An Evaluation of English Courses for Graduate Students of Thammasat University

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate two English courses for graduate students: TU 005 and TU 006 at Thammasat University in the B.E. 2553 academic year (2010). The participants included two TU 005 lecturers, fifty-one TU 005 students, five TU 006 lecturers, and eighty TU 006 students. A questionnaire was used to collect information from the lecturers and students. The questionnaire probed the lecturers' and students' opinions on the learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, lecturers, textbooks and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, the benefits of the course, plus their overall satisfaction with the course, the students or lecturers, and the textbook. The results revealed that both TU 005 and TU 006 students and TU 005 lecturers responded at the high level to all aspects; however, TU 006 lecturers responded at the high level to virtually all aspects except that they were satisfied with the textbook to some extent.

Keywords: graduate students' opinions, lecturers' opinions, English courses for graduate students

1. Introduction

The Language Institute of Thammasat University (LITU) was officially established as a university faculty in 1985 to serve the ever-growing need for English language training for students in all faculties at Thammasat University. LITU conducts 3 types of courses for both undergraduate and graduate students at Thammasat University's academic campuses: Tha Prachan and Rangsit. The three groups are (1) undergraduate foundation courses, (2) English for Specific Purposes (ESP), courses for 2nd –year up students and (3) remedial graduate courses (TU 005 and TU 006) for those who cannot get the required score for qualified graduates set by Thammasat University. Qualified graduate students must have at least 550 of 1,000 TU-GET (Thammasat University General English Test) full scores.

1.1 Background to the Research

The students entering any graduate program at Thammasat University, apart from those who pass the TU-GET, have to pass TU 005 and TU 006 courses before graduation.

TU005, English 1, is designed to improve students' reading skills. Students will have extensive practice in vocabulary-building and reading comprehension. Therefore, this course emphasizes all important reading skills: previewing and predicting, identifying main ideas and topics, using context to guess meaning, identifying supporting details, recognizing patterns of organization, making inferences, distinguishing fact from opinion, and identifying purpose and tone. When this course was evaluated, the textbook *Ready to Read More* by Karen Blanchard and Christine Root was employed.

TU 006, English 2, is designed to improve students' writing skills. Emphasis is placed on developing the skill of writing sentences and paragraphs. This course mainly focuses on essential writing skills, namely paragraph development, narration, description, cause and effect, giving examples, and comparison and contrast. The textbook, *Communicative Writing*, an in-house coursebook written by Pratin Pimsarn and another supplementary workbook written by a LITU staff were used during the course evaluation.

This B.E. 2553 Academic Year (2010) was suitable for the TU 005 and TU 006 course evaluation, the objectives of which were to provide information to improve the courses and to provide a basis for decisions about curriculum adoption and the effective use of these courses (?) in the future.

1.2 The Objectives of the Study

The purposes of this study were to:

1. obtain the lecturers' opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course and their satisfaction with the course, the students and the textbook.

2. obtain the students' opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course and their satisfaction with the course.

1.3 Research Questions

This research study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the TU 005 and TU 006 lecturers' opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course and their satisfaction with the course, the students and the textbook?

2. What are the TU 005 and TU 006 students' opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook and supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, benefits of the course?

1.4 Scope of the study

The samples of this study were two TU 005 lecturers, fifty-one TU 005 students, five TU 006 lecturers and eighty TU 006 students in the first semester of 2009 academic year at Thammasat University. The results from this study, therefore, cannot be applied to students in other faculties, nor can they be generalized to students in subsequent semesters.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Definitions of Curriculum Evaluation

A curriculum can be defined as a set of materials or planned experiences designed to accomplish certain stated or implied objectives (Wayne W. Welch: 1969,

p. 429) and as an attempt to communicate the essential features of educational programmes, preferably using specific objectives and a systematic approach to the design and management of teaching and learning. The curriculum, therefore, should be relevant to both teachers' and learners' needs, be feasible given the working environment, adequately communicate intent and purpose, guide planning strategies for implementation and be capable of being used as a basis for improvement (Singla and Gupta: 2011).

Curriculum evaluation can thus be understood as the gathering of information after using the curriculum for the purpose of making decisions on its effectiveness, It is concerned primarily with questions of utility that involve value and judgment.

Curriculum evaluation serves two important functions Firstly, it provides a means of obtaining information that can be used to improve a course. Secondly, it provides a basis for decisions about curriculum adoption and effective deployment . The first kind of assessment is generally called "formative evaluation"; the second is referred to as "summative evaluation." (Scriven, 1997 cited in Darussalam, 2010, p. 59) Formative evaluation is made during an ongoing programme, while summative evaluation is made at the end of a programme and aims to collect information as a means of deciding whether or not to continue a programme, or after a programme ends to assess its overall effectiveness.

Fleischman and Williams (1996) proposed a framework for evaluating an instructional programme, combining an outcome evaluation with a process evaluation. The outcome evaluation attempts to determine the extent to which a programme's specific objectives have been achieved, whereas the process evaluation seeks to describe an instructional programme and how it was implemented, and through this, attempt to gain an understanding of why its objectives were or were not achieved. Accordingly, an evaluation should be designed in which evaluation questions, data collection and analysis, address students, instruction and outcomes. The information on the background of the students involved includes grade level, age, socioeconomic level, aptitude and achievement (grades and test score). The component of instruction describes how the key activities of the curriculum or instructional programme are implemented, including instructional objectives, hours of instruction, teacher characteristics and experience. The component of outcomes concerns the effects that the program has on students, and to what extent the programme has met its stated objectives.

2.2 Components of English Instructional Management

2.2.1 The physical environment of the classroom

Brown (2000, pp. 192-194) states the physical environment for learning, the classroom itself, including sight, sound, and comfort profoundly affect students. For

example, classrooms should be neat, clean, and orderly in appearance. Brown also mentions the influence of equipment on learning. For instance, the equipment should fit comfortably into the room, everyone should be able to see (and/or hear) the visual/auditory stimulus, and all machinery should actually work.

2.2.2 Course content for reading and writing courses

Jeremy Harmer (2001, pp. 201-202) identifies different skills involved in reading, such as identifying the topic, predicting and guessing, reading for general understanding, for specific information, for detailed information and for the interpretation of a text. Brown (2000, pp. 306-310) suggests ten strategies for reading comprehension such as identifying the purpose in reading, using graphemic (sorry, I'm not aware of this term – is it correct?) rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up decoding, using efficient silent reading techniques for relatively rapid comprehension, skimming the text for main ideas, scanning the text for specific information, using semantic mapping or clustering, guessing when you aren't certain, analyzing vocabulary, distinguishing between literal and implied meanings, and capitalizing on discourse markers to process relationships.

According to Harmer (2000, pp. 257-258), there are a number of different approaches to the practice of writing skills both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers can choose whether to focus on the process of writing or on the product. When concentrating on the product, teachers are interested in the aim of a task and in the end result. Those who advocate a process-focused approach spend time with learners on pre-writing phases, editing, redrafting and finally "publishing" their work.

2.2.3 Teachers' roles

Harmer (2001, p. 213) describes the different roles of the teacher when asking students to read intensively as organiser, observer, feedback organiser and prompter. As an organiser, the teacher needs to tell the students exactly what their reading purpose is, give them clear instructions about how to achieve this, and how long they will have to do this. While students are reading, teachers can observe their progress to see how well they are doing individually and collectively. When the students have completed the task, teachers can lead a feedback plenary to check that they have completed the task successfully. This may involve having them compare their answers in pairs or asking them to say where in the text they found the information for their answers. As a prompter, the teacher can encourage them to notice particular language features in the text they have just read.

Harmer (2001, pp. 261-262) identifies the three main roles of a writing teacher as motivator, resource, and feedback provider. Teachers motivate their students to create the right conditions for the generation of ideas, to persuade them of the usefulness of a particular activity, and to encourage them to apply effort for maximum benefit. Teachers also act as a resource to supply information and language when

necessary. As a feedback provider, teachers should provide constructive feedback on the content of the students' own writing.

2.2.4 Textbook /supplementary worksheets

Brown (2000, p. 142) suggests textbook evaluation criteria adapted from Robinett (1978, pp. 249-51). These criteria are goals of the course, background of the students, approach, general content, quality of practice material, sequencing, vocabulary, general sociolinguistic factors, format, accompanying materials including workbook, tapes—audio and/or video, a set of tests, and teacher's guide. Are they useful and sufficient? According to Harmer (2000, pp. 301-306), the "assessment" of a coursebook is an out-of class judgment as to how well a new book will perform in class. Coursebook evaluation, on the other hand, is a judgment on how well a book has performed in fact. Harmer presents a three-stage procedure that allows teachers to assess books on the basis of their own beliefs and their assessment of their students' needs and circumstances, including selecting areas of assessment, stating beliefs, and using statement for assessment (meaning unclear). Similarly, evaluation of materials can be approached in three stages: teachers' records of how successful different lessons and activities have been, teachers' discussion, and student responses that can be collected by asking them if they enjoyed the material they have just been using or asking them for a written response to the following:

- What was your favorite lesson in the book this week? Why?
- What was your least favorite lesson?
- What was your favorite activity?
- What was your least favorite activity? Why?

Harmer proposes options for coursebooks in the following table (adapted from Harmer, 2000, p. 306):

Table 1: Options for coursebook use

Use the coursebook extract?			
Yes		No	
• Change ✓ add ✓ rewrite ✓ replace activities ✓ re-order ✓ reduce	• No change	• omit	• replace

2.2.5 Evaluation

Harmer (2001, p. 326) suggests the following direct test item types for reading and writing. Reading test item types include: multiple choice questions to test comprehension of a text; transferring written information to charts, graphs and maps; choosing the best summary of a paragraph or a whole text, and matching jumbled headings with paragraphs. Writing test item types are writing compositions and stories.

2.2.6 Major Changes in Approaches to Language Teaching

Jacobs and Farrell (cited in Jack C. Richards.) suggest eight major changes in approaches to language teaching. These changes are:1) *learner autonomy* this means learners may have greater choice to choose the content and process of their learning, and they might employ these choices, such as the use of small groups or self-assessment; 2)*The social nature of learning* learners can interact with others through cooperative learning; 3) *Curricular integration* English is not seen as a stand-alone subject but is linked to other subjects in the curriculum; 4) *Focus on meaning* this becomes the driving force of learning; 5) *Diversity:* Learners learn in different ways and have different strengths;
6) *Thinking skills* students do not learn language for its own sake but in order to develop and apply their thinking skills in situations that go beyond the language classroom; 7) *Alternative assessment* can be used to build up a comprehensive picture of what students are capable of doing in a second language**;** new multiple forms of assessment such as observation, interviews, journals and portfolios are needed to replace traditional multiple-choice and other assessment formats that test lower-order skills; and 8) *Teachers as co-learners* and facilitators who are constantly trying out different alternatives, i.e., learning through doing.

2.2.7 Relevant Research

Adisa Benjarattananon's (2010) study of the BA in English curriculum at Prince of Songkla University, Pattani: considered the three dimensional perspectives of instructors, graduates and employers. She analyzed levels of satisfaction at content, teaching and learning methods and instructors' qualifications from 13 instructors' points of views, satisfactions of content, instructors' qualifications, benefits and applications of the subjects for higher education and work performance from 42 graduates' points of view, and satisfactions of the graduates' characteristics, including academic and professional abilities; professional morality and attitude; personality and interpersonal relationship from 24 employers' points of view. The study discovered that the three sample groups had high levels of satisfaction towards all items in the objectives. A comparison of the three groups of samples also revealed no difference.
Jenna Lee Thompson (2011) conducted an evaluation of a university level English for tourism program. The participants included fifteen students who enrolled in the course, two university officials from the international college and the instructor of the course. Four types of data collection were used: questionnaires, interviews, a

teacher's log and learning materials. The results revealed that learners responded positively to in-class listening and speaking tasks that they felt were manageable and relevant to their future ambitions. However, there were negative responses towards textbook and outside readings; the learners viewed these as non-essential to meeting their goals. In addition, the stakeholders viewed the program as a vital part of the curriculum.

Sayananon and Padkate (2011) conducted a study on age and English instruction, and factors affecting satisfaction and dissatisfaction when studying English. This research aimed to understand EFL students' learning achievement in relation to many factors such as different starting ages of EFL learners and the reasons behind learning satisfaction or dissatisfaction. This study involved two thousand Naresuan University first-year students. It was found that many reasons concerning student learning satisfaction were 1) kind, friendly, and experienced lecturers 2) the benefits to the future careers, and 3) interesting content and materials.

3   Methodology

3.1   Participants

The participants in this study consisted of two TU 005 lecturers, fifty-one TU 005 students, five TU 006 lecturers and eighty TU 006 students both from Tha Prachan and Rangsit Campuses at Thammasat University in the academic year 2009.

3.2 Materials

The research instrument in the study was a questionnaire divided into three parts: 1) personal information, 2) the participants' opinions towards various aspects of the courses: physical learning and teaching environment and equipment, course content, the textbook/ supplementary worksheets, assessment and evaluation, lecturers and benefits of the course, and 3) other opinions and suggestions.

3.3 Procedures

The questionnaire was distributed before the end of the courses in September, 2010.

3.4. Data Analysis

The completed questionnaires were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 12.0 for data analysis. Descriptive statistics (percentage, mean frequency and standard deviation) were used to measure and analyze all the indicators of the study.

4   Results

4.1 Personal information

This part of the study analyzes the students' personal information consisting of gender, year of study, faculty, grade point average, frequency of attendance and types of the courses. It was found that the majority of the TU 005 students (N=51) are female (62.7%), studying in the first year (43.1%), studying the faculty of nursing (35.3%), followed by the students of in the faculties of science and technology, of engineering (27.5%/each), having grade points average at 2.01-2.50 (43.1%) and 3.01-3.50 (31.4%), attending all classes (74.5%) and studying TU 005 as a compulsory course (88.2%).

Similarly, most of the TU 006 students (N=80) are female (73.8%), studying in the second year (70%), studying in the faculty of political science (28.8%), of mass communication and journalism (23.8%), of medicine (22.5%), having grade points average at 3.01-3.50 (55%) followed by at 3.51-4.00 (37.5%). Most students attended all classes (51.3%), while 47.5 percent of them were absent from class between once and three times. Eighty percent of them studied TU 006 as a compulsory course.

In addition, this part includes the lecturers' personal information including gender, age range, the highest level of education, academic position and teaching experience. Two TU 005 lecturers were female age between 31 and 40, having a master's degree as their highest level of education, and having teaching experience between 5 and 10 years. In the like manner, all TU 006 lecturers (N=5) were female age between 21 and 60, having a master's degree as their highest level of education, having academic positions as assistant professors and associate professors equally (40%) followed by 20% in the associate professor position and the majority (60%) had teaching experience more than 20 years.

4.2 Summary of lecturers' and students' opinions towards various aspects of the courses

Table 2: Lecturers' and students' opinions towards physical learning and teaching environments and equipment

Opinions	TU 005				TU 006			
	lecturers		Students		lecturers		students	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
The classroom environment enhances teaching and learning.	4.50	0.70	4.35	0.65	4.20	0.44	4.22	0.69
The classrooms and locations are appropriate.	4.50	0.70	4.49	0.54	4.60	0.54	4.08	0.74

The classrooms have a high standard of cleanliness.	4.50	0.70	4.49	0.64	4.40	0.54	4.08	0.79
The classrooms are sufficiently equipped with learning support devices such as computers, projectors, stereos, etc.	4.50	0.70	4.47	0.57	4.80	0.44	4.31	0.66
These learning support devices are up to date.	4.50	0.70	4.43	0.53	4.20	0.44	4.26	0.75
Average	4.50	0.70	4.45	0.59	4.44	0.48	4.19	0.73

As shown in Table 2, all TU 005 lecturers had highest level opinions of the physical learning and teaching environment, and the appropriateness and modernity of equipment. However, TU 005 and TU 006 students as well as TU 006 lecturers agreed at only the high level.

Table 3: Lecturers' and students' opinions towards course content

Opinions	TU 005				TU 006			
	lecturers		Students		lecturers		students	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
The course content is appropriate for the class schedule.	4.00	0.00	4.23	0.65	4.40	0.54	4.00	0.76
The course content is appropriate for credits awarded for the course.	4.50	0.70	4.17	0.62	4.60	0.54	4.01	0.72
The course content is consistent with course objectives.	4.50	0.70	4.21	0.64	4.60	0.54	4.20	0.60
The course content is up to date and relevant to the current real-world situations.	4.50	0.70	4.17	0.68	3.60	0.54	3.97	0.67
The course content helps promote learners' professionalism.	4.50	0.70	3.88	0.68	3.80	0.44	3.78	0.86
The course content is presented	4.50	0.70	4.03	0.69	4.00	0.70	3.95	0.70

in a clear and systematic way.							
The course content enhances learners' ethics and morals.	4.00	1.41	3.88	0.68	3.80	0.44	3.66	0.77
The course content supports knowledge and understanding in Thai and foreign cultures.	4.50	0.70	3.88	0.73	3.60	0.54	3.80	0.71
Average	4.38	0.70	4.06	0.67	4.05	0.54	3.92	0.72

Table 3 shows that TU 005 lecturers agreed at the highest level that the TU 005 course content was appropriate, up to date, relevant to the current real-world situations, that it was presented in a clear and systematic way, and that it supported knowledge and understanding in Thai and foreign cultures. TU 006 lecturers agreed at the high level that the TU 006 course content was appropriate and consistent with course objectives. In addition, both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that the course content was appropriate. On average all participants were very satisfied with the course content.

Table 4: Students' opinions towards lecturers

Opinions	TU 005 students		TU 006 students	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
The lecturer manages the lessons as specified in the course outline.	4.50	0.54	4.42	0.630
The lecturer uses appropriate techniques for the content.	4.50	0.57	4.31	0.64
The lecturer arranges the content in a systematic way.	4.35	0.55	4.10	0.73
The lecturer uses proper teaching materials.	4.45	0.64	4.21	0.63
The lecturer uses educational technology appropriately.	4.45	0.57	4.18	0.67
The lecture uses questions to stimulate and uses activities to develop the thinking skill.	4.43	0.67	4.36	0.69
The lecturer let students participate in activities.	4.60	0.66	4.51	0.57
Average	4.47	0.60	4.30	0.65

As seen from Table 4, TU 005 students agreed at the highest level that their lecturers managed the lessons appropriately, used appropriate techniques, and let them

participate in activities. TU 006 students agreed at the highest level that their lecturers let them take on active roles during activities. On average both were very satisfied with their lecturers.

Table 5: Lecturers' and students' opinions towards the textbook and supplementary worksheets

Opinions	TU 005				TU 006			
	lecturers		students		lecturers		students	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
The textbook and supplementary worksheets cover the course objective.	4.50	0.70	4.27	0.56	3.80	1.09	4.03	0.68
The textbook and supplementary worksheets encourage learning.	4.50	0.70	4.19	0.60	4.00	0.70	4.06	0.68
The textbook and supplementary worksheets are reliably referenced.	4.50	0.70	4.13	0.69	3.80	0.44	3.90	0.70
The textbook and supplementary materials are attractive in appearance.	4.00	1.41	4.19	0.66	3.60	1.14	3.71	0.73
Average	4.38	0.88	4.20	0.63	3.80	0.84	3.93	0.70

Table 5 reveals that all TU 005 students, TU 006 lecturers and students agreed at the high level that the textbook and supplementary sheets covered the course objective, encouraged learning, and that they were reliably referenced and attractive in appearance, while TU 005 lecturers agreed with the first three aspects at the highest level. On average all participants were very satisfied with the textbook and supplementary worksheets.

Table 6: Lecturers' and students' opinions towards assessment and evaluation

Opinions	TU 005				TU 006			
	lecturers		students		lecturers		students	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Assessment is in line with course objectives.	4.00	0.00	4.25	0.62	4.20	0.44	4.17	0.67
The scores in assessment and evaluation are allocated in	4.00	0.00	4.05	0.64	4.40	0.54	4.11	0.67

appropriate proportions.								
The approaches to assessment and evaluation are appropriate.	4.50	0.70	4.03	0.66	4.20	0.83	4.13	0.67
The length of the examination is compatible with the time allowed to sit the exam.	4.50	0.70	3.96	0.84	3.20	0.83	3.60	1.00
Evaluation includes assessment of students' thought processes.	3.50	0.70	4.19	0.60	3.40	0.89	4.03	0.77
Evaluation includes a focus on assessing the students' application of knowledge.	3.50	0.70	4.03	0.69	3.80	0.44	4.05	0.76
Average	4.10	0.42	4.10	0.67	3.88	0.71	4.01	0.76

Table 6 shows that both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that assessment was in line with course objectives, the scores in assessment and evaluation were allotted in appropriate proportions, the length of examination time was appropriate, the evaluation incorporated the students' thought process and their application of knowledge. In contrast, TU 005 lecturers agreed at the highest level that the approaches to assessment and evaluation, and the length of examination time were appropriate. However, TU 006 students thought that the length of examination time was appropriate only to a certain degree. On average all participants were very satisfied with assessment and evaluation.

Table 7: Lecturers' and students' opinions towards the benefits of the course

opinions	TU 005				TU 006			
	lecturers		students		lecturers		students	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
The course provides students with language knowledge and skills according to the course objectives.	4.50	0.70	4.11	0.55	4.20	0.44	4.26	0.63
The knowledge from this course is applicable to students' further study.	4.00	0.00	4.17	0.65	4.40	0.54	4.26	0.74
The knowledge from this course enables continuous self-	4.50	0.70	4.23	0.65	4.20	0.83	4.27	0.71

development.								
The knowledge from this course can be utilized to assist other people in society.	4.50	0.70	4.00	0.69	3.20	0.83	3.86	0.83
The knowledge from this course can be utilized efficiently in daily life.	3.50	0.70	4.07	0.68	3.40	0.89	4.08	0.79
The knowledge from this course can be utilized efficiently in professional life.	3.50	0.70	4.11	0.71	3.80	0.44	4.06	0.71
Average	4.08	0.58	4.12	0.66	3.87	0.66	4.13	0.74

Table 7 shows that both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that they obtained knowledge from this course that could be applied in their study and utilized efficiently in both their daily and professional life. However, TU 006 lecturers thought that the knowledge from this course could be utilized to assist other people in society to a certain degree. On average all participants were very satisfied with the benefits of the course.

Table 8: Lecturers' and students' satisfaction towards each course

Opinions	TU 005		TU 006	
	lecturers	students	lecturers	Students
Satisfaction with the course	4.00	4.05	4.00	3.98
Satisfaction with the students	4.00	-	4.00	-
Satisfaction with the textbook	4.00	-	3.20	-

Table 8 reveals that TU 005, TU 006 students were very satisfied with the course. Similarly, TU 005 lecturers were very satisfied with the course, the students and the textbook, while TU 006 lecturers were very satisfied with the course and the students. In contrast, TU 006 lecturers were satisfied with the textbook to a certain degree.

4.3 Other lecturers' and students' opinions and suggestions

TU 005 students' opinions and suggestions (N= 51, the number in parentheses represents the frequencies of responses):

- Teachers should encourage students to talk in English while studying. (1)

- The teaching schedule should be changed from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Monday to 1:30 on Wednesdays because we (nursing students) have other classes (7), and we are sleepy when studying in the evening (2).
- We were satisfied with the course because of good lecturers (12) who provided groupwork activities applicable to our daily lives (8) and other subjects, a good atmosphere (7), better understanding of English (4), revision of English(3), and English development (2) respectively.
- There should be a remedial examination and an answer key for the midterm exam. (1)

TU 006 students' opinions and suggestions (N= 80, the number in parentheses represents the frequencies of responses):

- There should be a security guard after class at 8:30 p.m. (1)
- The content is too difficult (5).
- The time for the exam should be changed from 2.30 hours to 3 hours (4).
- The teachers should teach and speak more slowly (4).
- The teaching schedule should be changed from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. to 5:30 – 8: 30 p.m., or to 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. on Saturday or Sunday (4).
- The LCD projector doesn't work properly, so we cannot see what the teacher is teaching clearly (2).
- The restroom is not clean and convenient (2).
- Even though this is a writing course, we should practice speaking, watch a movie, fun story or cartoon in other media. (2)
- Current news or situations, other illustrations such as pictures, charts, diagrams, various fonts should be added to the text. (1)
- We were satisfied with the course due to its application to future work (17), its application to the composition of English articles (12) and good lecturers who provided fun classes and sufficient supplementary sheets (12), appropriate content (4), and good atmosphere (4) respectively.
- Students who were moderately satisfied with the course said their lecturers were knowledgeable, but they could not explain some topics clearly; they gained more knowledge when doing exercises but not as they expected, they could not keep up with other students and lecturers, they did not understand, they could not apply their knowledge when taking the exam, and their lecturers did not focus on the textbook.
- Students who were little satisfied with the course said their lecturers spoke fast, and they asked students to do exercises while they were explaining. Therefore, they could not take notes.

TU 006 lecturers' opinions and suggestions (N=5, the number in parentheses represents the frequency of each response):

- We are satisfied with the good students who participate well in class, make great effort, or ask when they do not understand (3).
- We have a good atmosphere. (1)
- The textbook is good because there are various topics and exercises with different types of paragraph. (1)
- The textbook is not up-to-date and has difficult examples for students to understand, so more examples should be added. (1) (meaning unclear; I have adjusted in relation to assumed meaning only)
- Some articles and chapters are quite easy. (1)

5   Conclusions, Discussion, and Recommendations
5.1 Conclusions

Summary of the results:

1. Overall, not only TU 005 lecturers but also TU 006 lecturers had the opinions at the high level on course content, the textbook and supplementary materials, assessment and evaluation, that the benefits of the course were appropriate, and that they were very satisfied with the course and the students. However, the TU 006 lecturers were satisfied with the textbook only to a certain degree .

2. Overall, the TU 005 students and TU 006 students evaluated at the highest level the physical environment, the course content, the textbook and supplementary materials, assessment and evaluation, that the benefits of the course were appropriate, and that they were very satisfied with the course.

5.2 Discussion

Five main areas are discussed in this section: the physical environment of the classroom, course content, teachers' roles, textbook/supplementary sheets, assessment and evaluation, and the application of research findings when improving the TU 005 and TU 006 English courses with approaches to language learning.

Regarding the physical environment of the classroom, it was found that both TU 005 and TU 006 lecturers and students were very satisfied because they agreed that the physical learning and teaching environment and equipment are appropriate and modern. This is because the two classes are taught in Language Institute classrooms equipped with up-to-date educational tools such as LCD projectors, computers connected with LAN, and microphones. In addition, the officer is available when there are any technological problems. As Brown (2000) states, the physical environment for learning profoundly affects students. Brown also mentions the influence of equipment on learning.

Regarding course content, it was found that both TU 005 and TU 006 lecturers and students were very satisfied because they agreed that the TU 005 course content was appropriate, up to date, relevant to current real-world situations, and it was presented in a clear and systematic way and supported knowledge and understanding in Thai and foreign cultures, while TU 006 lecturers agreed at the high level that the TU 006 course content was appropriate and consistent with course objectives. In addition, both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that the course content was appropriate. All opinions are attributed to what the students have studied. For example, the TU 005 course is designed to improve the students' reading skills such as previewing and predicting, identifying main ideas and topics, using context to guess meaning, identifying supporting details, recognizing patterns of organization, making inferences, distinguishing fact from opinion, and identifying purpose and tone. As Jeremy Harmer (2001, pp. 201-202) mentions, different skills are involved in reading such as identifying the topic, predicting and guessing, reading for general understanding, for specific information, for detailed information and interpreting text. Additionally, the TU 006 course is designed to improve the students' writing skills such as paragraph development, narration, description, cause and effect, giving examples, and comparison and contrast as Harmer (2001, pp. 257-258) states that there are a number of different approaches to the practice of writing skills both inside and outside the classroom. Since TU 006 aims to advocate a process approach, lecturers spend time with learners on pre-writing phases, before editing, redrafting and writing a final draft.

For the teachers' roles, it was found that TU 005 students agreed at the highest level that their lecturers managed the lessons appropriately, used appropriate techniques, and let them participate in activities, . TU 006 students agreed at the highest level that their lecturers let them take an active role in activities as Harmer (2001, p. 213) states the roles of the teacher when asking students to read intensively as an organiser, observer, feedback organiser and prompter. Harmer (2001, pp. 261-262) mentions the additional roles of a writing teacher as motivator, resource, and feedback provider. These findings accorded with the students' open-ended opinions saying, "we (TU 005 students) were satisfied with the course because of good lecturers (12 responses, N = 51) who provided groupwork activities", and "we (TU 006 students, N = 80) were very satisfied with good lecturers who provided fun classes and sufficient supplementary sheets (12 responses).

According to textbook/supplementary sheets, it was found all TU 005 students, TU 006 lecturers and students agreed at the high level that the textbook and supplementary sheets covered the course objective, encouraged learning, and they were reliably referenced and attractive in appearance, while TU 005 lecturers agreed with the first three aspects at the highest level. This accorded with the findings of Jenna Lee Thompson (2011), who conducted an evaluation of a university level

English for Tourism program and found that the participants (fifteen students enrolled in the course, two university officials from the international college and the course instructor), had negative responses towards textbook and outside readings, because the learners viewed these as non-essential to meeting their goals.

Regarding assessment and evaluation, it was found that both TU 005 and TU 006 students agreed at the high level that assessment was in line with course objectives, the scores in assessment and evaluation were allotted in appropriate proportions, the length of examination time was appropriate, the evaluation covered the students' thought process and their application of knowledge. In contrast, TU 005 lecturers agreed at the highest level that the approaches to assessment and evaluation, and the length of examination time were appropriate. However, TU 006 students thought that the length of examination time was appropriate to a certain degree. This accorded with the open-ended suggestions of TU 006 students, who said, "The duration of the exam should be changed from 2.30 hours to 3 hours." (4 responses, N = 80).

The findings of this research should be applied when the Language Institute revises its curriculum in the near future. Furthermore, these findings also provide guidance to improve the courses and provide a basis for decisions about curriculum adoption and effective use in the future. The new curriculum should consider Jacobs and Farrell's (cited in Jack C. Richards) eight suggested changes to language teaching: 1) learner autonomy; 2) the social nature of learning; 3) curricular integration; 4) focus on meaning; 5) diversity; 6) thinking skills; 7) alternative assessment; and 8) teachers as co-learners. Most importantly, it was found that TU 006 lecturers were satisfied with the textbook only to a certain degree. Lecturers who will teach the TU 006 course in the future should therefore discuss which available textbook is most appropriate and efficient to use.

5.3 Recommendations for the Future Course Evaluation

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made for future course evaluations. First, future studies should utilize a wider range of information sources such as asking for opinions from lecturers, current students and/or lecturers in the related fields of current students, and/or graduates, since the present study drew on questionnaire answers from lecturers and current students only. Second, for triangulation, future studies should use different means of data collection, such as interviews, focus groups, teachers' logs (records), and students' logs of what they like and dislike while studying.

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