

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into 5 parts: 1) a summary of the study, 2) a summary of the findings, 3) discussions of the trainees' attitudes towards the in-service English training program, 4) conclusions, and 5) recommendation for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

One of the school's main goals is that faculty and support staff need to develop their knowledge at the international level. Therefore, the English training program is important to support this goal and to evaluate the program is necessary to improve the program for it to be effective in order to develop the staff's English knowledge as much as possible.

The study of trainees' attitudes towards the in-service English training course was conducted to explore the trainees' attitudes. Also, the study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the course through trainees' attitudes on the course content, teaching materials, the instruction, timing, evaluation as well as progress and knowledge application.

The study population was 88 staff members who participated in the in-service English training course from December 2006 to November 2007. Twenty-nine of them - -15 faculty staff members and 14 support staff members- - participated in the beginner course while 59 respondents - - 47 faculty staff members and 12 support staff members - - studied in the lower-intermediate.

A hundred self-administered sets of the questionnaire were randomly given to a hundred trainees in both sections during October-November 2007. Thirty

questionnaires were provided to all trainees in the pre-intermediate level, and all but one were returned. Meanwhile 70 questionnaires were given to those in the intermediate level, and 59 respondents completed the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts:

Part 1: Personal information including responsibility, level of the students, gender, age, marital status, education level, years of teaching, years of studying or/and using English after graduation, and their own opinions towards their English knowledge

Part 2 : Trainees' attitudes towards the in-service training course including the course content, the instruction, teaching materials, timing, evaluation, progress and knowledge application

Part 3: Comments and suggestions on how the in-service English program can be improved

The primary data which is the responses from the questionnaire were exploited in the study. The SPSS program version 12 was utilized to analyze all the statistical information. The statistical devices including frequency distribution, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were employed to answer the research questions.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the study can be summarized as follows:

5.2.1 Results of Personal Information

In both groups, the number of faculty staff was greater than that of the support staff members. However, the faculty staff was almost the same number as support

staff in the beginner group. In the lower- intermediate group, most of the respondents were faculty staff (79.7%). In the beginner group, the smallest number of the respondents or only 13.3% taught students at high school level, whereas the biggest number of the respondents in the lower- intermediate group taught the high school students (29.8). In the two groups, most of the respondents were female. The similarity in both groups was that female respondents were approximately two times that of the male (2:1). In the beginner group, female respondents were almost twice that of the male (65.5%: 34.5%) while they were slightly over twice that of the opposite sex in the lower- intermediate group (67.8%: 32.2%). Similar to the beginner group (24.1%), most of the respondents in the lower-intermediate group were aged between 36-40 years old (25.4%). In the beginner and the lower- intermediate group, most of the respondents were married. In the beginner group, the married (69%) over twice outnumbered that of the single (31%). In the-lower intermediate group, the married respondents (59.3%) outnumbered the single (40.7%). In both groups, the respondents having master's degree (approximately 86%) were slightly six times outnumbered by those having bachelor's degree (approximately 14%). In the area of teaching, most of the respondents in the beginner and the lower-intermediate group had 0-5 years, 48.3% and 42.4% respectively. 24.1% of the respondents in the beginner group and 18.6% in the lower-intermediate group had more than 21 years of teaching experience. Also, in English experience, most of the respondents in the beginner (55.2%) and the lower-intermediate group (67.8%) had 0-5 years. The smallest number of the respondents had more than 21 years of English experience in the beginner group (3.4%) and the lower-intermediate group (5.1%). However, the attitudes towards their English knowledge were different. Most of the respondents in

the pre-intermediate level had the ideas that they needed improvement in English (48.3%), whereas almost half of the respondents believed that their English knowledge was fair (47.5%).

In part III, less than 50% of the respondents gave comments and suggestions. Forty-one per cent of the respondents in the pre-intermediate and only 24% in the intermediate level gave some feedbacks regarding the comments and suggestions.

The results were as follows.

Most of the trainees had the opinion that the course objective and the content the trainer taught should have been the same. Also, the evaluation should have been the same as the content taught.

5.2.2 Results of Trainees' Attitudes towards the In- Service English Training Course

Research Question 1: *What are the trainees' attitudes towards the in-service English training program?*

In both groups- - the beginner and the lower-intermediate group, the study revealed that the trainees were equally satisfied with the in-service English training course (mean 3.48 for pre-intermediate and 3.46 for intermediate)

Research Question 2: *What are the trainees' attitudes towards the course content, teaching materials, timing, evaluation and progress, and knowledge application?*

In the beginner group the trainer's teaching (3.73), time schedules and duration (3.61), and the textbook, supplementary and teaching aids (3.54) were at the satisfied level. However, the trainee's attitudes towards the course content (3.38), the progress and knowledge application (3.38), and the evaluation (3.22) were neutral. The highest score was the trainer's English competence shown by his/her explanations while the

appropriateness of the evaluation methods received the lowest score (3.13) at the neutral level. On the other hand, the trainees' attitudes in the lower-intermediate group on timing (3.78), the instruction (3.53), and the teaching materials (3.49) were at the satisfied. Meanwhile, the course content (3.37), progress and knowledge application (3.36), and the evaluation (3.22) were neutral. In both the beginner and lower-intermediate group, the highest score was the trainer's English competence 4.17 and 3.94 respectively. Meanwhile the appropriateness of the evaluation methods exploited in the course (3.13) in the beginner group and the fulfillment of trainee's needs on content (3.03) in the lower-intermediate group received the lowest score.

Research Question 3: To what extent the trainees can apply the knowledge studied in the program in their work, communication and the career path?

In the beginner group, the extent the trainees can apply their knowledge studied in the program in their communication (mean 3.37) and the career path (mean 3.27) was neutral meanwhile that they can apply their knowledge in their work(mean 3.44) was at the satisfied level.

In the lower- intermediate group, the extent to which the trainees can apply their knowledge studied in the program in their communication (mean 3.32) and in their work (mean 3.32) through the attitudes was neutral, whereas the extent the trainees can apply their knowledge studied in the program to the career path through the attitude was at the satisfied level (mean 3.42).

5.3 DISCUSSION

5.3.1 Regarding the research question 1 - -the attitudes towards the in-service training course which are 3.48 in the beginner group and 3.46 in the lower-

intermediate course, most respondents ticked the agree blank in all the issues.

Although the questionnaire had great anonymity, most Assumption College faculty and support staff knew that the questionnaire and the results will be submitted to the academic department who managed the training course and their personal information given may be traced to the ones who answered the questionnaire. According to Hamilton and Parker (1997, p. 27), when upward communication takes place, MUM effects or the tendency to provide feedbacks or answers more acceptable to their superiors because subordinates may be afraid that their career path may be blocked.

5.3.2 Regarding the research question 2, the results of the trainer's organizing interesting class activities relates to those of the progress of knowledge. Both groups - the beginner and the lower-intermediate group, this area gained the lowest score 3.37 and 3.22 respectively at the neutral level, whereas the improvement in English gained the score which is not significantly different 3.44 in the pre-intermediate at the satisfied level, and 3.37 in the intermediate at the neutral level. Philips and Stone (2004, p. 5) said in the topic of the evaluation framework that in the evaluation of learning, due to the new interesting activities the participant learning has taken place. The adjustments to the program content, design of the program, and the teaching depend on the data on learning evaluation.

5.3.3 Less than half of the respondents gave comments and suggestions. Forty-one per cent of the respondents in the pre-intermediate and only 24% in the intermediate level gave some feedbacks with comments and suggestions. Kumar (1999, p.118) said that one of the disadvantages of the open-ended questions is that some respondents may not be able to express their opinions freely, so it is likely to lose some information. Also, Pickard (2007, p. 195) stated that too much thinking and

writing are involved in answering the open-ended questions and time is also a factor that some respondents do not want to answer the open-ended questions.

5.3.4 The second highest number of respondents marked the undecided blank in almost all of the issues. Kumar (1999, p. 119) affirmed that it has a tendency for some respondents to tick in blanks or categories without thinking carefully or deciding clearly on which should be marked.

5.3.5 Kaufman, Guerra, and Platt (2006) stated that "... the value of an educational program is based on how well that program meets the needs..." (p. 2). The results on the fulfillment in the content in both groups- - the beginner and the lower-intermediate group gained the lowest score among other areas in the same issue 3.10 and 3.03 respectively which are at the neutral level. They do not relate with the results of the satisfaction of the program as a whole 3.48 in the pre-intermediate and 3.47 in the intermediate level because other issues such as the trainer, textbooks, supplementary materials, and teaching aids, time schedules and duration, evaluation, and progress and knowledge application are also concerned with the results. However, they instead relate to the satisfaction with the course content overall which is 3.17 in the pre-intermediate and 3.16 in the intermediate. The two figures gained the second lowest scores after the results of the fulfillment in the content.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of the study can be drawn as follows.

5.4.1 In general, the trainees were satisfied with the in-service English training course.

5.4.2 The trainees in both groups- - felt neutral with the evaluation.

5.4.3 The trainees were not certain whether they could apply the knowledge gained in their work, communication, and the career path.

5.5 ROCOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

According to the findings and the conclusions of the study, below are recommendations for further research.

5.5.1 Further research should study programs in other fields of knowledge such as business administration, management, importing-exporting, and human resource.

5.5.2 Subjects working for other kinds of organizations including government and private organizations such as offices, hospitals, and police stations should be researched.