

Perceptions of EFL Teachers at King Abdulaziz University Regarding the Effectiveness of Cambridge University Press's Train the Trainer Course

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Abstract

This study adds to the current literature on ongoing in-house professional development for teachers by exploring how administrators, other faculty, and the English-language (EFL) teachers who participated in Cambridge University Press's Train the Trainer course (TTT) at King Abdulaziz University (KAU), Saudi Arabia, judged the TTT's usefulness. To determine whether to support the TTT in the future, KAU wanted to identify how well its TTT graduates could provide professional development to their colleagues. This study's aim is to discuss how positively those who were involved in the TTT, particularly the administration, the TTT graduate trainers themselves, and the other teachers who attended the workshops presented by first-year graduates of the ELI's TTT responded to the course. The main question it addresses is how successful the implementation of such a TTT course can be at the English language institute of a Saudi university, like at KAU, so as to determine if the TTT should continue to be offered at KAU and more generally, taking the example of the ELI at KAU, if the TTT course should also be proposed at other English language institutes in Saudi Arabia. This study employed a Likert scale survey, semi-structured interviews, and open-ended questions with TTT participants, administrators, and other faculty to assess the TTT's initial value. The main finding of this study is that so far, the TTT course was perceived as beneficial. However, future analyses should evaluate the longer-term effects of the TTT on teaching approaches and student learning.

Keywords: effectiveness of Cambridge Train the Trainer course, EFL Saudi context, EFL, EFL professional development, teacher-trainers

Cite as: Roy, C. K., Rahim, S., & Khojah, A. Y. (2018). Perceptions of EFL Teachers at King Abdulaziz University Regarding the Effectiveness of Cambridge University Press's Train the Trainer Course. *Arab World English Journal*, 9 (2). DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no2.6>

This study investigates how participants, other faculty, and administrators at the English Language Institute (ELI) at King Abdulaziz University (KAU) perceived Cambridge University Press (CUP)'s Train the Trainer course (TTT), as offered to some English as Foreign Language (EFL) instructors at the ELI during the 2016-2017 academic year. The purpose of the TTT is to provide good teachers with the opportunity to become certified to provide Cambridge-standard professional development to their peers. The intended result of this training is that graduates of the TTT are able to provide their colleagues with useful professional development, thus improving the quality of instruction independent of outside assistance.

Before the 2016-2017 school year, KAU provided all professional development through its own Professional Development Unit (PDU), since the university had no connection with CUP. After KAU finalized a textbook contract with CUP, however, KAU was offered the TTT, which KAU then funded. The university arranged for the TTT to be offered simultaneously in 2016-2017 at its Men's Campus and two of its three women's campuses: the Women's Main Campus and Women's Colleges. However, this study examined the TTT only as implemented at the two women's campuses.

The Purpose of the Study

This study discusses how the ELI administration, the TTT graduate trainers themselves, and the other teachers who attended the workshops presented by first-year graduates of the ELI's TTT responded to the course. The TTT is currently being offered for a second year to another group of teachers. Having already supported the development of teachers during the first year of the TTT at the ELI, the administration wanted to ascertain the value of both the TTT course at the ELI and the workshops that the course's graduate teacher-trainers have subsequently provided. This study's focus, how the stakeholders evaluate the program, will determine whether the TTT is offered beyond this second year.

Research Questions

At the core of the study are four questions:

1. How effective do the teachers, graduates of the TTT, and the administration judge the TTT to have been so far?
2. How successfully do teachers feel they have been able to use the teaching methods that they have learned from the TTT graduate teacher-trainers at the ELI?
3. After the certification of its own teacher-trainers, was the ELI able to autonomously design and provide valued EFL training sessions to its faculty members?
4. To what degree did the workshops offered by the TTT graduates reflect the context and content of real classroom experiences?

The Value of Professional Development

Despite the fact that, as Rose and Reynolds (2007) point out, "the concept of continuing professional development (CPD) in education is often ill-defined" (p. 219), no institute with international standards can evolve or even survive without dynamic and ongoing professional development. Teachers everywhere tend to appreciate professional development because it not only gives them new ways to handle their changing curriculums and new technology as well as the opportunity to acquire new teaching techniques, but it also updates their understanding of how

students learn. In fact, to adapt to new demands and opportunities, especially technological ones, and to benefit from new findings in the field, EFL teachers must receive ongoing education so as to develop their skills and knowledge (Mohammadi & Moradi, 2017). In the case of many language institutes, this training is provided in-house.

However, professional development is more than just weekly workshops. At the ELI of KAU, for example, it takes various forms: in-house training, regional and international conferences, end-of-the-year symposiums, and the TTT that this research paper examines. The TTT is an extensive course: the workshops that TTT graduates deliver may range from classroom techniques and methodologies to technology and beyond, depending on the needs of the ELI's teachers. By enabling teacher-trainers to subsequently offer professional development to their peers on such topics, the TTT aligns with the current general aim of language institutions to prioritize the training of their teachers so that the institutions continuously meet "prescribed standards-based performance benchmarks" (Bills, Giles, & Rogers, 2016, p. 106). In fact, providing in-house training through such instruments as the TTT has become imperative due to the ongoing evolution of curriculums and of students' technological needs and tools, "rapid changes in the educational scenario [that] compel the teachers to work hard in order to respond to such changes effectively" (Al Asmari, 2016, p. 118).

Such professional development is thus a way for teachers to keep learning after starting to teach, without having to engage in further formal studies. The results of this ongoing teacher-education are improvements in teaching and learning. In fact, one indicator of the importance to all stakeholders—faculty members, administration, and students—of teachers' participation in professional development is the fact that at most language institutes, including the ELI, it that such participation is considered in the institution's end-of-year evaluations of their teachers.

Another sign of the importance of professional development is the effort that institutions may make to provide it to their teachers, whether by hiring international EFL trainers, by providing in-house training for their faculty, by implementing new teaching practices, or by formulating policy that supports professional development. As Tawelbeh (2015) argues, "[i]n order for learners to get effective learning opportunities, teachers' professional development should be considered as a major goal in institutions' policies" (p. 117).

To be successful, however, professional-development training needs to address the genuine interests and concerns of teachers: "to develop professionally, teachers should feel a continuous desire to learn more about themselves as professionals, and about their profession" (Peña Muñoz, 2009, p. 19). At the ELI of KAU, teachers expressed a strong interest in in-house workshops and training opportunities, a need that led to the administration arranging to offer the TTT as a means of increasing the number of meaningful workshops available each year.

Three Current Themes in Professional Development

Three trends in professional development—reflectiveness, newest teaching techniques, and the correlation between teachers' effectiveness and their students' performance—were incorporated into the TTT as delivered at KAU.

The first of these is an emphasis on the importance of teachers reflecting on their own teaching practices and experiences. The reflective practice that is part of the Cambridge training

course is seen by the ELI, the TTT graduates, and other teachers to accord with Auten and Twigg (2015)'s description of such reflection "as both a mode of learning and an avenue to improving one's teaching" (p. 8), and thus to improving students' learning processes. In fact, the idea that students' achievement is strongly commensurate with their teachers' professional skills and methodologies "is a widely accepted notion, and thus the focus on teacher quality has had a long history in the field of education" (Yoo, 2016, p. 8). As Peña Muñoz (2009) points out, in order to develop a better understanding of how to improve their practice, teachers must articulate their personal theories of teaching (p.19). And through such reflection, teachers learn to hone their skills or to identify areas that need development, such as the need to learn new teaching techniques.

Another current emphasis in professional development is on exploring recently developed teaching techniques. Since most teachers do not have time to enrol in outside professional-development programs, in-house workshops may provide their only opportunity to learn about new insights in EFL teaching. Typically, teacher development happens within a group: the faculty of a language institute, for instance, often work as a team to support each other and share their expertise. Ideally, such learning "involves trying out new strategies in the classroom, usually with supervision and monitoring and getting feedback from others on one's own practice" (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p. 3). In the absence of programs like the TTT or other in-house workshops, this kind of professional development might not be available to all or any of the faculty. But teacher-trainer graduates of the TTT help to increase access for their colleagues to training in the best current teaching practices.

A third trend, the strong correlation between professional development, teachers' effectiveness, and students' performance, has also received considerable attention recently:

many educational researchers and practitioners argue that in order to improve student achievement, it is necessary to improve teacher quality. One way to do this is through sustained classroom-based professional development programs, which aim to improve teachers' knowledge, instructional practices, and pedagogical beliefs. (Tawalbeh, 2015, p. 118)

Because teachers employ the teaching practices that they have learned are effective, these improvements in knowledge affect teachers' daily practice and classroom decisions, and ultimately their students' learning (Mohammadi & Moradi, 2017).

Recent Studies on Professional Development

Studies have underscored the necessity of ongoing professional development for all faculty because, especially as technology develops, new ways of communicating and getting information emerge. For this reason,

[e]ffective language study is focused on communication, facilitating the development of knowledge and skills in language and culture, integrating language acquisition with content from other subject areas, and preparing students to be lifelong learners and users of the skills, information, and insights they gain. (Al Asmari, 2016, p. 118)

Furthermore, due to the high demand on them to successfully integrate language acquisition with other related language skills, teachers benefit greatly from ongoing in-house professional development that gives them hands-on opportunities to practice new approaches.

The Role of Needs-Assessment Analysis in Professional Development

Good professional development should be based on needs analysis (Tawalbeh, 2015) to ensure that training sessions meet teachers' needs or interests, and thereby help teachers' practices to evolve in response to their changing conditions and knowledge.

At the beginning of every academic year, the ELI's Professional Development Committee (an arm of its PDU) canvases faculty members to determine their professional-development needs. Though this can be a complex task since teachers may disagree about which workshops are most necessary, in 2016 the ELI needs survey showed that faculty wanted to learn about the latest insights into two topics: using technology in the classroom, and effectively teaching the four skills (speaking, listening, writing and reading). By thus demonstrating their strong interest in developing their professional skills, the teachers confirmed their support for workshops and for the trainers offering them. At the ELI, all members of a sample group of faculty surveyed in 2018 through Google Forms strongly confirmed that the workshops given by their own TTT graduates had helped them to develop as teachers.

The Role of the Needs-Analysis Survey in Achieving Teaching Excellence

A needs analysis of what teachers would like to see in professional development workshops allows teacher-trainers to offer workshops directly related to what those teachers need to know in order to improve their teaching and thereby their students' success rate. In this way, teachers can act, as Yousef and Dajani (2014) put it, as "leaders of change." Workshops that TTT graduates offer in response to a needs analysis are better able to provide teachers with training in new techniques, raise their professional standards, and thus improve the quality of their work.

The Train the Trainer Course as a Source of Professional Development

The TTT, designed and developed by Cambridge English (a subsidiary of the University of Cambridge) and provided through employers and language institutes, offers participants a series of workshops, workshop observations, and feedback to better equip its graduates for providing powerful and effective teacher-training workshops to their fellow teachers. It is an intensive set of workshops that involve an experienced Cambridge trainer as well as senior faculty members in discussions of how to plan, design, deliver and evaluate professional-development training sessions for their fellow teachers. The course does not always take the traditional top-down approach that, as Rose and Reynolds (2007) note, has traditionally characterized perceptions of professional development. Rather, the TTT workshops as delivered at the ELI were often an opportunity for teachers to learn from each other.

The core components of the course are training classes, the design and analysis of training sessions, the delivery of training sessions, teacher observation, feedback management, and trainer development. The workshops that TTT graduates in turn provide are intended to help EFL teachers to hone their teaching skills and to meet such professional targets as better teaching of the four skills, optimal use of technology in the classroom, effective management of large groups, and the

promotion of critical thinking in class. The course thus corresponds to teachers' needs to develop their skills, knowledge, and tools to grow professionally and teach effectively.

Participants engage in face-to-face training sessions, independent follow-ups, and practical tasks. By the end of the year-long course, successful participants should have improved their skills for designing and delivering teacher-training sessions and courses, deepened their understanding of the key issues involved in planning and delivering training courses, developed an understanding of good practices for observing and giving feedback to course participants, trained their fellow teachers to use the latest EFL techniques, built sustainability into their teacher-development programs, extended their own teaching skills and experience, and identified strategies they may employ for their further development as trainers. TTT graduates should have also demonstrated the ability to effectively deliver Cambridge-prepared professional-development workshop material, to be able to research topics related to teaching methodology, and to design and produce relevant and appropriate workshops with achievable aims. Finally, they should display a strong interest in successfully delivering workshops, and fully appreciate the value of critical self-reflection to their own further development as teacher-trainers.

The Purpose of the Train the Trainer Course at the ELI of KAU

The main purpose of the TTT is to promote the best new teaching practices, to encourage reflection on and discussion of those techniques amongst faculty members, and to provide opportunities for teachers to experiment with these new ideas in the classroom. At the ELI, TTT workshops have led to teachers learning about the applications and implications of helpful new teaching methods, and about ways to use current technology in class.

The Collegiality that the TTT Encourages

The positive atmosphere in which the TTT is delivered helps the program to achieve these goals. As Yousef and Dajani (2014) point out, professional development is an opportunity "to promote, strengthen and foster cooperation to enhance teachers' professional development based on the different experiences teachers have" (p. 143). Thus, the TTT's provision of a supportive environment in which to explore those differences has helped ELI teachers to reflect on and share individual strategies and perspectives on classroom issues.

In fact, in its objective to provide ongoing professional development in an atmosphere of collegial learning, the program's in-house training and learning opportunities resemble learning circles, structures which promote a rich "learning experience where teachers are able to improve their instructional practices and to construct knowledge for themselves and for their colleagues. Learning circles improve teachers' communication skills and build confidence to cultivate a culture of collaboration and teamwork" (Yousef & Dajani, 2014, p. 151). Ultimately, the friendly manner in which TTT training is offered increases the likelihood of teachers voicing their particular experiences and needs, which gives teacher-trainers the opportunity to fine-tune the professional-development workshops that they then provide to their colleagues.

TTT Promotes Better Teaching

Similarly, when TTT graduates design their own workshops they aim to give their training sessions variety and inclusiveness so that they can encompass the variety of approaches that

teachers use: “teacher[s] may hold personal attitudes and beliefs about all possible aspects of their professional practices, from the subject matter to teaching methods, from what constitutes a good teacher to what constitutes a good student” (Lin, 2013, p. 56).

Some researchers have explored the connection between teachers learning to share their experiences and the growing autonomy of those teachers in choosing best teaching practices. Peña Muñoz (2009), for example, conducted a study in Mexico with five university tutors into how their practice and perceptions of professional development related to their autonomy in planning professional development, and concluded that

it is essential to learn about what has shaped teachers’ experiences as learners and as practitioners. Furthermore, it is necessary to uncover other factors that may influence teachers’ beliefs, such as contextual, personal and academic aspects, because teachers often describe their practice of language teaching in terms of these beliefs. (Peña Muñoz, 2009, p. 22)

At the ELI, graduates of the TTT are thus aiming to develop the potential of the existing faculty either through cascading sessions or new workshops, according to the results of needs analyses.

The Value of in-House rather than Visitor-led Training, in General and at the ELI in Particular

One reason that the ELI embraced the opportunity to implement this CUP training course was that the institute wanted to develop its own teacher-trainers; the other is that, in alignment with its mission and vision statements, the ELI sought to provide its faculty with exceptional professional development. At the ELI of KAU, as at most other language institutes, the faculty members see professional-development workshops as a means of enhancing their professional skills and knowledge: as Richards and Ferrell (2005) note, “not everything teachers need to know can be provided at the pre-service level” (p. 1), and the ELI therefore provided the TTT to teachers to train the faculty.

When trainers can provide professional development to their own colleagues in their own institutions, as ELI teacher-trainers at KAU are able to do through the TTT, in two ways the training that they provide is better than training provided by an outside facilitator. First, in-house trainers are able to contextualize their own teaching practices according to the specific needs of the language institute. In this way, the trainers can address their colleagues’ specific, identified needs: for instance, how to deal with students passing from one level to the next at the same time as curriculums are being redefined. When the ELI used to invite Cambridge trainers from abroad, even from the nearby United Arab Emirates (UAE), the training provided was broad and, in important ways, unrelated to teaching at KAU’s ELI, where such factors as a lack of resources, large classes, and students’ levels of language ability, achievement, and absenteeism reduced the value of the recommended pacing of lessons and use of classroom activities. But those who already teach at the ELI of KAU know exactly what kind of students and challenges teachers actually face on a daily basis, and what kinds of workshops would best serve faculty members. For this reason, the TTT has improved the quality of professional development available to the faculty of the ELI.

And second, when professional-development training meets teachers' specific needs, that training is more likely to be not only cooperative and collaborative, but also sustainable (Mohammadi & Moradi, 2017). The presence of TTT graduates amongst the faculty at the ELI means that no extra money needs to be budgeted to bring in visiting professional-development trainers; it also means the elimination of problems—with visas, flights, or accommodation—which might otherwise impact workshops. Furthermore, training sessions can be scheduled for any time that is convenient to ELI teachers. That scheduling flexibility is important because at KAU, changes in exam schedules due to unexpected rain- or sandstorms may affect teachers' ability to attend workshops. These budgetary and logistical reasons for empowering some faculty members to offer very helpful professional development to their colleagues were important reasons behind the ELI initiating the TTT.

The TTT course thus meets faculty needs for help in handling such common campus-specific challenges as large classes, disruptive students, and changing classroom technology. In fact, ELI's TTT graduates are already improving the faculty's ability to manage these issues while carrying out the ELI's mission to develop the quality of its instruction. ELI teachers have confirmed that these workshops have significantly enhanced their own professional development and teaching practices.

Furthermore, the ELI administration sees the TTT as an important means not only of increasing the number of in-house teacher training sessions available to faculty, but also of providing a practical balance between teaching theory and practical application, thereby helping teachers to more thoroughly understand how to use their newly acquired or updated knowledge. While workshops addressing new and relevant information are without doubt of interest to teachers, even workshops that revisit familiar topics can be valuable educational refreshers for faculty: the more skilled teachers are, the better their teaching methods, and the more their students benefit. Topics covered in the training sessions of the TTT graduates thus must be applicable to real classroom scenarios and to the course book at the ELI itself. Therefore, the TTT is a very practical course, allowing participants to apply whatever they learn in the training sessions to their work with their own students;

In a workshop, participants are expected to learn something that they can later apply in the classroom and to get hands-on experience with the topic, such as developing procedures for classroom observation, [integrating technology, encouraging critical thinking, and promoting creativity]. (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p. 23)

For all these reasons, the TTT's provision of in-house professional development enhances the program's measures to encourage participants to consider and test new ideas.

Implementation of the Train the Trainer Course at the ELI

As part of a major curriculum change in the 2015-2016 academic year, the ELI contracted with the CUP that the latter would provide the TTT to selected faculty members for two successive academic years, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. The only challenge that the ELI faced in providing the TTT was allocating sufficient time for the training sessions. Given the ELI's tight modular

schedule, workshop scheduling required meticulous planning to ensure that the training sessions did not conflict with exam and assessment dates.

For the first of these years, because of their superior knowledge, experience, potential, and adaptability, ten faculty members from each of the ELI's two women's campuses in question were selected for participation in the TTT. They attended the course between August, 2016 and May, 2017. Four of the ten graduated from the Women's Main Campus, and nine from the Women's Colleges, due mostly to the participants' prior professional commitments.

Methodology

This research utilized an explorative study method, employing three in-person semi-structured interviews (one with all four administrators who played key roles in making the TTT available; one with each pair of leaders from the two campus-based group of participants) and one questionnaire distributed to 20 randomly chosen members of the 200 faculty who participated in the TTT. All three interviews were conducted at the KAU, Jeddah: two at the ELI at the Women's Main Campus and one at the Women's Colleges; and all interviewees gave their voluntary consent to being interviewed. The interview responses were then grouped according to whether they were from administrators or participants.

The administrators were asked for their opinions about the usefulness, effectiveness, and expected standards of the Cambridge course; they were also asked about the facilitation process, the selection of candidates, the effectiveness of their workshops, and the benefits to the ELI and the TTT participants of this program (Appendix A). Although the interviews with the administrators were conducted in English, someone was present to translate for those participants who preferred to be interviewed in Arabic, so everyone interviewed was able to respond freely. The guidelines for the interview prescribed anonymity; therefore, the participants are referred to as Participant 1, Participant 2, and so on. Similarly, the anonymity of the four TTT participants responding to questions (Appendix B) in their semi-structured interview was preserved. As for the faculty questionnaire, it was made available online to faculty members through Google Forms, and consisted of 24 statements and questions, out of which 20 were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the TTT course itself, most utilizing the Likert Scale (Appendix C). Their anonymous responses were then analyzed using thematic analysis.

Analysis of Interview and Survey Responses

This section summarizes significant findings from the four ELI administrators as well as from the interviews with four of the 13 TTT graduates (two of each of the women's campuses). It then reviews the statistical analysis of survey responses by 20 out of the 200 participants in the ELI workshops offered by TTT graduates.

ELI Administrators' Perceptions

When asked about the cost efficiency of the TTT, Participant T4 said that it is "saving a lot of money. The travel, accommodation and on-site expenses of [using CUP trainers instead to provide all future professional development for ELI faculty] . . . was not feasible in the long run." Training sessions by the TTT graduates, in contrast, entail no further costs, and the workshops can be scheduled to accommodate the ELI's schedule.

Administrators felt that the workshops offered by TTT graduates aligned with the ELI's vision and mission to provide valuable in-house training at international standards of excellence to its faculty. Participant T1 said that she was pleased that the ELI, in accordance with its mission of providing on-going professional development, had decided to develop its own on-site trainers, because attendance at such sessions is part of the teachers' yearly evaluation (though unrelated to their job security). Participant T2 said that the training sessions provided by the ELI trainers were more effective than previous workshops provided by a Cambridge representative from abroad. Participant T3 highlighted the fact that faculty gave "better scores [to] our own trainers" than to CUP's; in addition, she noted that "our own trainers are more vibrant, [more] suitable to our own community." All of the interviewees emphasized that training the institute's own faculty to become trainers is much more convenient and more easily managed than bringing in outside trainers.

In terms of knowing their audience, the professional-development areas that needed to be tackled, and effective activities to use in their workshops, all four administrator respondents felt that ELI's new trainers performed well. Participant T3 said that as in-house teacher-trainers, the ELI graduates from this course contributed significantly to the institute. She also pointed out that other faculty members' appreciation for the training that their newly qualified colleagues had provided them with the previous year had motivated more faculty to engage in professional development during this current academic year. At the same time, the interviewees valued the work that the resource person from Cambridge had done in providing the TTT course to the ELI participants so that they could carry on her work in subsequent years.

Participants' Perceptions of How Effectively the TTT Taught Professional Development

During the interview of the two participants at the Women's Main Campus, participant T1 said that the course met her needs as a trainer in the EFL field, especially in regard to developing her own subsequent workshops. Participant T2 added that the training had had a positive impact on her teaching by providing her with better insights into how to teach the four language skills as well as how to anticipate and tackle issues faced by the ELI teachers at KAU (students needing extra help, the fast pace of the curriculum, tardiness, low motivation, and long hours, to name a few). Participant T1 said that she had gained the ability to design, develop, and conduct her own workshops according to the needs of the faculty and the institute. During the interview at the Women's Colleges with the other two TTT graduates, Participant T3 said that her participation in the course had helped her to understand how to give effective feedback to teachers after observing their classes. Participant T4 felt that the sessions had improved her abilities to time the workshops she gave her colleagues and to foster collaboration between the teachers participating in those workshops. Participants 2 and 3 felt more empowered and effective after having been certified by this internationally recognized training program.

Faculty Perceptions of the Effectiveness of the Train the Trainer Course Graduates' Workshops

Faculty respondents to the online questionnaire indicated more than 90% agreement or strong agreement with the survey's 20 questions and statements about their perceptions of the effectiveness of their training by their TTT-certified colleagues. These results indicate that they found the TTT to be a valuable form of professional development.

To streamline the graphing of responses, answers to this questionnaire's questions and statements were arranged in groups of five simply according to the order in which they were asked. These 20 items are represented below by the letter "Q" and a unique number over the four graphs (Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4); the corresponding questions or statements appear beneath each graph. Although respondents could choose from five numbers to indicate their responses to each statement or question (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree), few respondents chose options 2 or 3, so the graphs (Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4) represent only responses 1, 4, and 5. Overall, the heights of the blue and orange "strongly agree" and "agree" bars clearly indicate that the faculty strongly valued the workshops that the TTT graduates offered during and after completing their participation in the TTT course.

The first questions in the survey (Fig. 1) concerned participants' perceptions of the overall effectiveness of the workshop sessions. As this graph indicates, respondents' levels of agreement with questionnaire items 1-5 were satisfactory.

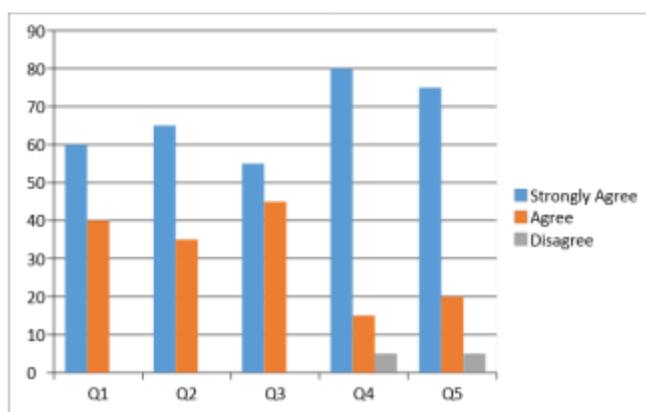


Figure 1. Faculty perception of the effectiveness of the graduate-led workshops (items 1 – 5), with the vertical axis representing the number of responses

- Q1. The training sessions addressed the problems relevant to our institution.
- Q2. The training sessions were interactive sessions where participants could play an active role.
- Q3. The training sessions identified and included appropriate aims.
- Q4. The activities in the training sessions offered a balance of input and output.
- Q5. Each workshop provided clearly stated objectives with appropriate interaction patterns.

Because the core components of the course are training classes, the analysis and design of training sessions, the delivery of training sessions, teacher observation, managing feedback, and trainer development, items 6 to 10 in the faculty questionnaire explored how effectively the TTT graduates designed and delivered training sessions, demonstrated knowledge of the topic, and provided valuable feedback.

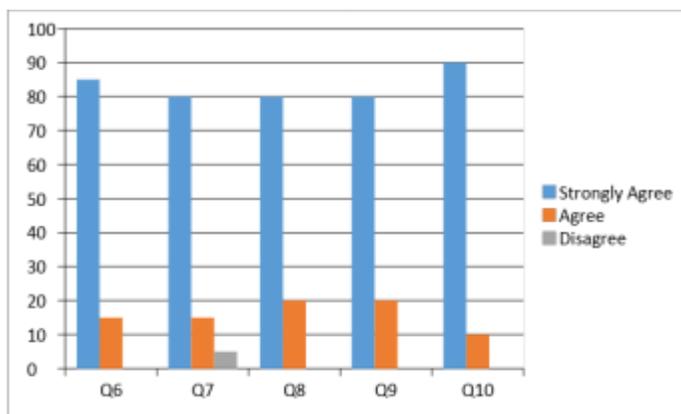


Figure 2. Faculty's satisfaction with the graduate trainers (items 6 – 10), with the vertical axis representing the number of responses

Q6. Trainers selected, adapted, or designed appropriate materials, activities, and resources for each session.

Q7. Trainers demonstrated knowledge of the topic and handled associated problems.

Q8. Trainers engaged their audience through energy, body language, enthusiasm, and good interpersonal skills.

Q9. Trainers demonstrated effective ELT techniques and organizational skills, flexibility, and adaptability.

Q10. Trainers supplied constructive and valuable feedback, responding to questions effectively.

The effectiveness of the training sessions was almost universally confirmed by the responses to items 11 through 20, represented in figures 3 and 4. Additionally, in response to Q 15, 19 of the 20 faculty respondents indicated that in the training sessions they had acquired valuable strategies and methods that they could implement in their classrooms, a major aim of the workshops that the TTT graduates provided and one that was not always satisfied by the workshops conducted previously at the ELI by Cambridge representatives from abroad.

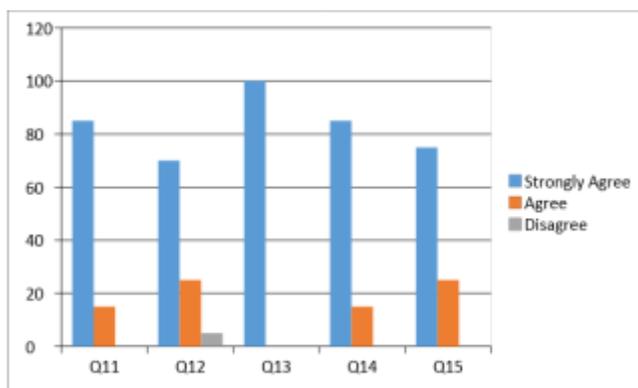


Figure 3. The impacts of graduate-led workshops on faculty (items 11 – 15), with the vertical axis representing the number of responses

- Q11. Trainers monitored their audience to encourage active participation and to check appropriately and sensitively for their full understanding.
- Q12. The training inspired reflection at the end of each session.
- Q13. At the end of each session, were you able to identify strategies/methods that you will implement in your classroom?
- Q14. Did the trainers relate the training sessions to the textbooks currently in use at the ELI?
- Q15. Were the training sessions successful in providing you (teachers) with new ideas for more engaging classroom activities?

The questionnaire indicated that the specific topics that the TTT graduate trainers chose to develop into workshops for their fellow teachers were relevant to the EFL educational context at the ELI of KAU. Responses to Q19 in particular showed that faculty appreciated professional development on using current technology in the EFL classroom, a topic that always appears on the needs analyses that the ELI's PDU conducts.

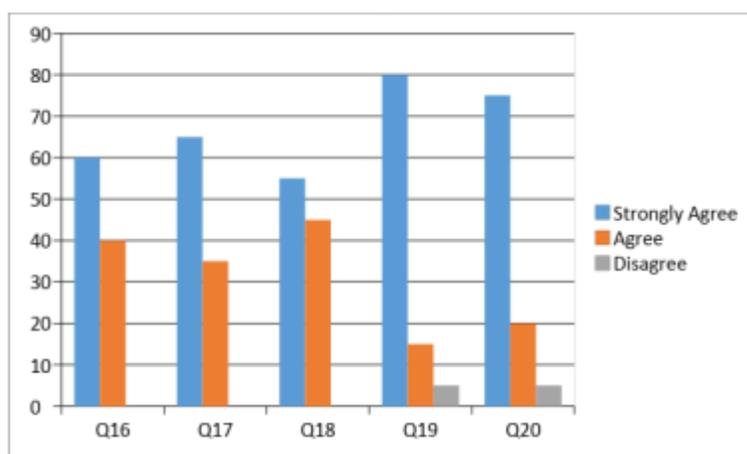


Figure 4. The impacts of graduate-led workshops on teaching practices (items 16 – 20), with the vertical axis representing the number of responses

- Q16. Did the training sessions promote critical thinking later in your EFL classroom?
- Q17. Did the training sessions help you to employ creative strategies in your own classroom to correspond with students' various learning styles?
- Q18. Did the training sessions teach you how to stimulate the different learning zones of your students' brains while they are learning?
- Q19. Did the training sessions help you to effectively utilize technology in your classrooms?
- Q20. Did the training sessions help you learn how to use motivating strategies to teach the four language skills in your classroom?

Conclusions

This study's interviews and statistical analyses indicate that for KAU's English Language Institute, for its faculty, and for its newly certified teacher-trainers, the TTT has already had positive impacts: it has provided faculty with valuable professional development, knowledge about current technological applications for the EFL classroom, and a creative and supportive professional-development atmosphere. In addition, it has tackled recurring, culturally-specific

challenges related to the teaching of EFL. These findings testify to the success of the program's implementation at the ELI.

Recommendations

Because it meets KAU's goal of helping the ELI to become a world-class centre for EFL instruction, for at least one more academic year after the current second year (2017-2018) KAU should fund CUP offering the TTT to its faculty interested in becoming professional-development trainers for their colleagues at KAU's ELI. In this way, an adequate number of teacher-trainers for the foreseeable future will likely be available to provide their fellow faculty members with timely professional updates and insights. This future TTT course should be scheduled for the beginning of module 1.

Limitations of the Study

While the TTT was offered also at KAU's Men's College, this study was conducted at the Women's Main Campus at KAU and it examined only the TTT as implemented there as well as at the Women's Colleges.

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Appendix A. Administrator Interview Questions and Statements

1. Was the selection of participants for ELI's TTT based on merit and on the ELI's professional development criteria?
2. Do you think this training is the most effective, cost-efficient way to develop our own in-house trainers?
3. Do you think this course has increased the trainers' value to the institute?
4. Were the expenses involved in running ELI's Train the Trainer course justified?
5. Did the TTT training schedule mesh well with the ELI's academic calendar?
6. Was the TTT smoothly implemented and run at the ELI?
7. Were the Cambridge facilitators of the TTT culturally sensitive?
8. Were an appropriate number of faculty selected to participate in this program?
9. Did the TTT graduates meet the ELI's standards of international excellence in their instruction of their ELI colleagues?
10. Would you run the TTT again, and if so, would you provide more than 10 spaces for participants?
11. Did the Cambridge University Press do an excellent job of smoothly implementing this program at the ELI?

Appendix B. Questionnaire for Graduates of the Train the Trainer Course

1. Did the TTT meet your needs as a workshop developer and presenter?
2. Did the TTT have a positive impact on your teaching?
3. Through these training sessions, have you gained the ability to design, develop, and conduct your own training and workshops in response to the needs of the faculty and the institute?

4. Do you think the TTT should be offered again at the institute to other faculty members?
5. Do you feel more empowered and effective after having participated in the TTT?
6. Do you think the TTT was relevant to the ELI's mission and vision?
7. Do you think the program's components met the ELI's professional development standards for teaching excellence?
8. Do you think using the TTT to develop in-house teacher-trainers is more beneficial to the ELI and its faculty than having a CUP representative train the whole faculty?
9. Do you think that it was reasonable that the TTT was offered at no cost to selected participants?
10. Do you think earning CUP certification through participation in the TTT will help you in your career?
11. Do you think your certification with CUP will enhance your ability to contribute meaningfully to the ELI?
12. Do you think the workshop venue was suitable for all group activities, comfortable, and in a nice location?

Appendix C. Questionnaire for Faculty Perception of the Effectiveness of the Graduate-led Workshops

1. The training sessions addressed the problems relevant to our institution.
2. The training sessions were interactive sessions where participants could play an active role.
3. The training sessions identified and included appropriate aims.
4. The activities in the training sessions offered a balance of input and output.
5. Each workshop provided clearly stated objectives with appropriate interaction patterns.
6. Trainers selected, adapted, or designed appropriate materials, activities, and resources for each session.
7. Trainers demonstrated knowledge of the topic and handled associated problems.
8. Trainers engaged their audience through energy, body language, enthusiasm, and good interpersonal skills.
9. Trainers demonstrated effective ELT techniques and organizational skills, flexibility, and adaptability.
10. Trainers supplied constructive and valuable feedback, responding to questions effectively.
11. Trainers monitored their audience to encourage active participation and to check appropriately and sensitively for their full understanding.
12. The training inspired reflection at the end of each session.
13. At the end of each session, were you able to identify strategies/methods that you will implement in your classroom?
14. Did the trainers relate the training sessions to the textbooks currently in use at the ELI?
15. Were the training sessions successful in providing you (teachers) with new ideas for more engaging classroom activities?
16. Did the training sessions promote critical thinking later in your EFL classroom?
17. Did the training sessions help you to employ creative strategies in your own classroom to correspond with students' various learning styles?
18. Did the training sessions teach you how to stimulate the different learning zones of your students' brains while they are learning?
19. Did the training sessions help you to effectively utilize technology in your classrooms?
20. Did the training sessions help you learn how to use motivating strategies to teach the four language skills in your classroom?