in item 31 (mean: 1.27; standard deviation: 0.704).

Another high percentage of agreement was observed in items 13, 17, 18, 20, 23 and 24. Eighty percent of the students agreed that the evaluated program balances teacher-centeredness and student-centeredness in learning through its courses (item 13), teaches students how to evaluate and adapt teaching materials (item 17), teaches them how to critically evaluate and analyze research articles (item 18), teaches students how to review literature (item 20), helps students clarify my beliefs about language teaching

and learning (item 23), and *increases my power of self-evaluation* (item 24). While only 6.7% disagreed with items 17 and 18, the other 13.3% were not certain (mean: 1.27; standard deviation: 0.594). And with regards to item 20, it shows that 20% of the students were not certain about the item and no one disagreed with the statement (mean: 1.2; standard deviation: 0.414). As for items 13, 23 and 24, the results show that 13.3% of the students expressed their disagreement with the three items while 6.7% of them were not certain about them (mean: 1.33; standard deviation: 0.724).

The results presented in the table above also show that 73.3% of the students believed (agreed/strongly agreed) that the program *is up-to-date* (item 5), encourages students' reflection on their past experiences as teachers (item 7), encourages students to relate their practice to relevant theoretical knowledge (item 8), promotes constant teacher professional development (item 12), teaches students how to design and conduct a research (item 16), teaches students how to synthesize information from literature (item 19) and helps students develop an understanding of current issues in English language teaching (item 22). On the other hand, 20% of the students think that the program is not up-to-date (item 5), while 6.7% neither agreed nor disagreed with this item (mean: 1.47; standard deviation: 0.834). For items 7, 12 and 16, only 6.7% of the students did not agree that the program encourages students' reflection on their teaching experiences, promotes constant teacher professional development or teaches students how to design and conduct a research, while 20% were neutral with their answers (mean: 1.33; standard deviation: 0.617). The results from item 19 show that while 26.7% of the students' answers were neutral about the program's ability to teach students how to synthesize information from the literature, none of the students disagreed (mean: 1.27; standard deviation: 0.458). And for items 8 and 22, the

percentage of disagreement with both items scored 13.3% of the students' answers and another 13.3% neither agreed nor disagreed (mean: 1.4; standard deviation: 0.737).

In addition, 66.7% of the students agreed that the English Language Teaching Master's Program is successful in linking different courses (item 1), gives students adequate training in research skills (item 4), promotes the ability to conduct research in different contexts (item 11) and teaches them how to evaluate themselves as teachers (item 15). In items 1 and 11, 20% of the answers were uncertain of each of the two statements, while 13.3% of the students showed their disagreement (mean: 1.47; standard deviation: 0.743). As for items 4 and 15, 20% of the students did not agree that the evaluated program provides adequate training in research skills or teaches students how to evaluate themselves as teachers and 13.3% of the students were uncertain of these items (mean: 1.53; standard deviation: 0.834).

Sixty percent of the students expressed their agreement with item 28, stating that the program teaches students to write an academic research paper, 26.7% of the students expressed their disagreement and 13.3% were uncertain (mean: 1.67; standard deviation: 0.9).

Furthermore, 53.3% of the answers in items 10, 25, 26, 29 and 30 express the students' agreement that the program promotes the ability to deal effectively with teaching for different purposes (item 10), equips students with testing and evaluation skills (item 25), *meets their needs* (item 29), is relevant to their needs (item 26) and gets them to be able to teach English more effectively (item 30). For items 10, 25 and 30, 26.7% of the students showed uncertainty through their answers, while the other 20% of the answers revealed the students' disagreement with the items (mean: 1.6; standard

deviation: 0.816). In addition, 26.7% of the students expressed their disagreement with the statement in the 26<sup>th</sup> item and 20% of the answers neither agreed nor disagreed (mean: 1.73; standard deviation: 0.884). And for item 29, 40% of the answers were neutral and only 6.7% of the students expressed their disagreement (mean: 1.53; standard deviation: 0.64).

Moreover, 46.7% of the students expressed their agreement with the program's ability in avoiding overlapping information between courses (item 2), promoting the ability to deal effectively with teaching in different contexts (item 9) and balancing research skills and teaching skills training (item 27), while 40% of the students expressed their disagreement with items 2 and 27, while 13.3% of the students neither agreed or disagreed (mean: 1.93; standard deviation: 0.961). Furthermore, 26.7% of the students were not sure about the statement in item 9 while the other 26.7% expressed their disagreement (mean: 1.8; standard deviation: 0.862).

Regarding the statement in item 3, stating that the program gives students adequate training in teaching skills, 46.7% disagreed with this statement, 40% expressed their agreement and 13% of the students' answers were not certain about it (mean: 2.07; standard deviation: 0.961).

Furthermore, the lowest percentage revealed through the table goes to item 14. The results showed equal percentage of agreement and disagreement with the program's ability to teach students how to teach English where they both were equal to 40%. And the other 20% of the answers neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (mean: 2 and its standard deviation is 0.926).

#### **4.2.2 Qualitative Data**

This part presents the qualitative data that were collected through the open-ended questions in the third part of the questionnaire. This part of the questionnaire includes three questions that require information about the program's strengths and weaknesses perceived by the students, and their suggestions for its improvement. Observing the findings of the first question, the results showed that the students believe that the English Language Teaching Master's Program at Eastern Mediterranean University has many strengths. The results revealed that many students had a high level of satisfaction regarding the theoretical knowledge the program provides them with, the thing that was expressed by 6 different students. Student 15 for example stated that the program "provides students with adequate theoretical knowledge", student 1 stated that the program "provided me with awareness related to the ELT theories", and student 9 said that "we are introduced to a wide variety of theories". Similarly, student 7 stated that the program "introduces learners to various points of views and theories in the field of ELT". In a similar vein, the program, in the opinion of student 2, provides chronological overview of the major approaches to ELT methods, and student 10 mentioned that "students get to learn about current issues in ELT".

Another strength that was mentioned by some students (6 students), was that the program is successful in promoting research skills. according to the students, "The program helps candidates to approach research" (student 7), and it "equips learners with the needed research skills" (student 15). Students 9 stated that through the program "we learn how to research". Moreover, student 2 stated that the program helps students in becoming more successful with the preparation of functional literature review. The answer provided by student 6 was "the program helps student to become

more familiar with writing a different kind of research”. And, student 11 stated that through the program “students are encouraged to be good researchers and always look for new/recent resources”.

Furthermore, students 10, 11, 12 and 14 all stated that the program is up-to-date, for instance, student 12 mentioned that “It’s up-to-date in terms of research and studies”, student 11 stated that “the courses are up-to-date” and students 10 and 14 believed that the program or the curriculum as a whole is up-to-date.

Another strong aspect of the English Language Teaching Master’s Program is related to the instructors’ qualifications. Four students gave positive comments about the instructors’ knowledge and qualifications. For example, student 2 stated that the “instructors’ background knowledge is one of the strengths of the program”, student 14 said that “some teachers are well qualified and helpful”, student 8 said that “the professors are friendly, knowledgeable and helpful. They understand students’ needs”, and student 3 said that “the program has teachers who are well qualified in their teaching areas”.

In addition, and with relation to the program’s instructors, three students expressed their satisfaction with the classroom procedures and instruction. Student 12, for instance, stated that some instructors use very good teaching methods, student 13 described the teachers’ instruction as very useful, and student 2 stated that she was very satisfied by the discussions that took place in the courses where students were able to express themselves freely and had to learn from each other.

Other strengths that were stated by the students through the open-ended questions are:



- The program introduces students to different contexts related to ELT (student 1),
- It provides cultural variety through its courses (student 15),
- During the ELT MA program, students have the chance to learn how to relate their experiences to relevant theoretical knowledge (student 5),
- The program helps candidates improve their reflective and evaluation skills (student 7),
- The program encourages students to look at any source or point of view critically (student 15),
- It helps students to know the various techniques of teaching (student 12),
- It provides learners with different ways that could make teaching more effective (student 3),
- The program is very academic (student 9),
- Some courses totally meet the current needs of ELT teachers, especially the professional academic areas (student 7),
- This program helps students be more autonomous (student 6),
- The program enables students to design or evaluate school curriculums and materials (student 6),
- The program is more learner centered (students 6).

On the other hand, regardless of the great number of strengths the students found in the ELT MA program, they also mentioned a number of weaknesses in the program they thought they had to mention. Despite the rich background knowledge instructors had, the students saw that some aspects of the instructors or some instructors' performances are not satisfactory. The mentioned aspects can be divided into three categories: instructor's general performance, instruction and communication issues.

Regarding the general performance, three students expressed their dissatisfaction with the effort made by some instructors. Student 7, for instance, stated that “because of some instructors, certain courses were a waste of time because they did not put the needed effort to contribute to the course or to the student’s knowledge”. Student 11 also stated that “some instructors are not working and teaching effectively, the students are not benefiting from them”. Furthermore, student 14 complained about the way the course and course outline was presented and he said that “some courses and course outlines are not very clear, sometimes I get lost when I want to know what to read or what to prepare for a lecture”.

The second category (instruction) is, to a great extent, related to the first one but it goes in more detail. For example, student 11 suggests, that the way the subjects are presented in the courses can be changed. In her answer regarding the weaknesses, student 7 stated that “some courses were not delivered in a way to meet the students’ needs”, also, student 6, mentioned that “some of the courses need to be taught or clarified more adequately” and confirming her complaint, student 14 stated that “not much explanations is provided by the teachers; the students are doing most of the presentations”.

And regarding the third category, the students expressed their dissatisfaction with the communication related issue. Student 6 stated that there was a lack of feedback by some teachers regarding the assignments. Students 11 and 4, on the other hand, were not satisfied with the feedback from their supervisors regarding their thesis corrections. Student 14 also mentioned that “some teachers are always busy and you can’t get help from them right away”. In addition, student 15 stated that “most instructors are not

active online and don't make much effort in using technology especially when it comes to replying to emails".

The second weakness that was revealed through the open-ended questions is related to the lack of practical training. Five students mentioned that the program does not provide the opportunity for students to practice teaching and thus does not prepare them to dealing with real-life teaching situations, especially for those with no previous teaching experience, and thought that the program focuses more on the theoretical aspects of ELT. Student 9, for instance stated that "I see lack of practical training in this program. I came to become a better teacher. If the program is too theoretical or research-based, I won't gain any practical skills".

Other weaknesses that were found are:

- The seminar course is not actually taught (student 15),
- Some useful elective courses are not offered every semester, so students are very likely to miss their chance of taking the courses they are interested in (student 7),
- The instructors seem to have no coordination when distributing and assigning tasks (student 15),
- There are lots of assignments during the semester (student 2 added that "this is hard to handle because students don't take only 1 course). Student 4 also stated that "there is too many homework, papers to write and projects that we are forgetting our primary focus, which is the thesis".
- Some courses were too general (student 7),
- Many teachers do not sympathize with students' lack of time or the fact that they have other responsibilities (student 3),

- Testing in some courses is based on memorization (student 2),
- Old-fashioned teaching methods (student 12),
- Some instructors choose very non-reader-friendly coursebooks and materials (student 15),
- Students have no say in choosing the resources they get to study from (student 11).

The third question in the questionnaire's third part asked students to provide some suggestions that can contribute to the improvement of the ELT MA program. The suggestion that was presented by 35% of the students (5 students) was the one related to increasing the practical aspect of ELT rather than focusing on the theoretical knowledge alone, where student 10 stated that the program "should be more practical rather than theoretical". Student 5 also stated that the program should be "giving the chance to the students to practice what they have learnt during lectures". Moreover, student 2 said: "In the end we'll be English teachers, therefore we should have teaching practice somehow both for adult and young learners".

Other suggestions and recommendations that contribute to the evaluated program's improvement were mostly related to the addition and improvement of the content and the organization of courses. For example, student 7, on one hand, suggested organizing the curriculum and the schedules of instructors so that some of the most important elective courses could be offered every semester; she said:

Few elective courses such as ESP, curriculum design and materials development should be provided every semester as they really provide some of the most essential and needed knowledge.

Student 3, on the other hand, suggested adding some recent courses related to language teaching and pedagogic skills. Student 15 also suggested paying more attention to the

prospective teachers' linguistic competence and she suggested providing more and better language courses for them. In the same vein, students 6 and 15 suggested the addition of some elective courses that serve the purpose of teaching students the needed analytical skills when it comes to dealing with statistical data and statistical programs used for quantitative data analysis. Student 6 stated, "I suggest adding one more module like teaching statistics especially for those students who have a thesis because while they write their thesis they need to pay for someone for doing their statistical part, it costs students financially, and also the students will be confused about how to explain it in more appropriate ways". And student 15 said, "adding some courses related to teaching data analysis for the thesis and other research can be very helpful".

In addition, the students provided further suggestions in relation with thesis writing, like adding some courses that would teach students how to write a well-organized thesis (student 1), providing some courses or workshops related to thesis writing (student 10) and student 11 suggested that the thesis should be specified with some credits as well.

Further suggestions and recommendations were provided by various students, and those included:

- Making changes in the teachers' instruction (student 6: "I suggest making some changes in the way they teach", and student 14: "teachers should talk more in the class and give as much info as they can"),
- Reducing assignments (student 3 stated that "for each course, one presentation and one project is enough I believe. In Europe this is how they do it, and those students

are better than us. So key to success is not giving too many projects, presentations and projects but to encourage students to write good thesis,

- Caring about students' personal lives and responsibilities (student 4),
- Paying more attention to students' professional development (student 6),
- Coming up with better criteria for admission (student 15),
- Making some changes in the teaching staff (student 12),
- Using more up-to-date materials (student 14),
- Involving students with choosing the course materials and sources (student 11),
- Improving effectiveness in the use of the internet for communication between students and instructors (student 15).

### **4.3 Alumni Questionnaire**

Similar to the student questionnaire, the aim of the alumni questionnaire is to collect the perceptions and opinions of ELT MA graduates about the evaluated program. Qualitative data concerned with the program's strengths, weaknesses and possible suggestions for the evaluated program's improvement are collected through this data collection tool which is divided into three parts: demographic information in the first, quantitative data through close-ended questions in the second and qualitative data through open-ended questions in the third part.

#### **4.3.1 Quantitative Data**

The second section in this data collection tool includes the collection of quantitative data through the use of the adapted questionnaire developed by Peacock (2009). The ELT MA graduates were asked to complete 31 close-ended questions where the answers are expressed through a five-point Likert scale. The results presented in Table 3 show the results for the agreement statements (Agree & Strongly Agree) and disagreement statements (Disagree & Strongly Disagree) combined together. The

results shown in Table 3 reveal that the percentage of the agreement statements ranged from 92.9% to 64.3%, the statements that expressed uncertainty had a percentage of 35.7% to 0% and the percentage of disagreement statements ranged from 21.4% to 0%.

Table 3: Alumni Questionnaire Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1</b> A/SA	<b>2</b> N	<b>3</b> D/SD	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>1 ...</b> had good linkage between different courses.	92.9%	0%	7.1%	1.14	0.535
<b>2 ...</b> avoided overlapping information between different courses.	64.3%	21.4%	14.3%	1.50	0.760
<b>3 ...</b> gave me adequate training in teaching skills.	71.4%	28.6%	0%	1.29	0.469
<b>4 ...</b> gave me adequate training in research skills.	92.9%	7.1%	0%	1.07	0.267
<b>5 ...</b> was up-to-date.	71.4%	28.6%	0%	1.29	0.469
<b>6 ...</b> encouraged me to reflect on my past experiences as a language learner.	85.7%	14.3%	0%	1.14	0.363
<b>7 ...</b> encouraged me to reflect on my past experiences as a language teacher.	85.7%	14.3%	0%	1.14	0.363
<b>8 ...</b> encouraged me to relate my practice to relevant theoretical knowledge.	85.7%	14.3%	0%	1.14	0.363
<b>9 ...</b> promoted the ability to deal effectively with teaching in different contexts.	71.4%	28.6%	0%	1.29	0.469
<b>10 ...</b> promoted the ability to deal effectively with teaching for different purposes.	64.3%	35.7%	0%	1.36	0.497

<b>11 ...</b> promoted the ability to conduct research in different contexts.	85.7%	14.3%	0%	1.14	0.363
<b>12 ...</b> promoted constant teacher professional development.	92.9%	0%	7.1%	1.14	0.535
<b>13 ...</b> balanced teacher-centered and student-centered learning in its courses.	85.7%	7.1%	7.1%	1.21	0.579
<b>14 ...</b> taught me how to teach English.	50%	28.6%	21.4%	1.71	0.825
<b>15 ...</b> taught me how to evaluate myself as a teacher.	64.3%	14.3%	21.4%	1.57	0.852
<b>16 ...</b> taught me how to design and conduct a research.	92.9%	0%	7.1%	1.14	0.535
<b>17 ...</b> taught me how to evaluate and adapt foreign language teaching materials.	71.4%	21.4%	7.1%	1.36	0.633
<b>18 ...</b> taught me how to critically evaluate and analyze research articles.	85.7%	7.1%	7.1%	1.21	0.579
<b>19 ...</b> taught me how to synthesize information from literature.	71.4%	21.4%	7.1%	1.36	0.633
<b>20 ...</b> taught me how to review literature.	85.7%	7.1%	7.1%	1.21	0.579
<b>21 ...</b> familiarized me with various concepts related to English language teaching.	92.9%	0%	7.1%	1.14	0.535
<b>22 ...</b> helped me develop an understanding of current issues in English language teaching.	78.6%	14.3%	7.1%	1.29	0.611
<b>23 ...</b> helped me clarify my beliefs about language teaching and learning.	71.4%	14.3%	14.3%	1.43	0.756
<b>24 ...</b> increased my power of self-evaluation.	78.6%	7.1%	14.3%	1.36	0.745



<b>25 ...</b> equipped me with foreign language testing and evaluation skills.	64.3%	21.4%	14.3%	1.50	0.760
<b>26 ...</b> was relevant to my needs.	78.6%	14.3%	7.1%	1.29	0.611
<b>27 ...</b> had a good balance between teaching skills and research skills training.	85.7%	0%	14.3%	1.29	0.726
<b>28 ...</b> taught me to write an academic research paper.	85.7%	0%	14.3%	1.29	0.726
<b>29 ...</b> met my needs.	78.6%	14.3%	7.1%	1.29	0.611
<b>30 ...</b> got me to be able to teach English more effectively.	64.3%	21.4%	14.3%	1.50	0.760
<b>31 ...</b> got me to be able to conduct research in English Language Teaching more effectively.	85.7%	7.1%	7.1%	1.21	0.579

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree M = Mean Std. = Standard Deviation

The results presented in Table 3 show the percentages and levels of agreement and disagreement expressed by the alumni regarding the given 31 close-ended items. The highest percentage of agreement is 92.9%, where the graduates agreed that the ELT MA Program is successful in linking different courses (item 1), gave the graduates adequate training in research skills (item 4), *promoted constant teacher professional development* (item 12), taught the graduates how to design and conduct a research (item 16) and familiarized them with various concepts related to English language teaching (item 21). For items 1, 12, 16 and 21, only 7.1% of the graduates expressed their disagreement (mean: 1.14; standard deviation: 0.535). On the other hand, none of the graduates disagreed with item 4 only 7.1% were not certain about this item (mean: 1.07; standard deviation: 0.267).

The items that had the second highest percentage of agreement were items 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 18, 20, 27, 28 and 31. Eighty-five point seven percent of the answers showed the graduates' agreement that the program encouraged graduates to reflect on their past experiences as language learners (item 6), encouraged them to reflect on their previous experiences as teachers (item 7), encouraged them to relate their practice to relevant theoretical knowledge (item 8), promoted the ability to conduct research in different contexts (item 11), balanced teacher-centered and student-centered learning in its courses (item 13), enabled them to know how to critically evaluate and analyze research articles (item 18), helped them to learn how to review literature (item 20), successfully balanced research skills and teaching skills training (item 27), taught students to produce an academic research paper (item 28) and got them to be able to conduct research in English Language Teaching more effectively (item 30). The results showed that only 14.3% of the graduates' answers expressed their disagreement regarding items 27 and 28 (mean: 1.29; standard deviation: 0.726). As for items 6, 7, 8 and 11, none of the students expressed their disagreement and 14.3% of the answers expressed the graduates' uncertainty regarding the items (mean: 1.14; standard deviation: 0.363). Furthermore, 7.1 % of the graduates disagreed with items 13, 18, 20 and 31, and the other 7.1% of the graduates were not certain about them (mean: 1.21; standard deviation: 0.579).

Moreover, 78.6% of the graduates thought (Agreed/Strongly Agreed) that the program *helped them develop an understanding of current issues in English language teaching* (item 22), *improved the students' abilities in self-evaluation* (item 24), *was relevant to the needs of students* (item 26) and was able to *meet the students' needs* (item 29). The percentage of disagreement with items 22, 26 and 19 was only 7.1% and the rest

(14.3%) of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed (mean: 1.29; standard deviation: 0.611). On the other hand, while 14.3% of the participants disagreed with item 24, the other 7.1% were uncertain about this statement (mean: 1.36; standard deviation: 0.745).

The percentage of agreement with items 3, 5, 9, 17, 19 and 23 was also high, where 71.4% of the participants agreed that the evaluated program gave them adequate training in teaching skills (item 3), was up-to-date (item 5), promoted the ability to deal effectively with teaching in different contexts (item 9), taught the graduates how to evaluate and adapt teaching materials (item 17), enabled students to know how to synthesize information from literature (item 19) and helped them clarify their beliefs about language teaching and learning (item 23). Although the rate of agreement is not the highest among all items, the rate of disagreement is significantly low. In item 23, 14.3% of the participants showed their disagreement and the other 14.3% were not certain about it (mean: 1.43; standard deviation: 0.756). In items 17 and 19, only 7.1% of the answers expressed the participants' disagreement and the rest 21.4% expressed uncertainty (mean: 1.36; standard deviation: 0.633). And in items 3, 5 and 9, none of the participants expressed their disagreement with the statements mentioned in the three items and the rest of the answers (28.6%) showed that the participants were not sure about the statements (mean: 1.29; standard deviation: 0.469).

In addition, 64.3% of the graduates agreed that the ELT MA Program avoided overlapping information between different courses (item 2), promoted the ability to deal effectively with teaching for different purposes (item 10), helped them learn how to evaluate themselves as teachers (item 15), equipped them with testing and evaluation skills (item 25) and got them to be able to teach English more effectively

(item 30). Regarding item 15, 21.4% of the answers provided by the graduates showed that they did not agree that the program helped them to learn how to evaluate themselves as teachers and 14.3% of the participants were not certain of this statement (mean: 1.57; standard deviation: 0.852). Items 2, 25 and 30 revealed lower levels of disagreement: 14.3% of the graduates did not think that the program was successful in avoiding overlapping information among courses, did not equip them with testing and evaluation skills and did not get them to be able to teach English more effectively. On the other hand, 21.4% of the answers showed uncertainty regarding those three items (mean: 1.50; standard deviation: 0.76). Furthermore, item 10 revealed that none of the graduates disagreed with the statement that the program promoted the ability to deal effectively with teaching for different purposes, while 35.7% of the participants were uncertain about it (mean: 1.36; standard deviation: 0.497).

The item that had the least level of agreement was item 14, where only 50% of the participants agreed that the program taught the students to teach English, 28.6% were not certain and 21.4% did not agree with this statement (mean: 1.71; standard deviation: 0.825).

#### **4.3.2 Qualitative Data**

In this part of the questionnaire, the participating graduates were asked 5 open-ended questions. Similar to the questions asked in the qualitative part of the student questionnaire and the questions asking instructors for a general evaluation of the program, the first three questions asked the graduates to state the strong and weak points of the evaluated program, in addition to providing some suggestions that could contribute to the program's improvement. The fourth question asks the graduates to state the problems that they faced during their studies and were caused by the English

Language Teaching Master's Program and in the last question, the graduates are asked to state the ways in which the program could have contributed in solving the stated problems.

Concerning the first question asking for the positive aspects of the program, the graduates provided different points of strength they could recall in English Language Teaching Master's program. The first point that was mentioned by 8 participants, which is equal to 57% of the graduates, is related to the instructors' qualification. The graduates seemed to be very satisfied with the instructors' knowledge and assistance through the courses. For example, alumni 2 stated "having knowledgeable teachers was the strongest point of the program", alumni 4 also said "the teaching staff were all well informed and efficient", alumni 6 described the lecturers as "experienced" and alumni 11 expressed her satisfaction with the lecturers as she said that they are "highly qualified lecturers". Alumni 1, 5 and 14 all described the staff as "useful" and alumni 1 added "I had a very good supervisor, who helped me during my thesis writing steps as well as the other stages".

Another point of strength mentioned by the alumni was that the program has equipped them with the adequate and necessary theoretical knowledge which helped them improve professionally and personally. For instance, alumni 3 said "It helped me become well equipped with theoretical and practical knowledge which altogether positively affected my teaching and self-confidence", and alumni 13 stated, "the program teaches the students how to use different current techniques while teaching English".

Moreover, the program, as the alumni's answers revealed, has helped them improve their research skills, as alumni 8 indicated. Similarly, alumni 13 said that the program "teaches the students how to search about new teaching techniques and prepare academic papers about these techniques and also it teaches how to teach English more effectively".

All in all, a great number of graduates seemed to be satisfied with most of the aspects regarding the ELT MA program, including the "quality of courses" (alumni 5). And as an expression for their satisfaction, alumni 10 described the program saying that "the program was well-settled" and alumni 4 said "the syllabus was well designed and met our needs".

Another strong aspect of the program was its rich environment consisting of students and instructors with different backgrounds, cultures, tongues and experiences. Alumni 11 stated having "instructors from various countries and cultures" as one of the strengths of the program and alumni 12 said that one of the strengths is "students from different countries, backgrounds and experiences and their willingness to share them with others". Moreover, alumni 14 said "the environment was so friendly and multicultural... that encouraged me to use English to communicate with my classmates". Other strengths were the department's library (alumni5), and the effective involvement of students and the discussions during classes (alumni11).

Answering the second question in the qualitative part of the questionnaire, the graduates were able to indicate several weaknesses they thought the program had. One weakness was stated by alumni 11 and 8 and was related to the lack of equal participation between students and instructors in presenting the materials in most of

the courses. For example, alumni 11 stated “some courses were too dependent on students’ presentations, in some topic areas; I felt the need for a lecture from a professional”. Other alumni (2, 6 and 7) stated that the program did not provide enough practical training when it comes to research and alumni 6 added that “giving too much theory was not necessary”.

Another weakness was mentioned by alumni 2 and 5 and was concerned with the interaction and communication between students themselves and between students and instructors. Alumni 2 said that there was “less contact between students and teachers out of the classroom”, while alumni 5 said the number of students in the classrooms was few, which limited the chances for healthy interaction and discussion in the classroom.

Other weaknesses that were identified by various alumni are as follows:

- Not all the teachers were keeping themselves up-to-date (alumni 12),
- The ELT MA program did not provide students with teaching skills (alumni 9),
- Assignments and exams overloads (alumni 3),
- Lack of good instruction and planning, alumni 10 said “Most of the teachers had no idea about what they are doing”
- Repetitive materials (alumni 12),
- There were not any courses involving the use of technology in language teaching, ‘graduated in 2004’ (alumni 11),
- Very time consuming. Alumni 4 mentioned “it was tiring to teach and continue with the MA program at the same time”.

As for the suggestions that would help in improving the program as asked in the third open-ended question, the alumni provided a variety of suggestions. The first suggestion provided by the alumni was related to the practical aspect of the program. The alumni seemed to have had benefited from receiving some training in teaching, conducting research and in the adaptation and designing of ELT materials. Alumni 12 for instance suggested to “make the courses more practical”, alumni 9 suggested adding some teaching practice through the courses, alumni 2 suggested “organizing more practical research course, and alumni 5 recommended “more practical materials design or adaptation lessons”.

Furthermore, the alumni made some suggestions in relation to thesis writing and the needed knowledge for completing the procedures involved in research and thesis writing. Alumni 6 said that “writing the thesis was the most problematic thing for me and my friends” and suggested that “supervisors should help and guide students more effectively in this process”. In a similar vein, alumni 14 suggested the addition of a course that would help or teach students how to use SPSS and statistical programs that can facilitate their data analysis needed in different research studies and in the thesis writing process.

Other suggestions included the following:

- Using a variety of materials (alumni 12),
- Familiarizing students (and some teachers) with new sources of references and programs to be used during projects and thesis (alumni 2),
- Promoting student centeredness through the courses (alumni 12),
- Offering online courses for distance learning (alumni 5).



The fourth question in this part asked the alumni about the different problems they faced during their teaching and the relation of these problems with the weaknesses that could be found in the ELT MA program. The mentioned problems were very few compared to the number of participating alumni and most of the participants stated that they did not face any problems that could be caused by a weakness in the MA program. One of the problems that was mentioned was related to the diversity of students' backgrounds in the classroom in which the graduates taught. Alumni 2, stated "facing diversity of students holding different cultures was one of the issues which must be considered more" and she added "teaching and covering some practical courses dealing with how to teach different skills and how to manage a class with variety of ethnicities could have been useful".

Another problem was mentioned by alumni 1, who has struggled with the use of technology. Yet, she added "using the technology in class, maybe because 14 years ago it was so rare to use the technology in class. Therefore, we couldn't take any courses about this..." and she added "however, the new ELT programs now might include these kind of courses, so the new students will not face such problems in their classes".

#### **4.4 Summary**

This chapter has presented the study's results that were obtained through the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collection tools, namely instructor interviews, student questionnaire (open- and close-ended items) and alumni questionnaire (open- and close-ended items). The obtained results will be further discussed in the next chapter and the four research questions will be answered.

## Chapter 5

### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the results of the study are discussed and compared to the results of several relevant studies in the literature, and the four research questions are answered consecutively. After discussing the results of the study, the conclusion of the study is presented, followed by an explanation of the implications of the study, the limitations and the suggestions for further research.

#### 5.1 Discussion of the Results

The findings of this study revealed that the perceptions of instructors, students and alumni about the English Language Teaching Master's program in Eastern Mediterranean University are mostly positive. The participants have expressed their different opinions of the program and provided various view-points regarding its strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, they provided some suggestions they thought would contribute to the improvement of the ELT MA program. And regarding the program's success in addressing the needs of the students, the results showed that the participants were, to a certain extent, satisfied with the program's ability in meeting their needs.

##### **5.1.1 The Research Question Number One: What are the strengths of the English Language Teaching Master's Program from the perspectives of instructors, students and alumni?**

Based on the results reached through perceptions of instructors, students and alumni, the major strength of the English Language Teaching Master's program is the fact that

it promotes the students' ability to conduct research. The quantitative data for example showed that 92.9% of the alumni expressed their agreement with the program's ability to teach and train students to conduct research (items 4 and 16), while the highest positive response provided by the students to questions related to research, in addition to the program's ability to promote training and teaching students to produce research more effectively was 86.7% (item 31).

The qualitative data also provided some expressions related to this strength. The instructor interviews, for example, showed that all the instructors believe that the program enables students to produce research in different contexts (revealed by questions 4 and 14). In addition, the qualitative data in the student and alumni questionnaires also included many expressions related to this strength. Forty percent of the students mentioned the ability to conduct research as one of the strengths of the program as well as two of the alumni. The reason behind considering the program to be very successful in preparing students for and equipping them with such effective research skills can go back to the content, requirements and testing methods applied in most of the courses in the program. Concerning the content, the program contains a compulsory course called 'Research Methods in ELT' in which students are introduced to the main concepts and terminology related to different types of research, they are trained to critically analyze and determine good and bad research including the used methods, sampling, general means of analysis, general organization of the research etc., and at the end of this course, they are required to produce a sample research to assure that they have gained adequate skills in this area. Requirements of other courses also include the critical analysis of different types of research and different sources, to be able to synthesize information from the literature and to produce a literature review.

The responses from quantitative data collected from student and alumni proved the success of the program in most of these areas where the level of agreement with related items received percentages which ranged between 71.4% and 85.7% from both student and alumni (items 19 and 20). Another reason for stating promoting research skills as a strength is the fact that the ultimate objective of the program is the thesis writing. To graduate from the program, students are required to produce a well written, well organized thesis, which requires very good research skills. This strength could not be compared to the results in related studies conducted using Peacock's (2009) evaluation framework since the items related to research were added as a part of the adaptation of the framework as an attempt to make it more suitable for the MA program rather than the undergraduate programs.

The results from the quantitative data showed that one of the major strengths of the program is the theoretical knowledge the program introduces the students to. Ninety-two point two percent of the alumni and 86.7% of the students agreed that the program familiarizes them with various concepts related to ELT (item 21). And regarding item 22, 78.6% of the alumni and 73.3% of the students agreed that the program helps them to develop an understanding of current issues in ELT. Moreover, both the alumni and the students agreed that the program encourages them to relate their teaching to the theoretical knowledge that they have learnt through the program.

The qualitative data also show that the participants had the belief that the program introduces students to appropriate amount of theoretical knowledge. The open-ended items in the student and alumni questionnaires elicited many answers supporting this strength. For instance, two of the alumni and six of the students mentioned this point as one of the strengths of the program. Through their answers to the seventh question

in the instructor interviews, all the instructors stated that the program does help students obtain adequate theoretical background and the reason for this strength is the content of several compulsory and elective courses like ‘Second Language Acquisition’, ‘General Linguistics’, ‘Approaches, Methods and Techniques in ELT’. In addition, for students coming from different departments or disciplines, the program provides them with a number of deficiency courses from the BA program that introduces them to the necessary theoretical knowledge that would allow them to cope with the demands and requirements of the MA program.

Both the alumni and the students believed that the English Language Teaching Master’s program is able to promote the candidates’ reflective skills. The quantitative data revealed that both the students and the alumni strongly agree to the program’s ability to promote the skill of reflection whether it is related to their experience as learners or as teachers. The percentage of agreement with item 6 which is concerned with encouraging students to practice reflection with relation to their previous experiences as learners, for example, was 93.3% with the students and it was 85.7% with the alumni, while the percentage of agreement with item 7 (the program encourages me to reflect on my past experiences as a language teacher), was 73.3% with the students and 85.7% with the alumni. In addition, the qualitative data collected through the instructor interviews showed that the instructors do believe that the program was successful in promoting the students’ reflective practice to a certain extent and they justified their responses by stating that this is generally dependent on the content and nature of the courses and on the teachers’ instruction, but all in all they believed that they do attempt to trigger the students to think about the practice of teaching. This is also backed by the students’ and alumni’s responses to item 8 in the

questionnaire where 73.3% of the students and 85.7% of the alumni agreed that the program encourages them to relate their practice to relevant theoretical knowledge. This result seems to be consistent with Peacock's (2009) research where it was shown through the results that the program promoted the reflective practice and evaluation skills. The results also agree with and Daloglu's (2010) study results in which 84% of the students agreed with item 8. Moreover, Zorba's (2015) study also revealed similar results from the student questionnaire where 80% and 88% of the students agreed with items 7 and 8, respectively. In a related context, the results of the study conducted by Omer (2017) showed that the levels of agreement with items 7 and 8 were some of the highest levels among other items in both students and alumni questionnaires.

Another strong point in the program revealed through both quantitative and qualitative data is promoting professional development. The responses to item 12 in the questionnaire (Does the program promote constant teacher professional development?), show that 92.9% of the alumni and 73.3% of the students expressed their agreement with this question. Regarding the results collected through the qualitative data (instructor interviews), the instructors confirmed the program's ability to promote constant teacher professional development by answering positively to the tenth interview question (Does the program promote the 'long-term, developmental nature of learning to teach' – does it promote post-qualification teacher growth and development?). Some of the instructors explained their answer by stating that the program itself is a call for the students' professional development and is a stage of this process in itself. Another reason why the participants believe in the program's ability to promote professional development is the fact that the program offers an elective course entitled 'Professional Development in ELT'. This course introduces students to

the concept of professional development from scratch, it defines the concept and introduces students to different forms of professional development and its importance for teachers. One of the instructors stated that professional development is meant to be the ultimate objective of the MA program, and that she explained that professional development of teachers is a never ending process. In the related literature, similar results were revealed. For instance, in the study conducted by Zorba (2015), the results showed that 100% of the instructors believed that the program promotes the long-term professional development of teachers (9<sup>th</sup> item). Similar results were also found in Peacock's (2009) and Omer's (2017) studies.

The results also showed that the English Language Teaching Master's program successfully balances teacher-centeredness and student-centeredness through its courses. The qualitative results showed that four of the instructors agreed that there is a balance between teacher and student centeredness and one of them believed that the program is more student than teacher centered. Answers from the quantitative data collected through student and alumni questionnaires showed a high level of agreement with the 13<sup>th</sup> item asking whether the program balances teacher-centeredness and student-centeredness in learning: 80% of the students and 85.7% of the alumni expressed their agreement with this item. Comparing the result of the quantitative data obtained in this research with the results of the quantitative data obtained in other research studies in the literature, we notice that the results of the relevant research in the literature are consistent with those of the current study where the level of disagreement with the statement are 19% in Peacock's (2009) study, 5% in Coskun and Daloglu's (2010) study, 19.5% in Salihoglu's (2012) study, and 0% in Zorba's (2015) study.

Furthermore, the skill of evaluation, whether it be evaluating materials or evaluating one's self as a teacher, was seen as one of the program's strengths. Item 5 asking whether the program promote the ability of the evaluation and adaptation of materials in the instructor interviews is related to the instructors' beliefs about the program's ability to promote self-evaluation. Two instructors were convinced that the evaluated program does promote this skill and three of them stated that it does, but to some extent. The instructors who had some doubts about the program's promoting the skill of self-evaluation explained their belief by stating that promoting this skill is largely dependent on the teachers' instruction and their course objectives. Concerning item 24 asking about the program's ability to promote self-evaluation, the quantitative data showed that 80% of the students agreed with this statement and similarly 78.6% of the alumni agreed with it. The obtained result in this study seems to be consistent with the results from several relevant studies in the literature (Peacock, 2009; Salihoglu, 2012; Zorba, 2015). All in all, self-evaluation seems to be promoted through the program since it is closely related to the skill of reflection which was found to be well promoted through the program.

Concerning the evaluation of materials, on the other hand, the qualitative data from instructor interviews showed that the instructors agreed to the program's ability to promote materials evaluation and adaptation to some extent, explaining that this skill is introduced to students through certain elective courses which may mean that not all students may have the chance to learn this skill and it is only available for students who take the related course. The quantitative data revealed a high percentage of agreement with item 17 (does the program teach me how to evaluate and adapt



teaching materials?) from the alumni and from the students. Seventy-one point four percent of the alumni and 80% of the students agreed with this statement.

Analyzing the qualitative data collected from instructors (interviews), students (open-ended questions) and alumni (open-ended questions), another strength was detected. When asked about the program's strengths, many participants mentioned the 'well qualified teaching staff' as one of the biggest strengths of the program. Not all aspects of the instructors' performance and instruction and not all instructors received the praise, but all participants seemed to be very satisfied with the qualifications of the instructors and their various specialties, their long experience in the field and in teaching, and with some instructors' constant seeking for improvement and keeping up with the latest methods, materials and sources. Through the students' and alumni's responses to the qualitative questions, it was revealed that some of the instructors' performance was very satisfactory.

Moreover, the qualitative data collection tools revealed that the participants found the well-structured and well-designed program, curriculum and courses strengths of the program. In addition, the diverse body of students coming from different backgrounds, ethnicities, religions and cultures which adds a lot to the program was seen as another strength. Each of the instructors, students and alumni expressed their gratitude for this opportunity, from which students are learning and expanding their horizons and knowledge of different contexts and cultures, and a chance is presented for instructors themselves to grow professionally and personally.

**5.1.2 The Research Question Number Two: What are the weaknesses of the English Language Teaching Master's Program from the perspectives of instructors, students and alumni?**

Through the results of this study, and by analyzing the perceptions of the participants, it was realized that the ELT MA program suffers from several weaknesses. One of the major weaknesses that was found is the program's lack of provision of English language teaching skills and practical training. For example, the items that received the highest levels of disagreement mostly from the students and the alumni, were the items related to the program's ability to promote, teach and train students how to teach English (items: 3, 14, 27, 30). The lowest percentage obtained in the student questionnaire goes to item 3, where 46.7% of the students disagreed that the program gives students adequate training in teaching skills, and the second highest percentage of disagreement goes to item 14 (teaches me how to teach English, 40% of disagreement) and item 27 (balances between research skills and teaching skills training, 40% of disagreement). Also, the highest percentage of disagreement in the alumni questionnaire is related to item 14 (helped me learn how to teach English, 21.4% of disagreement). In addition to the results of the quantitative data, the qualitative data also revealed the participants' dissatisfaction with the practical side of the program. When asked about the weaknesses of the program, some instructors mentioned that the program lacks the teaching practice in the courses. Similarly, the students generally believed that the program did not provide the needed practical teaching practice they were enrolled in the program for. The alumni, were dissatisfied with the amount of practice they received, but the level of dissatisfaction they had was not as strong as students'. This weakness was also obtained when evaluating other programs in studies like Coşkun and Daloğlu (2010), Şeferoğlu (2006), Peacock (2009), and Karakaş (2012). The reason behind the lack of practice teaching and practical training in the MA program may be because of the fact that the program focuses mostly on equipping candidates with research skills and theoretical

knowledge. In addition, the ELT MA candidates are generally expected to have some kind of teaching experience when they enter the program which eliminates the need for actually teaching candidates how to teach English. In this case, the needs of candidates who have little or no teaching experience are not put into consideration.

Another weakness found in the ELT MA program is related to instructors' performance. Despite all the advantages the participants could mention about the instructors when asked about the strengths of the evaluated program, they were able to spot some disadvantages they thought were affecting the quality of instruction and the program as a whole. Many students were facing some problems with some aspects of teachers' instruction. The open-ended items in the questionnaire revealed that students were not satisfied with some teachers' effort in contributing to the courses they were providing. The reason behind this dissatisfaction is the fact that most of the lectures were presented by students themselves, and when they felt they needed more explanation some teachers were not very helpful, and the students would fear asking for help because it might have affected their grades on the presentations. In addition, the program has been going on for a long time now, and some instructors as one alumni member stated "were not working on up-dating themselves". In other words, some of the materials, course outlines, requirements and explanation are given to students like they were given to others years ago. No changes or up-dating were made. Through analyzing the answers from the qualitative data from the instructor interviews, it was observed that most instructors were answering the interview questions according to their own courses and their own instruction, methods and performance. When asked about general information or aspects about the program, the instructors did not seem to be very familiar with each other's ways of teaching, the materials they used or their

ways of dealing with students; and this indicates the lack of healthy coordination and communication between instructors themselves.

Other than classroom procedures, some students and alumni were not happy with the communication going on between them and instructors, and found it very difficult to reach and contact some instructors out of the course hours. This goes the same to the relationship and communication between students and their thesis supervisors. The qualitative data included complaints about the performance of certain supervisors and the lack of guidance and follow-up provided for students in the process of thesis writing.

In relation to thesis writing, another weakness the students and alumni stated through the second question of the qualitative part of the questionnaire was the insufficient guidance on how to write and organize a thesis. Many students seemed to have suffered while writing their thesis especially when they had to deal with analyzing quantitative data and using statistical programs. In addition, the non-credit seminar course, which is supposed to be provided to students during the semester in which they are writing their thesis, is not being actually taught. Since the program is very research-based, it might be somehow reasonable not to provide training that is specifically directed to thesis writing, and although this could justify the lack of thesis writing practice, it is still observed as a weakness to students and alumni, which demands some change of perspective on the behalf of instructors and the responsible policy makers in the department.

The students and the alumni also stated that another weakness in the program is the overload of requirements and assignments assigned for students in each course. The

answers of the students and the alumni provided a general understanding on their perspective regarding the requirements of the courses which they described as ‘too many’. They did not seem to find the requirements (presentations, assignments, papers, projects, etc.) anything less than useful, but on the other hand, they felt very overwhelmed with the amount of requirements given in each course and the fact that the lack of coordination between instructors made it even worse. The answers received through the qualitative questions in the questionnaires explained that the main and ultimate goals of candidates are to be able to be better teachers and to produce well written theses. The overload of requirements assigned to students shift their attention from what they are interested in and are too demanding that even students who want to work while completing their Master’s degree find it almost impossible to manage both and perform well in both.

### **5.1.3 The Research Question Number Three: What suggestions can instructors, students and alumni give for improving the English Language Teaching Master’s Program?**

The first and most frequent suggestion made by the instructors, students and alumni is adding some practical training in teaching English language. Practice teaching was observed to be one of the main goals that candidates seek through the MA program, and since the main basis of the program is focused on theory and research skills training rather than actual teaching skills, it needs to be changed. Other studies conducted by Coşkun and Daloğlu (2012), Peacock (2009), Omer (2017), Karakaş (2012), and Zorba (2015) reached similar conclusions. Therefore, adding ‘practicum’ or courses that are mostly based on actual practice and application of the theoretical knowledge taught can be useful for candidates’ future professional lives.

The second most suggested issue is related to making changes in courses. The instructors, students and alumni suggested the addition of courses. For example, some instructors suggested adding some courses that include the most recent improvements in the field. Some of those suggested courses are: “Corpus Linguistics in ELT”, “Critical Pedagogy”, “Technology in ELT”, “World Englishes” and a course on teaching culture. Similar suggestions were made in a study by Zorba (2015) conducted on the BA program in the same context. Moreover, the students and the alumni suggested adding a course related to statistical analysis in ELT research that would be specifically concerned with teaching statistical programs like SPSS. Other course suggestions are related to practical training for teaching, materials adaptation and design, and thesis writing.

In relation to making some changes in the courses, both the students and the instructors suggested that there can be some improvements in the content and organization of the already existing courses. For example, the students suggested that there are some very important elective courses in the program (such as, Professional Development in ELT’, Curriculum Development for ESP’ and ‘Materials Development in ELT’), and to ensure that these courses are available for students, these specific courses should be provided every semester.

Furthermore, the participants also put forward some recommendations related to the materials and sources used in the program’s different courses. The suggestions involve the use of a variety of up-to-date, recent and reader friendly materials, and involving the students in choosing the course, presentation and research materials they will use.

Other suggestions were related to the instructors. The participants recommended some useful things that can be done to improve the instructors' performance and connection with their students. One of the most frequently suggested point is that the instructors should have a bigger role inside the classroom concerning presenting the materials and contributing more detailed information and explanation. Although the program is more student centered, the students and the alumni stated that it would be more useful if the lecturers had more to do and more to say in the lecture and not leave it all on the students. Another point is that the instructors can make some changes in the way they teach and present different subjects. The students and the instructors also suggested that there should be more coordination between the different instructors to avoid overload of requirements at the same period of time (students) and to avoid any overlaps in different courses (instructors). The students suggested promoting the use of the internet inside and outside the classroom. Some instructors are still not very active in using technology while lecturing or for communicating with their students outside the classroom. Promoting this aspect can yield in more enjoyable lectures and more effective communication between students and instructors and especially between students and their supervisors.

#### **5.1.4 The Research Question Number Four: To what extent does the English Language Teaching Master's Program meet the students' needs from the perspectives of the instructors, students and alumni?**

After analyzing the data collected in this study, it was concluded that the English Language Teaching Master's program was partially successful in fulfilling the needs of the students. The responses of the students and the alumni to both items in the questionnaire, asking whether the program meets and is relevant to the needs of the students, showed that the program meets the student's needs to some extent (53.3% of

the students and 78.6% of the alumni expressed their agreement to both items 26 and 29). Similarly, the instructors' answers to question 19 in the instructor interview showed that two instructors believed that the program does meet the students' needs and the other three instructors were not completely sure about this. The instructors added that they cannot be completely objective when answering this question so it is better to get the answer from the students themselves. They also mentioned that although they may not be able to sincerely answer this question, what they can mention is the positive feedback they always receive from their graduates about the program and how it was useful for them in both their higher academic experiences as well as in their professional life. In the relevant literature, Omer's (2017) study had the most consistent results with the current study. Although the ones conducted by Coskun and Daloglu (2010) and Zorba (2015) had similar findings, the percentage of agreement with the questionnaire items were higher than the percentages in this study. In addition, the results of the studies conducted by Peacock (2009) and Salihoglu (2012) revealed the participants' uncertainty regarding this question.

The general findings of this study revealed that the English Language Teaching Master's program, despite its weaknesses, was able, to a certain extent, to meet the needs of the students.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This study was conducted in order to evaluate the MA in ELT program at EMU and determine its strengths and weaknesses from the perspectives of instructors, students and alumni. Moreover, the participants provided some suggestions that can be useful for improving the program. The findings of this study revealed that the English Language Teaching Master's program at Eastern Mediterranean University has



various strong and weak aspects. Nevertheless, the general perceptions regarding the program were found to be positive.

The major strength in the evaluated program was the program's ability to promote, teach and train students how to conduct research. Other strengths of the program included introducing students to adequate theoretical knowledge, promoting reflective practice, promoting continuous professional development, balancing teacher-centeredness and student-centeredness and promoting evaluation skills. Moreover, the participants mentioned the general structure and content of the program and the qualified instructors as two of the main strengths of the program.

Regarding the weaknesses found in the ELT Master's program, the main weakness stated by the participants was the lack of practical skills with regards to language teaching. The weaknesses also included the unsatisfactory performance of some instructors regarding classroom procedures and communication with students, insufficient guidance and training concerning thesis writing, overloads of requirements through courses, and lack of coordination between instructors.

Other than describing the program's strengths and weaknesses, the participants provided a number of suggestions and recommendations that can be followed and applied in order to make some improvements in the evaluated program. The most important suggestion presented by the instructors, students and alumni is the addition of the practical aspect to the Master's program, in other words, providing students with some training in teaching English language. Another suggestion involved adding and reorganizing courses to better meet the demands of the field and the academic needs of the students. Other suggestions included improving the quality of the used materials,

expanding the role of the instructors in the classroom, and improving the communication between students and instructors and between instructors themselves.

Finally, and based on the study's results, it was determined that the English Language Teaching Master's program at Eastern Mediterranean University was to some extent successful in fulfilling the students' needs as it was perceived by instructors, students and alumni.

### **5.3 Implications**

Various practical implications can be derived from the findings of the current research. The first pedagogical implication that can be mentioned is that the results of this study can be considered as feedback from which the administrators and instructors can benefit, and which can be used to improve the negative or weak aspects of the program. Taking advantage of this feedback by promoting the strengths and eliminating or compensating for the weaknesses can result in improving the courses and the general structure and content of the program and increase its effectiveness.

The second implication can include understanding the findings and using the points that were the most dissatisfactory for the students to make some changes in the program that would contribute to moving the program closer toward the needs of the students. The last implication is that this study can act as a start for a series of evaluation studies concerned with the evaluation and re-evaluation of the program. This constant evaluation results in the constant observation and improvement of the program, which is the reason why it is extremely important.

## **5.4 Limitations**

There are a number of limitations that were encountered while conducting this research. The first limitation is related to the methodology. The sampling of the alumni did not provide the necessary variety. The majority of the alumni (12 out of 14) were graduates from the program teaching at the English preparatory school at EMU; thus, the variety and diversity of the alumni was not represented because most of the participants held the Turkish or Turkish Cypriot nationality and spoke Turkish as their first language.

Another limitation in the methodology part is concerned with the student essay data collection tool. This tool was distributed along with the student questionnaire but the number of people who returned the essays was very low and the quality of the returned essays did not allow the researcher to use them. For this reason, this data collection tool was eliminated from the research.

The lack of document analysis as well as the lack of observation sessions can also be perceived as one of the study's drawbacks. Peacock (2009) has proposed the addition of the latter data collection tool to his framework, but in the literature, Coksun and Daloglu (2010), Omer (2017), Zorba (2015) and Salihoglu (2012) did not use this tool either. Furthermore, not conducting interviews with other participant groups (students and alumni) can be seen as another limitation.

## **5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Some suggestions for further research can be derived from this study. The first suggestion that can be provided is including more data collection tools that would be helpful in obtaining information from different perspectives. The first tool was also

provided as a suggestion in different studies in the literature (Peacock, 2009; Zorba, 2015) and it is the observations. This tool would allow the researcher to observe whether the objectives of the program as a whole and of the courses in particular are being met through the instruction and the classroom procedures. It would also reveal the quality of information provided to students as well as the quality and effort made by the instructors. Other tools that can be used are document analysis, student interviews and student essays. In addition, seeking a larger sample or number of participants, especially graduates, could increase the credibility and generalizability of the findings. Another group of stakeholders that can be added is policy makers, this can include the dean of the faculty, the rector, or even the minister of education. Lastly, the aim of this study is to contribute to the development of the program, and it was conducted to be the first episode of a series of evaluation studies. Thus, similar studies are suggested to be able to examine and measure the extent to which the results of the current study have been taken into consideration and to report on the effectiveness of the improvements that were made.

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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A: The Curriculum of the ELT MA Program at EMU

Table 4: The Curriculum of the ELT MA Program at EMU

Ref. Code	Course Code	Course	Credit	Core/Elective
A75R1	ELTE501	Approaches, Methods and Techniques in ELT	(3-0) 3	Core
A75R2	ELTE502	Second Language Acquisition	(3-0) 3	Core
A75R3	ELTE503	Research Methods in ELT	(3-0) 3	Core
A75R4	ELTE504	General Linguistics	(3-0) 3	Core
A75R5	REQ1	Elective Course	(3-0) 3	Elective
A75R6	REQ2	Elective Course	(3-0) 3	Elective
A75R7	REQ3	Elective Course	(3-0) 3	Elective
A75R8	REQ4	Elective Course	(3-0) 3	Elective
A75R0	ELTE500	Thesis Guidance	0	Core
A75RS	ELTE598	Seminar	0	Core

Table 5: The Elective Courses in the Curriculum of the ELT MA Program at EMU

ELTE506	Current Issues in English Language Teaching	(3-0) 3
ELTE507	Curriculum Development for English for Specific Purposes	(3-0) 3
ELTE508	Professional Development in ELT	(3-0) 3
ELTE509	Literature in Teaching English as a Foreign Language	(3-0) 3
ELTE510	Material Development	(3-0) 3
ELTE511	Testing in English Language Teaching	(3-0) 3
ELTE512	Instructional technology in ELT	(3-0) 3
ELTE513	Pragmatics and discourse	(3-0) 3
ELTE514	Sociolinguistics	(3-0) 3
ELTE515	Seminar in English Language Teaching	(3-0) 3
ELTE516	Creative Writing	(3-0) 3
ELTE517	Turkish-English Contrastive Analysis	(3-0) 3
ELTE518	Statistics in English Language Teaching	(3-0) 3

## Appendix B: Instructor Interviews' Consent Form

### Instructor Interviews' Consent Form

Dear Instructors,

As part of my MA studies, I am conducting a research on the evaluation of the Master's Program in English Language Teaching (ELT) at Eastern Mediterranean University. This interview aims to identify your opinions about the ELT Master's Program. To this aim, you are asked to state the strengths and the weaknesses of the program, and to give suggestions for its improvement. It is very important that you answer the questions sincerely. Please note that the interviews will be audio-recorded. You are not obliged to participate in this research and are free to refuse to participate and/or withdraw from participating at any point of the research. If you agree to participate in and complete the interview, your identity and responses will be treated confidentially and will be used only for research purposes.

Thank you for your cooperation.

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#### CONSENT FORM

I have read and understood the purpose of this study and how my responses will be used. Therefore, I agree to participate in this study by responding to the interview questions and I give my consent for audio-recording the interview.

Name-surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C: Instructor Interviews' Questions

### Part I: Background Information

**Directions:** Please provide the following information.

**Gender:**  Male  Female

**Age:**  25-35  36-45  46-55  56+

**Years of Teaching Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_ years.

**Nationality:**  Turkish (TR)  Turkish Cypriot (TRNC)  Other \_\_\_\_\_

(please specify)

**Mother Tongue:**  Turkish  English  Arabic  Persian  Kurdish

Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

### Part II: Evaluation of the ELT Master's Program at EMU

**Directions:** Could you please state your ideas regarding the following questions?

Does the program...

1. Have a clearly stated philosophy?
2. Reflect program philosophy?
3. Promote student flexibility in using different teaching approaches for different situations?
4. Promote student ability to conduct research?
5. Promote the ability to evaluate and adapt foreign-language-teaching materials?
6. Incorporate and encourage student reflection on the experiences and values they have when they enter the program? In particular, does it encourage student reflection on their 'apprenticeship of observation'?
7. Introduce student to adequate theoretical background in the field of ELT?
8. Promote the skill of reflection and self-evaluation as a teacher?
9. Promote reflective practice in teaching?

10. Promote the ‘long-term, developmental nature of learning to teach’ – does it promote post-qualification teacher growth and development?
11. Have good linkage among courses, avoiding overlaps?
12. Balance teacher- and student-centered learning?
13. Prepare students to function in the sociocultural context in which they will work?
14. Prepare students to conduct research in different contexts and for different purposes?
15. Prepare students to write an academic article?
16. Incorporate and balance teaching and research skills to an appropriate degree?
17. Enable students to critically analyze and evaluate different sources in the literature?
18. Is the program up-to-date?
19. Do students believe the program meets their needs, is relevant to their needs, and adequately prepares them for better classroom teaching and for conducting research?

### **Part III: Overall Evaluation of the ELT Master’s Program at EMU**

1. What are the strengths of the ELT Master’s Program at EMU?
2. What are the weaknesses of the ELT Master’s Program at EMU?
3. What suggestions do you have for the improvement of the ELT Master’s Program?

## Appendix D: Student Questionnaire's Consent Form

### Student Questionnaire Consent Form

Dear students,

As part of my MA studies, I am conducting a research on the evaluation of the Master's Program in English Language Teaching (ELT) at Eastern Mediterranean University.

This questionnaire aims to identify your opinions about the ELT Master's Program.

To this aim, you are asked to state the strengths and the weaknesses of the program, and to give your suggestions for its improvement. It is very important that you answer the questions sincerely. You are not obliged to participate in this research and are free to refuse to participate and/or withdraw from participating at any point of the research.

If you agree to participate in and complete the questionnaire, your identity and responses will be treated confidentially and will be used only for research purposes.

Thank you for your cooperation

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#### CONSENT FORM

I have read and understood the purpose of this study and how my responses will be used. Therefore, I agree to participate in this study by responding to the interview questions and I give my consent for audio-recording the interview.

Name-surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Student Questionnaire

### Part I: Background Information

**Directions:** Please provide the necessary information below.

**Gender:**  Male  Female

**Age:**  17-22  23-28  29-34  35+

**Semester:**  1<sup>st</sup>  2<sup>nd</sup>  3<sup>rd</sup>  4<sup>th</sup>  5<sup>th</sup>  6<sup>th</sup>

**Nationality:**  Turkish (TR)  Turkish Cypriot (TRNC)  Other \_\_\_\_\_

(please specify)

**Mother Tongue:**  Turkish  English  Arabic  Persian  Kurdish

Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

### Part II: Evaluation of the ELT Master's Program Questionnaire

**Directions:** Please read the following statements and mark (X) as appropriate.

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1</b> Strongly agree	<b>2</b> Agree	<b>3</b> Uncertain	<b>4</b> Disagree	<b>5</b> Strongly disagree
<b>1.</b> has good linkage between different courses.					
<b>2.</b> avoids overlapping information between different courses.					
<b>3.</b> gives me adequate training in teaching skills.					
<b>4.</b> gives me adequate training in research skills.					
<b>5.</b> is up-to-date.					
<b>6.</b> encourages me to reflect on my past experiences as a language learner.					
<b>7.</b> encourages me to reflect on my past experiences as a language teacher.					

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 Strongly agree</b>	<b>2 Agree</b>	<b>3 Uncertain</b>	<b>4 Disagree</b>	<b>5 Strongly disagree</b>
<b>8.</b> encourages me to relate my practice to relevant theoretical knowledge.					
<b>9.</b> promotes the ability to deal effectively with teaching in different contexts.					
<b>10.</b> promotes the ability to deal effectively with teaching for different purposes.					
<b>11.</b> promotes the ability to conduct research in different contexts.					
<b>12.</b> promotes constant teacher professional development.					
<b>13.</b> balances teacher-centered and student-centered learning in its courses.					
<b>14.</b> teaches me how to teach English.					
<b>15.</b> teaches me how to evaluate myself as a teacher.					
<b>16.</b> teaches me how to design and conduct a research.					
<b>17.</b> teaches me how to evaluate and adapt foreign language teaching materials.					
<b>18.</b> teaches me how to critically evaluate and analyze research articles.					
<b>19.</b> teaches me how to synthesize information from literature.					
<b>20.</b> teaches me how to review literature.					



<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 Strongly agree</b>	<b>2 Agree</b>	<b>3 Uncertain</b>	<b>4 Disagree</b>	<b>5 Strongly disagree</b>
<b>21.</b> familiarizes me with various concepts related to English language teaching.					
<b>22.</b> helps me develop an understanding of current issues in English language teaching.					
<b>23.</b> helps me clarify my beliefs about language teaching and learning.					
<b>24.</b> increases my power of self-evaluation.					
<b>25.</b> equips me with foreign language testing and evaluation skills.					
<b>26.</b> is relevant to my needs.					
<b>27.</b> has a good balance between teaching skills and research skills training.					
<b>28.</b> teaches me to write an academic research paper.					
<b>29.</b> meets my needs.					
<b>30.</b> gets me to be able to teach English more effectively.					
<b>31.</b> gest me to be able to conduct research in English Language Teaching more effectively.					

**Part III: Please answer the following questions about the ELT Master's Program.**

1. What are the strengths of the ELT Master's Program at EMU?

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2. What are the weaknesses of the ELT Master's Program at EMU?

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3. What are your suggestions for the improvement of the ELT Master's Program at EMU?

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## Appendix F: Alumni Questionnaire's Consent Form

### Alumni Questionnaire Consent Form

Dear ELT graduate,

As part of my MA studies, I am conducting a research on the evaluation of the Master's Program in English Language Teaching (ELT) at Eastern Mediterranean University. This questionnaire aims to identify your opinions about the English Language Teaching Master's Program. To this aim, you are asked to state the strengths and the weaknesses of the program, and to give suggestions for its improvement. It is very important that you answer the questions sincerely. You are not obliged to participate in this research and are free to refuse to participate and/or withdraw from participating at any point of the research. If you agree to participate in and complete the questionnaire, your identity and responses will be treated confidentially and will be used only for research purposes.

Thank you for your cooperation

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#### CONSENT FORM

I have read and understood the purpose of this study and how my responses will be used. Therefore, I agree to participate in this study by responding to the interview questions and I give my consent for audio-recording the interview.

Name-surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix G: Alumni Questionnaire

### Part I- Background Information

**Directions:** Please provide the necessary information below.

**Gender:**  Male  Female

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Years of Teaching Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_ years.

**Nationality:**  Turkish (TR).  Turkish Cypriot (TRNC).  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(please specify)

**Mother Tongue:**  Turkish  English  Arabic  Persian  Kurdish  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

**Do you work as a teacher? Yes. No.**

**a. If yes, which level(s) do you teach?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**b. If no, why not? please specify your job and place of work:**

\_\_\_\_\_

### Part II: Evaluation of the ELT Master's Program Questionnaire

**Directions:** Please read the following statements and mark (X) as appropriate.

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 Strongly agree</b>	<b>2 Agree</b>	<b>3 Uncertain</b>	<b>4 Disagree</b>	<b>5 Strongly disagree</b>
<b>1.</b> had good linkage between different courses.					
<b>2.</b> avoided overlapping information between different courses.					
<b>3.</b> gave me adequate training in teaching skills.					
<b>4.</b> gave me adequate training in research skills.					
<b>5.</b> was up-to-date.					
<b>6.</b> encouraged me to reflect on my past experiences as a language learner.					
<b>7.</b> encouraged me to reflect on my past experience as a language teacher.					

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1</b> <b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Agree</b>	<b>3</b> <b>Uncertain</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Disagree</b>	<b>5</b> <b>Strongly disagree</b>
<b>8.</b> encouraged me to relate my practice to relevant theoretical knowledge.					
<b>9.</b> promoted the ability to deal effectively with teaching in different contexts.					
<b>10.</b> promoted the ability to deal effectively with teaching for different purposes.					
<b>11.</b> promotes the ability to conduct research in different contexts.					
<b>12.</b> promotes constant teacher professional development.					
<b>13.</b> balanced teacher-centered and student-centered learning in its courses.					
<b>14.</b> taught me how to teach English.					
<b>15.</b> taught me how to evaluate myself as a teacher.					
<b>16.</b> taught me how to design and conduct a research.					
<b>17.</b> taught me how to evaluate and adapt foreign language teaching materials.					
<b>18.</b> taught me how to critically evaluate and analyze research articles.					
<b>19.</b> taught me how to synthesize information from literature.					
<b>20.</b> taught me how to review literature.					

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 Strongly agree</b>	<b>2 Agree</b>	<b>3 Uncertain</b>	<b>4 Disagree</b>	<b>5 Strongly disagree</b>
<b>21.</b> familiarized me with various concepts related to English language teaching.					
<b>22.</b> helped me develop an understanding of current issues in English language teaching.					
<b>23.</b> helped me clarify my beliefs about language teaching and learning.					
<b>24.</b> increased my power of self-evaluation.					
<b>25.</b> equipped me with foreign language testing and evaluation skills.					
<b>26.</b> was relevant to my needs.					
<b>27.</b> had a good balance between teaching skills and research skills training.					
<b>28.</b> taught me to write an academic research paper.					
<b>29.</b> met my needs.					
<b>30.</b> got me to be able teach English more effectively.					
<b>31.</b> got me to be able to conduct research in English Language Teaching more effectively.					

**Part III: Please answer the following questions about the ELT Master's Program.**

1. What were the strengths of the ELT Master's Program at EMU?

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2. What were the weaknesses of the ELT Master's Program at EMU?

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3. What are your suggestions for the improvement of the ELT Master's Program?

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4. What kinds of problems did you face in your teaching due to the weaknesses in the ELT Master's Program?

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5. How could the MA in ELT Program have contributed (more) to the solution of these problems?

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## Appendix H: Student Questionnaire Detailed Results

Table 6: Student Questionnaire Detailed Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 SA</b>	<b>2 A</b>	<b>3 U</b>	<b>4 D</b>	<b>5 SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>1 ...</b> has good linkage between different courses.	13.3%	53.3%	20%	13.3%	0%	2.33	0.900
<b>2 ...</b> avoids overlapping information between different courses.	6.7%	40%	13.3%	33.3%	6.7%	2.93	1.163
<b>3 ...</b> gives me adequate training in teaching skills.	6.7%	26.7%	20%	33.3%	13.3%	3.20	1.207
<b>4 ...</b> gives me adequate training in research skills.	33.3%	33.3%	13.3%	13.3%	6.7%	2.27	1.280
<b>5 ...</b> is up-to-date.	20%	53.3%	6.7%	13.3%	6.7%	2.33	1.175
<b>6 ...</b> encourages me to reflect on my past experiences as a language learner.	26.7%	66.7%	6.7%	0%	0%	1.80	0.561
<b>7 ...</b> encourages me to reflect on my past experiences as a language teacher.	20%	53.3%	20%	6.7%	0%	2.13	0.834
<b>8 ...</b> encourages me to relate my practice to relevant theoretical knowledge.	20%	53.3%	13.3%	13.3%	0%	2.20	0.941
<b>9 ...</b> promotes the ability to deal effectively with teaching in different contexts.	26.7%	20%	26.7%	20%	6.7%	2.60	1.298

Continuous of Student Questionnaire Detailed Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 SA</b>	<b>2 A</b>	<b>3 U</b>	<b>4 D</b>	<b>5 SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>10 ...</b> promotes the ability to deal effectively with teaching for different purposes.	20%	33.3%	26.7%	13.3%	6.7%	2.53	1.187
<b>11 ...</b> promotes the ability to conduct research in different contexts.	33.3%	33.3%	20%	13.3%	0%	2.13	1.060
<b>12 ...</b> promotes constant teacher professional development.	40%	33.3%	20%	6.7%	0%	1.93	0.961
<b>13 ...</b> balances teacher-centered and student-centered learning in its courses.	20%	60%	6.7%	13.3%	0%	2.13	0.915
<b>14 ...</b> teaches me how to teach English.	20%	20%	20%	40%	0%	2.80	1.207
<b>15 ...</b> teaches me how to evaluate myself as a teacher.	20%	46.7%	13.3%	20%	0%	2.33	1.047
<b>16 ...</b> teaches me how to design and conduct a research.	33.3%	40%	20%	0%	6.7%	2.07	1.100
<b>17 ...</b> teaches me how to evaluate and adapt foreign language teaching materials.	20%	60%	13.3%	6.7%	0%	2.07	0.799
<b>18 ...</b> teaches me how to critically evaluate and analyze research articles.	20%	60%	13.3%	6.7%	0%	2.07	0.799

Continuous of Student Questionnaire Detailed Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 SA</b>	<b>2 A</b>	<b>3 U</b>	<b>4 D</b>	<b>5 SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>19 ...</b> teaches me how to synthesize information from literature.	20%	53.3%	26.7%	0%	0%	2.07	0.704
<b>20 ...</b> teaches me how to review literature.	20%	60%	20%	0%	0%	2.00	0.655
<b>21 ...</b> familiarizes me with various concepts related to English language teaching.	33.3%	60%	0%	6.7%	0%	1.80	0.775
<b>22 ...</b> helps me develop an understanding of current issues in English language teaching.	33.3%	33.3%	20%	13.3%	0%	2.13	1.060
<b>23 ...</b> helps me clarify my beliefs about language teaching and learning.	33.3%	53.3%	0%	13.3%	0%	1.93	0.961
<b>24 ...</b> increases my power of self-evaluation.	13.3%	60%	13.3%	13.3%	0%	2.27	0.884
<b>25 ...</b> equips me with foreign language testing and evaluation skills.	13.3%	46.7%	20%	20%	0%	2.47	0.990
<b>26 ...</b> is relevant to my needs.	20%	33.3%	20%	20%	6.7%	2.60	1.242
<b>27 ...</b> has a good balance between teaching skills and research skills training.	13.3%	26.7%	20%	33.3%	6.7%	2.93	1.223

Continuous of Student Questionnaire Detailed Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 SA</b>	<b>2 A</b>	<b>3 U</b>	<b>4 D</b>	<b>5 SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>28</b> ... teaches me to write an academic research paper.	26.7%	33.3%	13.3%	26.7%	0%	2.40	1.183
<b>29</b> ... meets my needs.	6.7%	53.3%	33.3%	6.7%	0%	2.40	0.737
<b>30</b> ... gets me to be able to teach English more effectively.	20%	33.3%	26.7%	20%	0%	2.47	1.060
<b>31</b> ... gets me to be able to conduct research in English Language Teaching more effectively.	13.3%	73.3%	0%	13.3%	0%	2.13	0.834

SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U = Uncertain, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, M = Mean, Std. = Standard Deviation

## Appendix I: Alumni Questionnaire Detailed Results

Table 7: Alumni Questionnaire Detailed Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 SA</b>	<b>2 A</b>	<b>3 U</b>	<b>4 D</b>	<b>5 SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>1 ...</b> had good linkage between different courses.	35.7%	57.1%	0%	7.1%	0%	1.79	0.802
<b>2 ...</b> avoided overlapping information between different courses.	28.6%	35.7%	21.4%	7.1%	7.1%	2.29	1.204
<b>3 ...</b> gave me adequate training in teaching skills.	21.4%	50.0%	28.6%	0%	0%	2.07	0.730
<b>4 ...</b> gave me adequate training in research skills.	50%	42.9%	7.1%	0%	0%	1.57	0.646
<b>5 ...</b> was up-to-date.	42.9%	28.6%	27.6%	0%	0%	1.86	0.864
<b>6 ...</b> encouraged me to reflect on my past experiences as a language learner.	50%	35.7%	14.3%	0%	0%	1.64	0.745
<b>7 ...</b> encouraged me to reflect on my past experiences as a language teacher.	35.7%	50%	14.3%	0%	0%	1.79	0.699
<b>8 ...</b> encouraged me to relate my practice to relevant theoretical knowledge.	42.9%	42.9%	14.3%	0%	0%	1.71	0.726
<b>9 ...</b> promoted the ability to deal effectively with teaching in different contexts.	14.3%	57.1%	28.6%	0%	0%	2.14	0.663

Continuous of Alumni Questionnaire Detailed Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 SA</b>	<b>2 A</b>	<b>3 U</b>	<b>4 D</b>	<b>5 SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>10 ...</b> promoted the ability to deal effectively with teaching for different purposes.	7.1%	57.1%	35.7%	0%	0%	2.29	0.611
<b>11 ...</b> promoted the ability to conduct research in different contexts.	21.4%	64.3%	14.3%	0%	0%	1.93	0.616
<b>12 ...</b> promoted constant teacher professional development.	57.1%	35.7%	0%	7.1%	0%	1.57	0.852
<b>13 ...</b> balanced teacher-centered and student-centered learning in its courses.	35.7%	50%	7.1%	7.1%	0%	1.86	0.864
<b>14 ...</b> taught me how to teach English.	14.3%	35.7%	28.6%	21.4%	0%	2.57	1.016
<b>15 ...</b> taught me how to evaluate myself as a teacher.	21.4%	42.9%	14.3%	21.4%	0%	2.36	1.082
<b>16 ...</b> taught me how to design and conduct a research.	64.3%	28.6%	0%	7.1%	0%	1.50	0.855
<b>17 ...</b> taught me how to evaluate and adapt foreign language teaching materials.	28.6%	42.9%	21.4%	7.1%	0%	2.07	0.917
<b>18 ...</b> taught me how to critically evaluate and analyze research articles.	35.7%	50%	7.1%	7.1%	0%	1.86	0.864

Continuous of Alumni Questionnaire Detailed Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 SA</b>	<b>2 A</b>	<b>3 U</b>	<b>4 D</b>	<b>5 SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>19 ...</b> taught me how to synthesize information from literature.	35.7%	35.7%	21.4%	0%	7.1%	2.07	1.141
<b>20 ...</b> taught me how to review literature.	50%	35.7%	7.1%	0%	7.1%	1.79	1.122
<b>21 ...</b> familiarized me with various concepts related to English language teaching.	42.9%	50%	0%	7.1%	0%	1.71	0.825
<b>22 ...</b> helped me develop an understanding of current issues in English language teaching.	42.9%	35.7%	14.3%	7.1%	0%	1.86	0.949
<b>23 ...</b> helped me clarify my beliefs about language teaching and learning.	21.4%	50%	14.3%	7.1%	7.1%	2.29	1.139
<b>24 ...</b> increased my power of self-evaluation.	21.4%	57.1%	7.1%	14.3%	0%	2.14	0.949
<b>25 ...</b> equipped me with foreign language testing and evaluation skills.	35.7%	28.6%	21.4%	7.1%	7.1%	2.21	1.251
<b>26 ...</b> was relevant to my needs.	57.1%	21.4%	14.3%	7.1%	0%	1.71	0.994
<b>27 ...</b> had a good balance between teaching skills and research skills training.	21.4%	64.3%	0%	14.3%	0%	2.07	0.917

Continuous of Alumni Questionnaire Detailed Results

<i>The MA in ELT Program...</i>	<b>1 SA</b>	<b>2 A</b>	<b>3 U</b>	<b>4 D</b>	<b>5 SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std.</b>
<b>28 ...</b> taught me to write an academic research paper.	64.3%	21.4%	0%	7.1%	7.1%	1.71	1.267
<b>29 ...</b> met my needs.	50%	28.6%	14.3%	7.1%	0%	1.79	0.975
<b>30 ...</b> got me to be able to teach English more effectively.	14.3%	50%	21.4%	0%	14.3%	2.50	1.225
<b>31 ...</b> got me to be able to conduct research in English Language Teaching more effectively.	50%	35.7%	7.1%	7.1%	0%	1.71	0.914

SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U = Uncertain, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, M = Mean, Std. = Standard Deviation