

Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Instrument in EFL Evaluation. A Case Study of the Intensive English Program at TVTC

Khaloufah Al-Shehri¹

¹ Jeddah College of Technology, Technical and Vocational Training Corporation, Saudi Arabia

Correspondence: Dr. Khaloufah Al-Shehri, Jeddah College of Technology, Technical and Vocational Training Corporation, Saudi Arabia. E-mail: kalshehri@tvtc.gov.sa

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is bidimensional. Firstly, it addresses the implications of adopting document analysis instrument in EFL evaluation (methodological purpose). Secondly, it appraises the Intensive English Program (IEP) at Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) structurally and contextually (situational purpose). The data are scrutinized qualitatively via reviewing 19 printed and online documents. The main findings disclose that all the examined variables pertaining IEP's context are fulfilled. There is, nonetheless, a lack of some vital policies related to counselling, quality and administrative support. Also, input evaluation reveals that the instruction time is insufficiently and unevenly distributed in IEP. This paper recommends that IEP should consider some vital missing policies and regulations which may otherwise lead to undesirable consequences in implementation. Document analysis needs to be encouraged in EFL appraisal as an apt research instrument for evaluating the stated policies and rules. It involves sifting, investigating and interpreting data in order to discover meaning, gain deep understanding, and take the right decisions accordingly. However, this qualitative tool requires robust data collection procedures, an authorized access to the records, careful treatment of the data and neutral readings of the findings.

Keywords: EFL, IEP, evaluation, qualitative, document analysis

1. Introduction

In the Saudi context, EFL programs are increasingly disseminated in various forms of intensity at many Saudi academic tracks. These programs are mostly outsourced to local or international companies based on a signed contract with the beneficiary institutions (colleges or universities). The need to qualitatively evaluate such programs is crucial especially with the current dearth of research studies (Al-Shehri, 2023, p. 15). This paper, therefore, endeavors to fill this gap by adopting document analysis as an instrument of qualitative investigation. It aims at evaluating the value and merit of the IEP at TVTC in the Saudi EFL situation through setting two objectives: 1) recognizing the suitability of the IEP structure (e.g. goals, objectives, policies, procedures and pedagogical matters) to the target context, 2) identifying the current humanitarian and physical input, and to what extent they coexist in the IEP.

The significance of this study comes from the fact that it examines the context and input variables instead of process or product ones. This focus is barely observed in EFL evaluation as most research studies emphasize process evaluation (how do teachers teach or how do students learn) or product evaluation (what do students achieve). Furthermore, this study appraises the outline of IEP especially in such an environment where English is entirely taught by native English-speaking teachers (NESTs). This type of instruction is rarely examined in the EFL context in general, and in Saudi in particular (Elyas & Mahboob, 2014, Alghofaili & Elyas, 2017 and Al-shehri 2022). Hussain et al. (2016) state that it is "the need of the hour to carry out the research activities to help flourish the program in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" and to academically evaluate such IEPs, we are requested to analyse several factors such as "the quality of the students, curricula, teachers and the policies" (p. 3).

In addition, most of the conducted studies in the Saudi EFL are quantitative-based such as Abdul Qadeer (2019), Ismaiel (2017), Hussain et al., (2016), McMullen (2014), Al-Shumaimeri (2013) and Al-Omrani (2008). So, adopting qualitative tools such as document analysis is important for deep investigation of the phenomenon (Medgyes, 2010). The present study is basically a response to this scarcity of qualitative research studies that

deeply examine EFL programs. It also evaluates some aspects of the electronic learning that is largely taking place as result of social distancing forced by pandemic situations such as COVID-19 or other financial or weather reasons. Finally, IEP is a hugely expensive program that requires learning facilities, foreign manpower, administrative assistance and electronic learning infrastructure. Thus, administrators and decision makers will no doubt be willing to see how successfully this program meets the Saudi EFL context. To this end, document analysis instrument is adopted to answer the following research questions.

2. Research Questions

Two qualitative questions are addressed in this study:

- (1) To what extent is the intensive English program's structure suitable to its present context?
- (2) What is the current situation of the humanitarian and physical resources of the intensive English program?

3. Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in appraising IEP for technical-diploma students at TVTC. IEP lasts for 17 weeks and executed online by external operator called Assrooh Athakiyah Company. As for the examined documents, there are 19 printed and online documents have been qualitatively investigated in this study.

4. Literature Review

4.1 EFL Evaluation

Educators do believe that EFL evaluation is essential to instructional programs' improvement, implementation and maintenance, especially with the current dynamic transformations in social, economic, political, and technological environments. Evaluation is set to assure quality and make any adaptation that suite these variables.

In general, evaluation is defined as a process of collecting data through a critical examination with the purpose of "making informed judgments" (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018, p. 294). In the field of education, evaluation has a variety of practices such as numerical measurement, pupils' assessment, testing, programs' evaluation, teachers' evaluation, curriculum evaluation, textbook evaluation (Anh, 2018, p.40) and recently, programs and school accreditation.

As for program evaluation, Stufflebeam (2003a, p. 224) defines evaluation as "the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics and outcomes of the programs to make judgments about the program, improve the programs' effectiveness and/or inform decisions about future programming". It aims at recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching program for the purposes of development. To achieve this, evaluators "raise deep questions as to the educational programs' value, worth, and merit" to see whether this program is "producing the desired results" (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018, p. 295). Aziz, Mahmood & Rehman (2018, p. 190) state that evaluation is the process of determining to what extent the objectives are accomplished through not only the "appraisal of achievement but also with the improvements". This perspective is also echoed in Stufflebeam (2003b) famous saying that "evaluation's most important purpose is not to prove, but to improve (p. 4). This improvement requires an ordinal process that involves "data collection, analysis and/or interpretation, judgment and discussion making (Gebre, 1999, p. 60).

Accordingly, EFL evaluation is perceived to be a systematized investigation of the value of a conducted program from one or more of these four different angles (i.e., Context, Input, Process, and Product) (Stufflebeam, 2003a, p. 31). To seek out this value, evaluation is operationally defined in this research as "a process of delineating, obtaining, reporting, and applying descriptive and judgmental information about some object's merit, worth, probity, and significance in order to guide decision making, support accountability, disseminate effective practices, and increase understanding of the involved phenomena" (Stufflebeam, 2003b, p. 10). The investigated phenomenon here is IEP at TVTC in Saudi Arabia.

Bearing in mind that there is a shortage of evaluation studies in the Saudi educational system in general and English education in particular. Barnawi & Al-hawsawi (2017) state that the number of studies that evaluate the Saudi educational policy and English educational policy in the country are limited, and there have been "very few in-depth studies that specifically examine EFL teaching" (p. 207). The review of research and evaluation studies in EFL context reveals that these studies are predominantly quantitative such as Abdul Qadeer (2019), Alghofaili & Elyas (2017), Ismaiel (2017), Hussain et al., (2016), McMullen (2014) and Al-Shumaimeri (2013). Thus, Al-Shehri (2023, p. 15) recommends that a qualitative investigation of EFL programs in Saudi setting is essential. It means that a researcher espouses qualitative instruments such as document analysis and observations to have a better reading of EFL policies and practices.

Lastly, it is important to highlight the relationship between evaluation and research studies. In general, research aims to develop knowledge or test theories about specific subject while evaluation assess the worth and value of a program, practice or certain service. The purpose of evaluation is broader than research and mostly followed by developmental decisions. It appraises the level of success at contextual, operational and product levels (Stufflebeam, 2003b). There are, however, no major discrepancies between evaluation and research (especially qualitative research). Levin (2003) argues that there are many areas where research and evaluation overlap and “the similarities are greater than the differences” (p.3). For instance, qualitative research studies and evaluation studies can adopt nonnumerical (qualitative) instruments such as documents analysis, observations and interviews. Also, the findings drawn in both cases are not subject to generalization to another analogous context. However, the current study is concerned more about the methodology (qualitative) than the design itself (being evaluation or research). This is because the implementation and implications of conducting documents analysis instrument are almost the same in research or evaluation studies.

4.2 Document Analysis between Theory and Practice

Initially, it is important to assure that there is a pressure on evaluators to adopt research activities, criteria and instruments (Levin, 2003, p. 24) due to the lack of evaluation as an independent field of study. Document analysis is one of the research instruments that is increasingly used in EFL evaluation. Before addressing this instrument as an evaluation (research) tool, it is worth discussing its theoretical foundation.

Document Analysis is originated in qualitative research design to create developmental insights of the nonnumerical obtained data. This design is defined as an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). Duke & Mallette (2011) argue that qualitative approach represents a very useful set of techniques for addressing questions that require the collection, analysis, and interpretation of qualitative data (e.g., words, observations, drawings, pictures, images). These data are subject to three core sequential stages. Creswell (2014) states that the process of qualitative paradigm involves data collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes (thematic analysis), and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. Hence, one of the most distinctive features of the qualitative design is the shift from the emphasis on cause-and-effect explanation (as in quantitative approach) toward personal interpretation (Stake, 2010, p.31). This model is then best prescribed as an interpretive personal design. The researcher brings his values and experiences, and seen an instrument who examines the phenomenon holistically. For instance, he has to precisely select the target issue, frame it in a proper design, set conditions to observe, choose suitable tools, meet people, investigate documents, redefine and direct the research constantly.

As a qualitative instrument, Zhang & Wildemuth, (2009) believe that document analysis is theoretically developed in anthropology and qualitative sociology in order to explore the meanings underlying the physical messages “through an inductive, grounding the examination of topics and themes, as well as the inferences drawn from them, in the data” (p. 1). It is aimed to collect, review, interrogate and analyze “various forms of written texts as a primary source of research data” (O’Leary, 2017, p. 496).

Bowen (2009, p. 28) indicates that documents can take different forms such as advertisements, agendas, attendance registers, minutes of meetings, manuals, background papers, books, brochures, diaries, journals, event printed outline programs letters, memoranda, maps, charts, newspapers, various public records and organizational or institutional reports. According to Creswell (2014, p. 240), documents could be classified as public documents (i.e., program-related documents, policies, research web-sites, newspapers, minutes of meetings, official reports, annual and special reports) or private documents (i.e., personal journals and diaries, letters, and E-mails).

O’Leary (2017, p. 282) argues that the best way to “understand the reality of the researched is to examine the texts that they themselves produce”. This is achieved through a profound examination of the documents. Bowen (2009) also contends that document analysis provides background and context, additional questions to be asked, supplementary data, a means of tracking change and development, and verification of finding from other data sources. Moreover, documents may be “the most effective means of gathering data when events can no longer be observed or when informants have forgotten the details” (Bowen, 2009, p. 31).

It seems that the role of document reviewing in investigating the phenomenon qualitatively is inevitable in evaluation studies. It is perceived as one of the major instruments of collecting data as asserted by Stufflebeam (2003b, p. 16) in evaluation of EFL programs. For instance, the evaluator can obtain information pertaining the context, input, or process of the program via a systematic reviewing the documents. This study will primarily focus on context and input evaluation of IEP.

However, document analysis requires vigilant processing in gathering and scrutinizing data since there might be substantial and complicated information. Hence, Bowen (2009) sets three stages in dealing with document analysis: "skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation" (p. 32) through an iterative process that combines the elements of content and thematic analysis. Thematic analysis, here, refers to a new form of pattern recognition within the obtained data. These emerging themes afterwards become the categories for data analysis. So, the collected data are first examined, charted, and classified in accordance with the key themes. Later, we will see the practical demonstration of this in the finding and discussion section.

Document analysis is, therefore, different from the quantitative content analysis instrument that is mainly based on counting "manifest textual elements" and deductively aim to test hypotheses or answer questions generated from theories or previous empirical sampling techniques (Duke & Mallette, 2011, p. 69). For instance, Zhang & Wildemuth, (2009) argue that in quantitative content analysis, the data are selected randomly to ensure the validity of statistical inference, while the data in qualitative documents analysis are selected purposefully to inform the research questions being considered. Consequently, the issue of generalizability of the findings in documents analysis is very limited.

The limitation of such a qualitative instrument could be settled by combining it with other qualitative and quantitative tools such as observation checklist or test, or a combination of both of what so called 'triangulation'. This will increase the reliability and validity of research findings. Triad3 (2016) states that in order to find convergence and validation, qualitative researchers usually use at least two resources through the usage of diverse data sources and approaches. This method is also recommended by pioneering researchers in EFL research such as Moussu & Lurda (2008, p. 341) and Medgyes (2010, p. 191).

Finally, espousing document analysis instrument requires the researcher (evaluator) to consider some crucial issues to obtain validated and corroborated data. These are the authenticity of the documents, unbiased selection of the documents and the relevance of these documents to the research questions.

5. Research Paradigm

At first, having a quick glance at the context of this research is beneficial. There are 13 IEPs in TVTC that offer an intensive-native English instruction. They last for 17 weeks and totals 510 hours. These programs are fully staffed by NESTs. The IEP's students are aged between 20-23 years. They already have diploma certificate in vocational and technical fields as such electronics, electricity, engineering computing science and tourism. They are primarily applying IEP for two main reasons: 1) preparing them to join the workplace or 2) pursuing their university degree at technical colleges. Out of the 3100 registered students in these programs, there are 175 students enrolled in Jeddah IEP.

5.1 Implementing Document Analysis

The above discussion of literature addresses document analysis from different angles. In the following, we will see the execution of this instrument in evaluating EFL program (IEP). It is important to mention that document analysis instrument is meant to address variables pertaining input and context evaluation as in the suggested model in Table 1.

Table 1. The designed model of analyzing the documents

Skimming		Examining	
Evaluation focus	Evidences from the documents	Analysis focus	Thematic coding
Interpreting			
Evaluation focus	Degree of Suitability	Justifications	
high, average or low			

The above model shows the three main sequential stages in reviewing the target documents. These are:

- (1) Skimming. It considers the variables of investigation match with the context or input evaluation and providing examples or evidences that illustrate their presence in the targeted examined document(s).
- (2) Examination. It identifies the focus of analysis of the variables and making a thematic coding for each item.
- (3) Interpretation. A decision is made about the degree of the suitability of these variables in the IEP context provided with justifications.

5.2 Types of Investigated Documents

In this study, the documents to be considered are divided into two categories as in the following:

(1) Public records (the existing official records of the program activities) including: students' records, program outline, periodic program reports, existing educational policy, program strategic plans, syllabus distribution plan, textbooks (Bowen (2009, p. 28).

(2) Physical and electronic evidence, including: flyers, posters, agendas, training materials, and existing infrastructure (O'Leary, 2017, p. 491-493 and Creswell, 2014, p. 240).

More specifically, the examined documents are listed in following table.

Table 2. The examined documents

No.	Document Name	Format	Investigated Variables
1	Intensive English Course: Program Outline	Printed document	Goal, Objectives, Mission, Action plans
2	Technical & Vocational Training Corporation At a Glance	Printed document	Policies
3	TVTC AA Robotel - Teacher Support Guide	Printed document	Procedures, Action plans
4	Student's Academic plan	Online document	Assessment, Action plans
5	Virtual sessions	Online document	Infrastructure
6	Coordinators Template to Slide Creation - And Teachers Activity Guide	Printed document	Procedures, Action plans
7	Let's Talk English: Teacher's Handbooks	Online document	Assessment's rubrics, Teaching strategies, Syllabus distribution
8	B1Syllabus_TVTC_2021_v2 Updated_2021 03 17	Printed document	Time, Assessment, Curriculum
9	Speaking Projects #1 Level A1, A2, & B1	Printed document.	Assessment
10	How to use the Let's Talk! English curriculum.	Printed document.	Procedures, Curriculum
11	How do students use Smart Class?	Online document	Infrastructure, Procedures, Action plans
12	Access to Virtual Class User Guide	Online document	Infrastructure
13	Access to Smart Hub Activities: User Guide	Printed document.	Infrastructure, Curriculum, Assessment
14	Learning Management System (LMS)	Online document	Infrastructure
15	Activity types that are possible in the Smart Class HUB	Online document	Infrastructure, Curriculum Assessment
16	Language Teaching Platform	Online document	Teaching strategies, Action plans
17	Let's Talk! English curriculum	Online document	Curriculum
18	Students' records in the placement test	Printed document	Accuracy of Placement Test
19	Teacher's data	Printed documents	Teachers

5.3 Validity

The validity of this document analysis instrument, the degree to which it measures what it claims to measure, is tested by juries' judgment (referee's validity). There are nineteen referees selected to judge the items and categorical patterns that are modified accordingly. These referees are very specialist lectures representing various domains in education and linguistics.

5.4 Reliability

The reliability, the degree to which it is consistent and stable in measuring what it is intended to measure, is examined. Holsti's method is used to test the reliability of the categorical type of coding used in this instrument. This method refers to the variation of the percent agreement between two coders or between the coder himself in two different periods of time. It "accounts for situations in which the coders evaluate different units across a set of variables" (Lombard, Snyder & Bracken, 2002, p. 591). The formula is $= 2 * M / (N 1 + N 2)$ where M is the total number of decisions that the two coders agree on; N1 and N2 are the numbers of decisions made by the two coders respectively (Allen, 2017). In this study, the reliability of the documents' analysis instrument is tested by selecting a sample of four investigated areas of evaluation. These areas are first evaluated according to a suggested list of thematic codes. Then (after 18 days) they are reevaluated by the researcher to find the percentage agreement between the two evaluations as in the following table:

Table 3. The percentage agreement between the two evaluations

Areas of Evaluation	Agreement	Disagreement	Percentage agreement
Policies	7	2	77.77%
Procedures	7	2	77.77%
Action plans	5	1	83.33%
Curriculum	8	2	80%
Total	27	7	79.41%

As it shows in Table 3, the percentage agreement between the two evaluations is 79.41%. It indicates that the intercoder reliability according Holsti equation is .79 which means good enough to adopt (Allen, 2017, p. 29).

6. Findings and Discussions

6.1 Introduction

Presenting the research findings in this section will be according to this dichotomy: context and input evaluation. Each type of evaluation has certain areas of investigation based on the relevant examined documents. The data are presented qualitatively according to the three serial steps: skimming, examining and interpreting.

6.2 Context Evaluation

Initially, context evaluation is concerning primarily about the unmet needs, challenges, problems and opportunities of success for IEP. It endeavors to answer the first research question: To what extent is the intensive English program's structure suitable to its present context?

IEP has been fully outsourced to Assrooh Athakiyah company by TVTC, and therefore investigating how this company designs the IEP and how does it match with the current context is what this question trying to address. To answer this question, documents' analysis of the related variables of IEP is carried out. The ultimate goal of such investigation is to examine these variables in terms of their presence and suitability. A set of relevant variables comprising the structure of IEP are examined according to the degree of suitability (low, average or high) as it is shown in Table 4. The interpretation of the findings (as in the second half of the table) is preceded by two stages: 1) providing evidences and illustrations from the target documents, and 2) applying thematic coding for these evidences. Also, interpreting these variables and judging their degree of suitability to the context is provided with justifications.

Table 4. Qualitative analysis of variables pertaining context evaluation

Skimming		Examining	
Evaluation focus	Evidences/examples from the documents	Analysis focus	Thematic coding
Goals	Allow both male and female TVTC graduates to improve their English proficiency, and thereafter be afforded better opportunities to apply to universities in continuance of their studies, and further, to allow them opportunities to join the workforce.	Relevance to IEP context	Needs reflective
Objectives	<p>a. Enable students to use and understand the English language by improving their receptive and productive skills, comprised of reading, listening, writing and speaking, respectively.</p> <p>b. Allow students to develop language skills in respect of grammar and vocabulary.</p> <p>c. Allow students to engage with Native English speakers in conversational English, such as their teachers, as well as with other second language speakers i.e., their peers.</p> <p>d. Motivate and encourage students to demonstrate, by their values, beliefs and behaviors, adherence to the highest standards in their personal and professional lives.</p>	Diversity	<p>Linguistic (a & b)</p> <p>Behavioral (c & d)</p>
Mission	Conduct a successful, online intensive English program in line with the highest-quality principles and procedures, thereby facilitating growth and development in Saudi national college graduates.	Setting	Realistic
Language skills	<p>a. The course aims to enable students to use and understand the English language by improving their receptive and productive skills respectively.</p> <p>b. The course allows students to develop language skills in respect of Grammar and Vocabulary which are given in parallel.</p> <p>c. Each section has Reading activities that focus on the Vocabulary and or Grammar from the chapter.</p> <p>d. The Conversation/Speaking activities are a culmination of each vocabulary section theme.</p>	Existence	<p>Separated (a)</p> <p>Integrated (b, c & d)</p>
Teaching philosophy	<p>a. We (the provider) believe that the classroom, be it virtual or face-to-face, should always be a space where active learning takes place.</p> <p>b. Allows students involved in the learning process, to contribute something meaningful and positive.</p> <p>c. Create the space to allow students to take away something valuable from each lesson forms a core part of our philosophy.</p> <p>d. Teachers provide students a unique, innovative, and effective learning experience.</p> <p>e. Language teachers should create tailored interactive activities, assign them to their students, and grade them quickly.</p>	Emphasis	<p>Student oriented (a, d & e)</p> <p>Active learning (b & c)</p>
Policies	<p>Major stated policies in IEP:</p> <p>a. Students are required to take a placement test in the beginning of the semester to be placed in their appropriate level (A1, A2 and B1).</p> <p>b. If the students are incorrectly placed, appropriate action will be taken within the first week to ensure that students are moved to a suitable class.</p> <p>c. All teachers are required to effectively conduct classes and facilitate learning remotely.</p> <p>d. Students must have access to Virtual Sessions and ‘Smart Class’ to</p>	Range and setting	<p>Compliant with goals & objectives (c, d & f)</p> <p>Inclusive in regulating &</p>

	facilitate understanding, participating and completing activities.		guiding
	e. Online work sessions, using ‘Let’s Talk English’ is scheduled daily, after virtual class sessions, for students to supplement learning with completion of relevant activities.		(a, e & g)
	f. Attending virtual classes is obligatory to get the certificate.		Adaptable
	g. There will not be any make-ups for quizzes or assignments.		(b, h & i)
	h. Both of Assrooh Athakiyah (the provider) and Robotel Corp. are responsible for selecting the core materials to be used for this course, subsequently approved by TVTC.		
	i. In the 10 th Week students undertake a progress Test to move to the second level (e.g., from A2 to B1).		
Procedures	Due to the substantial number of procedures found in many documents, they are categorized as in the following:	Inclusiveness	Educational
	a. Registration procedures, show how and where students can apply for IEP according to certain criteria.		(b, f, g, h & k)
	b. Placement procedures, show how to accommodate students at their proper levels A1, A2, B1 and B2.		
	c. Recruitment procedures, show how to staff the project manager, academic coordinators and teachers.		Administrative
	d. Communications procedures, show who to communicate with (according to his position), what methods of communication (Emails, virtual or face to face meetings, WhatsApp or MS Teams) and when to communicate (daily, weekly, and out of working hours).		(a, c, & d)
	e. Following up procedures, show how to assure quality for the administrative and educational practices for all practitioners in IEP (supervisors, coordinators, teachers and students).		Developing
	f. Teaching procedures, show how teachers will utilize the level-appropriate ‘Slide and Guide’ template provided by coordinators for the taught chapters. Each teacher is responsible for teaching one cohort all the language skills.		(e)
	g. Course content procedures: show how to select and use the core and supplementary contents.		
	h. Online learning procedures, show how to use online platforms such as Learning Management System LMS, Smart Class and Microsoft Teams for both of students and teachers.		
	k. Assessment procedures, show when and how to carry out formative and summative assessments.		
	Interpreting		
Evaluation focus	Degree of Suitability	Justifications	
Goal	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is compatible with TVTC overall stated goal. • It stresses language competency that students need to possess. • It refers to the two main tracks that IEP graduates might join: • Pursuing their study (e.g., Bachelor degree) • Joining workplace. 	
Objectives	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are smart objectives (measurable) and not so broad. • They cover all the language skills. • They stress good range of sub-cognitive objectives (to use, to understand and 	

		to improve) and emotional objectives (to engage, to motivate, and to encourage).
Mission	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It mentions the reason of existence of the provider. • It focuses on satisfying students' needs. • It is realistic and clear: Not too narrow or broad. • It motivates and inspires students as it refers to their expecting contribution in the society.
Language skills	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The skills are dealt with according their linguistic taxonomy (receptive or productive skills). • Integrating these skills with vocabulary and grammar can help L2 students to recognize and analyze language patterns intensely. • Speaking and vocabulary are thematically-based which can assure language authenticity.
Teaching philosophy	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active and authentic learning are adopted and encouraged. • There is no reference to old conventional strategies that weights teachers' role over students.
Policies	Average	<p>Despite the fact that these policies are succinct and to some extent overarching, there is an absence of other crucial contextual policies such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of having academic counseling policies especially for gifted students and those with special needs. • Lack of having alternative polices (e.g., absence of teachers, online technical issues, failed students and missed classes). • Lack of clarifying who should teach each level of students and why? • Lack of considering quality assurance of the IEP regarding how and when IEP is revised and developed? • Lack of having developmental and preparation policies of the staff (e.g., before and in-service training). • Lack of engaging the community or the private sector in these policies (e.g., applying ESP English and making filed visits).
Procedures	High	<p>These procedures are expected to be reflecting the preset policies and objectives. They are overarching and subsequently beneficial to the IEP context for these reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are broad enough to meet the across IEP needs. • They are inclusive of both administrative and pedagogical matters. • They are officially legitimized by the provider and TVTC to avoid any contradictions in implementation. • They address some neglected issues in the policies such quality assurance and recruitment of the staff. • Some procedures (e.g., online learning and communications procedures) are set in an innovative way that reflects higher level of professionalism and responsibility. They are available at these links: <p>- https://tvtc-aa.com/assets/images/vc.pdf</p> <p>- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pYbXM3ZM=sharing</p>

The results of the above table reveal that goals, objectives, mission, language skills, teaching philosophy and procedures of IEP are highly suitable to the context for the given justifications. There is, nevertheless, one variable (Policies of IEP) that is marked as 'average suitable'. This is because of the absence of some important policies that could guide and increase the productivity of this program. These missing policies are centralized on academic counseling policies for gifted and special needs students, administrative and technical policies and

quality assurance policy. The lack of having such essential policies may lead to chaotic implementation (Stufflebeam, 2003b) and hinder the opportunities of success for IEP (Ulumi, 2016).

6.3 Input Evaluation

Input evaluation focuses mainly on the key issues pertaining instrumental, pedagogical and humanitarian resources of IEP in terms of their existence and degree of fulfilment. This type of evaluation, therefore, is trying to answer the second research question: What is the current situation of the humanitarian and physical resources of the intensive English program?

Table 5. Qualitative analysis of variables pertaining input evaluation

Skimming		Examining	
Evaluation focus	Evidences/examples from the documents	Analysis focus	Thematic coding
Action plans	<p>The following are the found action plans; summarized and categorized according to the participants' position:</p> <p>a. A plan for TVTC program manager regarding progress updates, concerns, changes, and evaluations, (mostly weekly based).</p> <p>b. A plan for project manager addresses the project scope, policies, strategies, budget, and expected concerns, (mostly weekly based).</p> <p>c. A plan for supervisors focuses on course and evaluation requirements, updates, concerns, upcoming deadlines, teacher and student queries and pre-arranged covers, (daily and weekly based).</p> <p>d. A plan for coordinators about auditing, assessments, schedules, uploading class materials and upcoming deadlines (daily, weekly and monthly based).</p> <p>e. A plan for teachers regarding implementing lesson plans, setting assessments, and dealing with pedagogical and technical concerns, (daily based).</p> <p>f. A plan for students regarding attending classes, doing class/homework and dealing with virtual platforms, (daily based).</p>	Scope	<p>Managerial (a, b & c)</p> <p>Educational (d)</p> <p>Pedagogical (e)</p> <p>Academic (f)</p>
Time resource	<p>a. Contact hours: 4 hours a day, 5 days a week, 15 weeks = 300 hours for one program time.</p> <p>b. Online work (self-study): 3 hours a day = 225 hours per program.</p> <p>c. 10 weeks (from 1-10) are set for the first assigned level.</p> <p>d. 5 weeks (from 11-15) are set for the second assigned level.</p> <p>e. 6th, 10th, 14th, 15th and 16th weeks are primarily set for assessing or preparing students for quizzes, projects or tests.</p>	Intensity & sufficiency	<p>Curricular time (a)</p> <p>Extracurricular time (b)</p> <p>Level time (c & d)</p> <p>Testing time (e)</p>
Infrastructure	<p>The infrastructure of the IEP is centralized in these platforms:</p> <p>a. Learning Management System (LMS), http://tvtc-aa.com</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accesses virtual session. • Accesses Smart Class. • Tracks and updates student attendance. • Tracks and updates student grades. • Manages course content. • Adds announcements. 	Functionality	<p>Organizational (a)</p> <p>Self-learning (b)</p>

	<p>b. Smart Class, https://tvtc-aa.com/assets/images/sm.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizes and assign activities. • Reviews student activities. • Provides feedback. • Manages students. 		Instructional (c)
	<p>c. Microsoft Teams, https://bit.ly/2Uocoje</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a class team. • Conducts virtual classes. • Records virtual classes. • Shares screen and other applications. • Allows students to interact by speaking and writing. • Downloads and back-up attendance report. 		
Curriculum	<p>a. The curriculum (Let's talk! English) is partitioned into 5 different courses, corresponding to levels A1, A2, B1, B2 and C1 of CEFR.</p> <p>b. Each cohort is given a level of material according to students' results at the placement test in beginning of the program.</p> <p>c. It includes almost 2,495 ready-to-be-assigned activities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A1 has 505 digital activities includes 268 auto-graded activities. 2. A2 has 582 digital activities includes 313 auto-graded activities. 3. B1 has 667 digital activities includes 345 auto-graded activities. 4. B2 has 741 digital activities includes 359 auto-graded activities. <p>d. These 4 curricula are basically grounded on these topics: All about you, Free Time, Family, School, Shopping, Entertainment, At Home, Food & Drink, Travel, Around the Town, Health and Wellness, and At Work.</p> <p>e. Each chapter (6 chapters) address these skills in order: Vocabulary, Grammar, Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking.</p> <p>f. Reading, writing, and grammar-based activities are included, but this curriculum also has a large number of interactive and engaging listening and speaking activities.</p> <p>g. The curriculum includes 56 grammar videos from A1 (beginner) to B2 (upper-intermediate). Also, there are many listening tracks where the students can respond to through making recordings.</p> <p>h. Robotel Corp. designs this curriculum to be in digital format that has these major features:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teachers assign the activities in the platform. 2. The students do the work synchronously or asynchronously. 3. The teachers or system (Smart Class platform) offer feedback (grades or comments) on these activities. 	Designing	Needs' analysis-based (a & b) Task-based (c) Thematic-based (d) Skill-based (e) Interactive-based (f) Learning style-based (g) Adaptable (h & i) Authentic-based (j)

4. There are 19 different activity types inside the platform.

5. Almost 50% of the activities are auto-graded.

i. IEP teachers are in complete control over the curriculum: they can assign the preloaded activities, modify these activities, and create their own activities on top of that.

j. The authentic tasks (especially listening and speaking) provide students with the essential skills to be 21st citizens in global society, and for real-life conversations and interaction in English.

Assessment	<p>Types of Assessment (out of 100).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 20% for Progress Tests (in weeks 6 & 10). b. 20% for the Final Exam (in week 15). c. 20% for Quizzes (weekly). d. 20% for Speaking Tests (in weeks 6, 8,9,13 &14). There are distributed rubrics for judging speaking. e. 20% for Participation and Attendance (daily). 	Diversity	<p>Formal formative assessment (a, c & d) Summative assessment (b) Informal formative assessment (e)</p>
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There are 7 teachers in IEP, 4 Britch, 3 South Africans. b. 2 teachers (out of 7) hold university degrees in Education. c. 3 teachers hold university degrees but not in Education or teaching. d. 2 teachers hold Master degree in education. e. The teaching experience for the teachers: 4, 7, 10,11,13, 20, 21 years. f. 5 teachers have previous teaching experience in the Saudi context (2, 2, 3, 4, and 4 years). 1 teacher has 8 years in UAE. 1 teacher has no experience at any EFL context. g. 2 teachers have specialized preparation in EFL teaching. One has CELTA (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), and the other has TEFL (Diploma in Teaching English as a Foreign Language). 	Qualification	<p>Nativeness (a) Preparation (b, c & d) Teaching experience (e) Context experience (f) Specialized certifications (g)</p>

Interpreting

Evaluation focus	Degree of fulfilment	Justifications
Action plans	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders in IEP are included in these plans. • These action plans are publicly declared and hierarchically set according to each defined position. • They cover a wide range of the essential duties. • Each plan (or part of it) is given a specific time to be fulfilled.
Time resource	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricular time (credited time) is only 57% as the rest (43%) is Extracurricular time (uncredited time). • The total curricular time (300 hours) allocated for one cohort studying two levels is too low. • Extracurricular time is not categorized as an intensive type of learning. • Level time is distributed unevenly between the current and next level (10 weeks for the first assigned level whilst 5 weeks for the second).

Infrastructure	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a noticeable misused of time in IEP: 5 weeks of the 16 comprising almost 100 hours (31 % of total hours that set officially for IEP), are for examinations, preparation for tests and grading. • These platforms have high reputation in online learning. • They are downloadable in all portable devices. • They are accompanied with live support for technical and maintenance issues. • They meet the diversified needs of all participants in ENEP. • They can assure learning quality through track students' and teachers' progress, giving electronic feedback and documenting lessons. • They have a wide space for sharing live audio and visual materials tasks. • They are all smoothly and directly accessible via one portal. • Teachers can create tailored interactive activities, allocate them to their classes, and grade them quickly.
Curriculum	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum is designed according to CEFR, so it is characteristically needs' analysis based. • This curriculum could be classified as 'hybrid curriculum' as it contains many important perspectives of designing EFL course such as having plenty of tasks, authentic themes and integrating all language skills. • This curriculum is designed according to CEFR and this (theoretically) leads to product-oriented learning or what is called competency-based learning. It is, therefore, suitable to IEP where the focus is on the behavior and performance. • The integration of technology in this curriculum can actively engage and motivate students. • The digitization of the curriculum via the auto-correction of the activities results in reliable and quick grading as well as offering immediate feedback. • The authenticity of the themes and activities that reflect real life situations are widely taken place. • There is a higher level of adaptability of the curriculum at pedagogical and technical levels. • The internationalization of a curriculum occurs in Let's Talk! English curriculum as there is an incorporation of an international and intercultural aspects into the content such as 21st century skills and cultures.
Assessment	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are varieties of assessment forms that meet different language skills and different learning needs. • Formative assessments (formal and informal) are the predominant. • There are distributed Rubrics for these assessments for more transparency.
Teachers	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the teachers are NESTs. • 4 teachers (out of 7) are either holding Bachelor degree or Master in Education/teaching. • All of them have adequate experience in teaching English (except one teacher with 4 years). • Most of them have context experience similar to IEP (6 teachers).

Table 5 shows a list of related variables to input evaluation that are qualitatively investigated to identify the degree of fulfilment of these variables in IEP (low, average or high). As it stated earlier on, the interpretation of the findings (as in the second halve of the table) is preceded by two stages: 1) providing evidences and illustrations from the target documents, and 2) applying thematic coding for these evidences. Also, interpreting

these variables and judging their degree of fulfilment is provided with justifications. It is to be considered that the high or low degree of fulfilment of these variables are merely depends on what the investigated documents have revealed.

The results disclose that most of the examined variables pertaining input evaluation of IEP are satisfied except the intensity of instruction time. For instance, the action plans, infrastructure, curriculum, assessment and teachers reach high degrees of fulfillment in IEP for the provided justifications. In contrast, instruction time variable gains low degree of fulfillment. The distribution of time is insufficient and below what is supposed to be. Though, time intensity variable is the main cause for establishing IEP for technical diploma students.

For instance, the total learning time (300 hours) is allocated for one cohort of students studying two levels is not only low but also distributed unequally. These hours are divided up into two main slots: 200 hours for the first assigned level (from week 1-10) and 100 hours for the second assigned level (from week 11-15). In addition, weeks 6,10,14,15 and 16 are primarily for assessments and grading (representing 31% of the total time) not for learning. The IEP students are classified as B1 or B2 level. Accordingly, they are not actually exposed to intensive learning due to this shortage of learning hours. Cambridge English Language Assessment (2013) assures that the number of learning hours required to progress B1 level is between 350–400 and B2 is 500–600. This finding echoes Al-Seghayer's (2014) claim that having inadequate time of learning English remains to be one of the main constrain for Saudi EFL students. Edelenbos et al. (2006) recommend that language intensity needs efficient distribution of time to make a constructive environment for students' learning.

Regarding the infrastructure variable, there are three online platforms facilitating learning and teaching process such LMS, Smart Class and Microsoft Teams. This diversity, in turns, could help to accomplish the mission and goals of IEP that are centralized on conducting a successful online intensive learning.

The adopted curriculum *Let's talk! English* is principally designed based on two core factors such as accurate placement of students according to CEFR levels and sufficient time of learning to progress each level. Unfortunately, the allocated learning time to complete each level of this curriculum is significantly low (as it discussed above). In addition, this curriculum lacks ESP English that technical diploma students need when they graduate, though the second goal of IEP is stressing the importance of preparing them to join workplace. Relatively, the idea of adopting EFL curricula with little to no adaptation with Saudi context seems to be also an ongoing challenge. This dilemma is considered to be one of the key hindrances that Saudi EFL schooling face as it argued by Al-Shumaimeri (2013), Barnawi & Al-hawsawi (2017) and Alenezi (2019).

Regarding the assessment scheme, IEP seems to have a good diversity of assessment tasks and even distribution of grades. Formative assessments are widely emphasized (80% of that total grades) over summative assessment (20%). Also, IEP students are given explicit set of criteria used for assessing their speaking (rubrics). According to the literature, adopting formative assessments can boost students' learning and help them to know their level regularly (Yorke, 2003 and Irons, 2008). This is also called assessment for learning. The positive trend towards formative assessment is also welcomed in the Saudi EFL situation. Omer & Umer (2015) find out that Saudi students' opinions of formative assessment types aim to have effective impact on their study and raise the quality of learning process. Bearing in mind that "the nature of formative assessment tasks should synchronize with their course objectives to help learners improve their academic skills" (Omer & Umer, 2015. p. 109).

The final variable to be considered in input evaluation is the quality of IEP teachers. Table 5 shows that IEP teachers are native speakers by birth. They also possess adequate qualifications and experiences required for such IEP instruction. It can not be claimed, however, that having good qualification entails good implementation. For instance, the literature (Astor, 2000; Moussu, 2006; Mullock, 2010 and Richards & Rodgers, 2014) assures that effective teacher should have pedagogical and contextual knowledge of the taught subject that can be observed and demonstrated. Unfortunately, this practical demonstration is only examined via observation instrument not documents analysis.

7. Conclusion

This qualitative study sheds some light on how to use document analysis instrument in EFL evaluation. It is also a response to the dearth of qualitative research studies that conducted on this type of instruction in the Saudi EFL setting. It reviews documents pertaining IEP's context and input in such an environment where English is exclusively taught online by NESTs.

The context evaluation shows that goals, objectives, mission, language skills, teaching philosophy and procedures of IEP are highly suitable. There is one variable (policies of IEP) that is marked as 'average suitable'

because of the absence of some relevant policies such as counselling policies for gifted and special needs students, administrative and technical policies and quality assurance policy.

The input evaluation reveals that action plans, infrastructure, curriculum, assessment and teachers reach high degree of fulfillment in IEP for the given justifications. Conversely, time resources variable gains a lower degree of fulfillment due to the insufficient and uneven distribution of the instruction time in IEP.

8. Recommendations

Since the "evaluation's most important purpose is not to prove, but to improve" (Stufflebeam, 2003a, p. 4), the following recommendations are set to improve the current policies and practices of IEP.

- (1) There is an absence of some vital policies pertaining to counselling, quality assurance and gifted and special education that need to be considered from both IEP and TVTC.
- (2) The policy makers at TVTC should urgently revise the distribution of IEP time of instruction as there is a lot of wasting time. For instance, instead of the five weeks allocated completely for examinations, a few hours in these weeks can fulfill this issue.
- (3) The policy makers at IEP need to eliminate the second assigned level that commences from the 11th week because of its insignificance to student' learning. There is, for instance, 100 hours only to master this level. Also, out of the six assigned weeks for this level, there are three weeks set primarily for examinations and grading not learning.
- (4) The current curriculum should be accompanied with ESP materials to satisfy IEP's students' needs who are technical and vocational specialists and are expected to join workforce after graduation.
- (5) Staffing intensive English programs in IEPs should not rely only on teachers' nativeness but also their qualifications and experiences.

9. Suggestions

- (1) Outsourcing such IEPs to external operators need to go through a group of qualified educationalists and linguists who can revise all pedagogical plans and procedures professionally.
- (2) Document analysis could be adopted as a stand-alone instrument to fulfill some aspects of qualitative investigations. However, EFL evaluation studies should be a combination of qualitative and quantitative means for a holistic understanding of the phenomenon and to create credibility of the findings.

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