

**IN THE NAME OF GOD**

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**Shiraz University**  
**Faculty of Literature and Humanities**

**Ph.D. Dissertation in TEFL**

**EVALUATION OF THE TEFL PROGRAM AT  
MASTER'S LEVEL IN IRAN**

**By**

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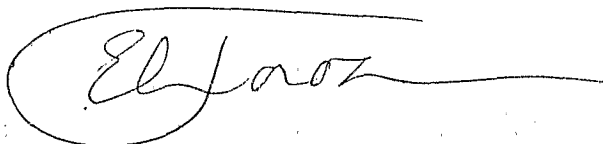
## Declaration

I undersigned Elham Foroozandeh majoring in TEFL in Ph.D. Program at the Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, certify that the present doctoral dissertation is original, and all the information taken from each and every source are referenced in full.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elham Foroozandeh', is written over a large, faint circular watermark or stamp.

May 2009

**IN THE NAME OF GOD**

**Evaluation of the TEFL Program at Master's Level in Iran**

**BY**

Elham Foroozandeh

**Dissertation**

SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTORAL DEGREE

**IN**


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**EVALUATED AND APPROVED BY THE THESIS COMMITTEE AS  
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## **Abstract**

### **Evaluation of the TEFL Program at Master's Level in Iran**

**By :**

**Elham Foroozandeh**

This program evaluation was designed within Stufflebeam's CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) Model (2002) with the purpose of evaluating the TEFL curriculum in MA program implemented at nine major universities in Iran based on the Official Curriculum developed in 1987.

Participants included 68 MA students, 34 instructors, and 9 administrators. Required data were collected through three questionnaires (checkpoints and open-ended questions) and interviews. Two course-based questionnaires including 3-point and 5-point Likert type items as well as one open-ended question for students and instructors were developed based on the Official Curriculum. To develop the Administrators' questionnaire, several program evaluation questionnaires for administrators were consulted out of which 42 items relevant to the Iranian educational context were selected. This questionnaire also included 5-point Likert type items as well as two open-ended questions. All the three questionnaires shared 23 items on the program's work plan. 18 instructors agreed to participate in the interview. Interviews with 30 students were done in classroom setting, in defense sessions, or in students' gatherings in academic events such as conferences. Students' interviews were later merged with their written answers as their oral comments were more or less the same as their written responses.

The data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative procedures. The data analysis techniques included Chi-square tests, Mann-Whitney U-test, QSR analysis for narratives, and Exploratory Data Analysis (stem-&-leaf plots). To validate and interpret the findings, the

same were discussed with about ten MA students and two Ph.D. instructors.

The findings generally revealed that (1) there was no consensus among the participants regarding the overall aim of the program, (2) the implemented curriculum is partially compatible with the Official Curriculum, and (3) the participants generally felt the need for (a) the official curriculum's revision, (b) reform in program delivery, and (c) reconsidering the screening system.

The Metaevaluation used to evaluate this study showed a total of 49.9% strength of the CIPP Model's provisions for the evaluation standards of utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy in this research.

Finally, in light of the results of this program evaluation, the strengths and weaknesses of the program, the opportunities for improvement, and the potential threats to the program's efficiency and long-term impact on the immediate beneficiaries are set forth through SWOT Analysis.



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Patience, Hard work, and Dedication  
that I need to take the long way ahead of me...

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the concepts of 'program' and 'evaluation' are generally introduced along with some program evaluation issues in relation to curriculum development. Next, the problem that motivated this study is stated, the objectives are defined, and the research queries are set forth. Finally, the significance of this research in relation to the Iranian MA TEFL curriculum improvement is discussed.

### 1.1 Preliminaries

**P**lanning programs is a typical activity carried out in many communities around the world. But not all activities could be called program. *Program* is defined as an organized activity offered on a continuing basis (Weir and Roberts, 1994). Or, technically speaking, it refers to "any activity, project, function, or policy that has an identifiable purpose or set of objectives" (US General Accounting Office— GAO, 1998, p. 3). Programs are planned and delivered in different contexts like business centers, health care organizations, educational communities, and the like. For each program, certain objectives specific to the given context and stakeholders are identified,

and program delivery is supposed to be in line with those sets of objectives.

There is more to this view than meets the eye. To make sure about the effectiveness of the program and its success in meeting the objectives, the program must be *evaluated*. 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 institutions involved" (Brown, 1989 cited in Johnson, 1989, p. 223). It involves careful collection of information about a program or some aspects of a program to make necessary decisions about the program. In effect, "evaluation is about standing back and being able to see things through somebody else's eyes" (Patton, 2002, interview at IDRC—International Development Research Center).

Program evaluation is so essential a process in a program that some key organizations in the United States and Canada have developed theoretical frameworks to implement sound program evaluations. In April 1998, GAO released a set of definitions of evaluation types and terminology including Performance Measurement, Program Evaluation, Relationship Between Performance Measurement and Program Evaluation (focus and use), and Types of Program Evaluation (Process or Implementation Evaluation, Outcome Evaluation, Impact Evaluation, and Cost-Benefit and Cost-Effectiveness Analyses).

Many similar definitions of the concept of 'evaluation' have been provided in the literature, but in almost all the relevant studies, evaluation is conventionally meant to answer questions or test

hypotheses the results of which will be incorporated into information bases used by stakeholders. Program evaluation is considered challenging for the evaluators in that they may not have the resources, time, or control over program design or implementation situations to obtain the necessary information.

There are different approaches to evaluation and the purposes that it would serve. Weir and Roberts (1994) distinguish between evaluation for purposes of *accountability* and evaluation for purposes of program or project *development*. In this framework, accountability refers to the competency of the staff to justify the quality of their work to others including the bureaucrats, employers, senior school staff, parents, students, the community, or the taxpayer. Along the same line, they distinguish between *contractual accountability*, “where job descriptions and planned outcomes are clearly specified in formal contracts and project frameworks...” and “more general *professional accountability*, where there may be an expectation that staff and administrators should be answerable for their work as it affects others, for example in the use of resources, in their professional practice, or in program outcomes” (p. 4). Therefore, accountability-oriented evaluation is carried out to assess the extent to which the staff has met contractual or professional accountability demands.

On the other hand, the purpose of *development-oriented* evaluation is to improve the program or the project. It could be carried out by internal or external evaluators, or a combination of both, which is generally considered to be more effective (Weir and Roberts, 1994). In educational contexts, program evaluation is concerned with both professional accountability and program development.