



**ການວິເຄາະໂດຍປຽບທຽບທັດສະນະນະຄະຕິຕໍ່ກັບຫຼັກສູດແລະ ວິທີການສິດສອນ
ຢູ່ ພາກວິຊາພາສາອັງກິດຄະນະສຶກສາສາດ ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລ ຈຳປາສັກ ແລະ ສຸພານຸວົງ, ສປປ ລາວ**

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ບົດຄັດຫຍໍ້

ການສຶກສານີ້ມີຈຸດປະສົງ ເພື່ອການປຽບທຽບທັດສະນະນະຄະຕິ ຂອງນັກສຶກສາ ຈາກສອງສະຖາບັນການສຶກສາຊັ້ນສູງ ຂອງ ສປປ ລາວ ໄດ້ແກ່ສອງພາກວິຊາພາສາອັງກິດ ຂອງຄະນະສຶກສາສາດ ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລສຸພານຸວົງ ແຂວງ ຫຼວງພະບາງ ແລະ ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຈຳປາສັກ ແຂວງຈຳປາສັກ ກ່ຽວກັບຫຼັກສູດການຮຽນ-ການສອນ ແລະ ວິທີການສອນຢູ່ແຕ່ລະແຫ່ງຕາມລຳດັບ. ເນື້ອໃນຂອງການສຶກສາດັ່ງກ່າວ ແມ່ນເນັ້ນໃຫ້ເຫັນຄວາມແຕກຕ່າງລະຫວ່າງທັດສະນະນະຄະຕິ ຂອງບັນດານັກສຶກສາ ຕໍ່ກັບບັນດາກະຕູ້ການວິໄຈ: ຫຼັກສູດການຮຽນ-ການສອນ ແລະ ວິທີສິດສອນຈາກອາຈານປະຈຳວິຊາ. ໃນຂະນະດຽວກັນການສຶກສາດັ່ງກ່າວ ຍົກໃຫ້ເຫັນການປຽບທຽບຄ່າຄະແນນສະເລ່ຍ ຈາກການເຮັດການທົດສອບຜ່ານບົດສອບເສັງກ່ຽວກັບຄວາມຮູ້ທົ່ວໄປທາງດ້ານພາສາອັງກິດ; ສິ່ງດັ່ງກ່າວເພື່ອຊອກຮູ້ ແລະ ທຳຄວາມເຂົ້າໃຈກ່ຽວກັບຄ່າຄະແນນທີ່ໄດ້ຮັບເຊິ່ງອາດມີຄວາມແຕກຕ່າງກັນ ຈາກສອງສະຖານທີ່ສຶກສາ. ສິ່ງທີ່ຄົ້ນພົບຈາກການສຶກສາດັ່ງກ່າວ ຈະຊ່ວຍໃຫ້ເຮົາຮັບຮູ້ວ່າຫຼັກສູດການຮຽນ-ການສອນ ແລະ ການສິດສອນຈາກອາຈານ ມີຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ຄ່າຄະແນນສະເລ່ຍ ຂອງ ບັນດານັກສຶກສາ ເຊິ່ງເປັນເກນຊີ້ວັດຄວາມສາມາດ ກ່ຽວກັບການປະເມີນຜົນທາງດ້ານວິຊາການ ຂອງ ບັນດານັກສຶກສາ.

ຄຳສຳຄັນ: ຫຼັກສູດການຮຽນ-ການສອນ, ການຮຽນ-ການສອນ, ການສຶກສາໂດຍປຽບທຽບ, ຄຸສອນພາສາອັງກິດ, ຫຼັກສູດພາສາອັງກິດ

A Comparative Analysis of Perspectives on English Curriculum and Teaching Method in Two Departments of English, at the Faculties of Education, Champasak and Souphanouvong Universities, LAO PDR

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Abstract:

This study aims at comparing the attitudes of students toward curriculum and the teaching methods of two departments in two different higher institutions, the Department of English Teacher of the Faculty of Education at Souphanouvong University, Luang Prabang in the Lao PDR, and the Department of English Teacher of the Faculty of Education at Champasak University, Champasak in the Lao PDR. As part of this study, we are interested in comparing the points of view of the students at each place in regard to the curriculum and the teaching staff. The overall average score of the students academic assessment in a general English test is examined to find out if there is any difference between the students' assessment at each place. The main findings of this study are to point out whether curriculum and/or teaching methods by teaching staffs affect the students' performance in terms of academic assessment, which is based on the general English test.

Keywords: Curriculum, teaching-learning, comparative analysis, English teacher, English language course.

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1. Introduction

The development of the education, training and qualification system in terms of quality, efficiency, access and equity is to be done in a relatively difficult context. High demographic growth, ethnic cultural and linguistic diversity: scattered habitat, economic and financial constraints and low institutional capacity constitute a big challenge to the country.

To achieve the Government's goals of graduating from the least developed countries status by 2020 and to prepare for the country's regional and international integration, the Government initiated higher education reforms covering both public and private higher education institutions with the Prime Minister's Decree on the Establishment of National University of Laos (NUOL) in 1995, and subsequent decrees on private higher education in 1995, and higher education curriculum profile in 2001. The decree establishing NUOL began to address the issue of a fragmented higher education system by combining 10 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) under a unified structure of NUOL in order to share facilities and resources. Due to the regional needs, the other two regional universities were later established to broaden access to higher education: Champasak University (CU) in the southern region and Souphanouvong University (SU) in the northern region of the Lao PDR in 2003. Mean while, the Decree on Private Education defined a framework for the establishment and operation of private (HEIs), and triggered the growth of private HEIs. In 2007, the Prime Minister's Decree on the Adoption and Implementation of the National Education System Reform Strategy 2006-2015 was issued. The Decree called for strengthening to move the higher education system towards regional and international standards and contribute to socio-economic development of the country. In 2009, the new decrees on NUOL, Champasak University and Souphanouvong University respectively were promulgated to promote administrative authority. Due to the needs of the province, one more new university was established in 2009 in central Savannakhet Province (Siharath, 2003).

Champasak University (CU) was established in 2002. One year later, Souphanouvong University (SU) was established. Both universities are two of the five universities in the Lao PDR. The Faculty of Education at CU consists of three departments as the Faculty of Education at SU does: Department of English Teacher, Department of Lao Language Teacher, and Department of Mathematics Teacher. The two Departments of English Teacher are for training future teachers of English and providing society with human resources in the field of English.

This section aims at introducing some relevant theoretical frameworks and concepts regarding the curriculum development, meanwhile some relevant literature work is also included.

A. Curriculum development theory

In 1984, Richards developed the curriculum process (Richards, 2001) into five steps: 1) needs analysis, 2) goal setting, 3) syllabus design, 4) methodology and 5) evaluation. The five components are equally important. He also added that the evaluation process should be applied to all phases of curriculum development.

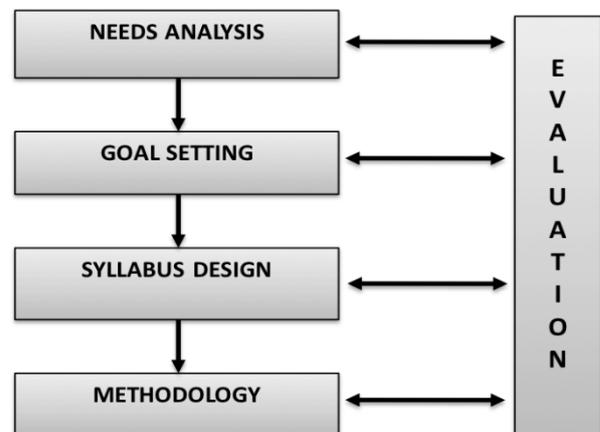


Diagram 1: Curriculum Process by Richards (1984)

Later, Brown (1995) added one step into the curriculum process. However, he placed testing in the middle of other four steps: needs analysis, objectives, materials, and teaching. Similar to Richards' model, evaluation is applied to all five components (see diagram 2).

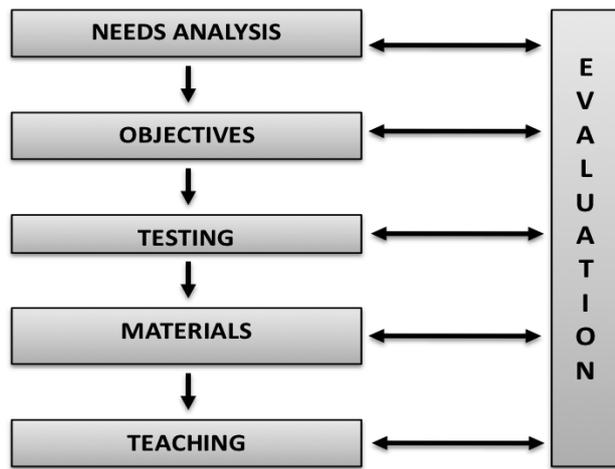


Diagram 2: Curriculum Process by Brown (1995)

More precisely, in 2001, Richards defines that “curriculum development refers to the range of planning and implementation processes involved in developing or renewing a curriculum, p. 41.” He states that these processes focus on needs analysis, situational analysis, planning learning outcomes, course organization, selecting and preparing teaching materials, providing for effective teaching and evaluation (see the Diagram 3 below). These elements are viewed as forming a network of an interaction system.

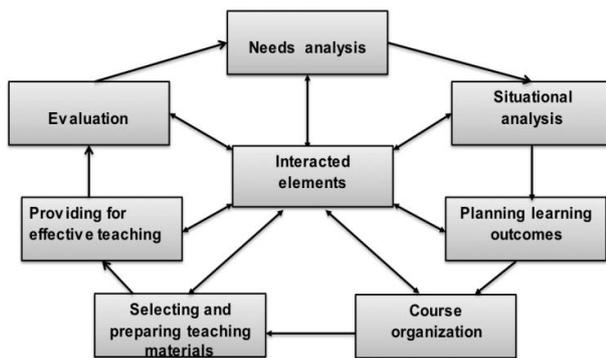


Diagram 3: Curriculum Process by Richards (2001)

B. Curriculum development process

Unlike the aforementioned development processes that improve a number of necessary steps to ensure the quality of curriculum developed, the process of curriculum development in the department consisted of only

two steps: 1) material selection and 2) implementation (Vangxaolee, 2010) as shown in Diagram 4. In the material selection process, the department followed the advice of the Department of English, Faculty of Education, National University of Laos (NUOL).

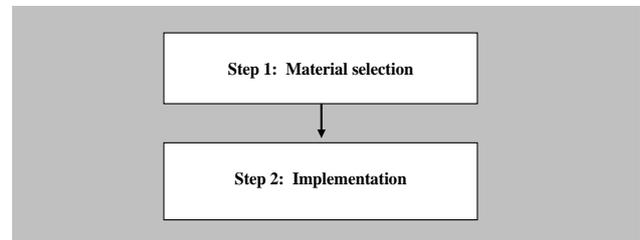


Diagram 4: Curriculum Process at NUOL, 2010

C. Relevant literature

There are many studies conducted in the past concerning curriculum development and process. Standard dictionaries define curriculum as a course of study offered by an academic institution. According to Doll (1965), curriculum is the formal and informal content and process by which learners gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills, and alter attitudes, appreciations, and values under the auspices of an academic institution. In other words, curriculum can be defined as the total experience. From this viewpoint, curriculum is not only the content selected and delivered, but also the planned and unplanned activities in which individuals’ participate as students.

Another study was obtained from Jack. C Richards (Richards, 2013), the development and implementation of language teaching programs can be approached in several different ways, each of which has different implications for curriculum design. In his publication, three curriculum approaches are described and compared. Each differs with respect to when issues related to input, process, and outcomes, are addressed. Forward design starts with syllabus planning, moves to methodology, and is followed by assessment of learning outcomes. Resolving issues of syllabus content and sequencing are essential starting points with forward design, which has been the major tradition in language curriculum development. Central design begins with classroom processes and methodology. Issues of syllabus and learning outcomes are not specified in detail in

advance and are addressed as the curriculum is implemented. Many of the 'innovative methods' of the 1980s and 90s reflect central design. Backward design starts from a specification of learning outcomes and decisions on methodology and syllabus are developed from the learning outcomes. The Common European Framework of Reference is a recent example of backward design. Examples will be given to suggest how the distinction between forward, central and backward design can clarify the nature of issues and trends that have emerged in language teaching in recent years.

A final literature to be addressed here is student assessment. Based on NAHE, student assessment can be defined as examination, tests and assignments which are the most commonly used approaches to evaluate in higher education. Negotiated and computer-based evaluations are emerging approaches that are gaining popularity among some disciplines. (1) Examination: "A formal test of somebody's knowledge or ability in a particular subject especially by means of written questions or practical exercise" or "The action of inspecting somebody in detail". To examine somebody or something is to inspect it closely; hence, an examination is a detailed inspection or analysis of an object or person. In an academic or professional context, examinations are tests which aim to determine the ability of a student or a prospective practitioner. Exams are usually written tests, although some may be practical or have practical components, and vary greatly in structure, content and difficulty depending on the subject, the age group of the tested persons and the profession. A person who passes an examination receives a diploma, a driving or professional license, depending on the examination's objectives. A competitive examination is an examination where applicants compete for a limited number of positions, as opposed to merely having to reach a certain level to pass. (2) Tests: Systematic procedures devised to sample and measure relevant knowledge and skills. Tests are a standard set of questions to be answered. As a result of a person's answer to such a series of questions, we obtain a measure (that is a numerical value of the characteristics of that person). Tests are a tool of measurement. A test is an assessment, often administered on paper or on the computer,

intended to measure the test-takers' or respondents' (often a student) knowledge, skills, aptitudes, or classification in many other topics (e.g., beliefs). Tests are often used in education, professional certification, counseling, psychology (e.g., MMPI), the military, and many other fields. The measurement that is the goal of testing is called a test score, and is "a summary of the evidence contained in an examinee's responses to the items of a test that are related to the construct or constructs being measured. Test scores are interpreted with regards to a norm or criterion, or occasionally both. The norm may be established independently, or by statistical analysis of a large number of subjects. A standardized test is one that is administered and scored in a consistent manner to ensure legal defensibility. A large proportion of formal testing is standardized. A standardized test with important consequences for the individual examinee is referred to as a high stakes test. The basic component of a test is an item, which is stored in an item bank. Items are often colloquially referred to as "questions," but not every item is phrased as a question; it may be such things as a true/false statement or a task that must be performed (if a performance test). (3) Classroom Assessment: An increasingly popular form of informal assessment is called classroom assessment techniques. These are specific short techniques that can be applied in a classroom situation to see how well the class is doing at achieving the objectives for a lesson. Often the techniques take 5 minutes or less to implement and give the teacher useful information about what learning objective needs to be emphasized more, revisited, explained in a different way, or requires more application time with students. An example of a classroom assessment technique, sometimes referred to as CATs, is to ask students to identify the muddiest point in a lecture on a concept that was just given. See Materials section for a handout on Classroom Assessment Techniques.

1.1. Objectives

- To relay general information about each English Department at the two respective universities: Champasak University and Souphanouvong University.

- To impart the perspectives of respective students towards curriculum and their teaching staff at each English department of the two respective universities: Champasak University and Souphanouvong University.
- To provide recommendations on curriculum development and teaching methods to the two English departments of Champasak University and Souphanouvong University.

2. Materials and Methods

This study is classified as a “quantitative and qualitative research”, since some computed statistics are applied to the analysis and interpretations, while some opinions given by the respondents are used to describe the issues.

2.1. Sample size determination

Sampling space includes two parts. The first part; two outstanding teachers from the Department of English Teacher at each university were interviewed to get some information about background, history, problems, issues regarding the curriculum and the method of teaching in their department. The second part was to use the questionnaire designed to gather some opinions from the respective students in each department of English Teacher from each university: Souphanouvong and Champasak. The survey was conducted in the academic year of 2013-2014, while the actual time of the survey implementation was mid 2014. The sample was determined to randomly select only 20 students from each grade: Student year2, student year3, student year 4, and student year 5, from each sampling site (SU and CU). Also we decided to randomly choose 10 female and 10 male respondents from each grade in each department; this would help the researcher to maintain and achieve a balanced analysis of both

genders. Lastly, the freshmen (first year students) were not included because the research team believed that this sampling group would not give us accurate answers, since they were new to the school.

2.2. Questionnaire design

For data analysis purpose, a questionnaire with 20 items was designed. Firstly, the draft questionnaire was discussed with experts and the advisor. To ensure strong content validity of the questionnaire, several adjustments were made, and the approved one was used for a pilot survey before releasing a final version. The pilot survey was conducted amongst 20 respondents with the same characteristics as the proposed sample. After completing the pilot survey, a final modified version of the questionnaire was successfully completed, in which some adjustments were been made.

In addition, the questionnaire design was organized into three main parts. A five-point Likert scale was applied to 8 items to determine the perspectives of students towards their curriculum and teaching staff (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2005). The five-point scale was applied to four parts of the questionnaire and shown in Table 1.

Part 1 of the questionnaire was designed to gather the demographic profile of the respondents such as course type, duration of usage, programme level, school, gender, and age range. There are 8 items in Part 2, asking: “Student Perspectives Towards the Curriculum”, which aims at collecting students’ feedbacks to their current curriculum, for example, how students like their course or programme, how difficult their course is, how do they like their main course, how do they spend time reviewing their courses, and how do they like to make changes to their courses.

Table 1: A five-point Likert scale ranking

Rating Scale	Part 3 (Attitude)	Part 4 (Satisfaction)	Part 5 (Suggestion)	Part 6 (Confirmation)
1	Extremely disagree	Extremely dissatisfied	Extremely not helpful	Definitely no
2	Disagree	Dissatisfied	Not helpful	No
3	Neutral	Average	Average	Not sure
4	Agree	Satisfied	Helpful	Yes
5	Extremely agree	Extremely satisfied	Extremely helpful	Definitely yes

The third part asks for attitudes towards their teaching resource person (teachers). It has 6 items to find out the students' opinions about the teaching methods of their teachers.

2.3. Data collection

After the final version of the questionnaire had been completed, the survey was conducted at each place, the Department of English Teacher at Souphanouvong University, and the Department of English Teacher at Champasak University.

2.4. Data analysis

The five-point Likert scale was employed to construct the questionnaire to launch the site survey; to interpret numeric data into meaningful results and the Likert scale intervals were introduced as shown in Table 2 (Wright & Masters, 1982).

Table 2: Likert scale intervals and interpretation

Rating scale	Interpretations	Mean score
1	Extremely dissatisfied	1.00-1.50
2	Dissatisfied	1.51-2.50
3	Neutral or Average	2.51-3.50
4	Satisfied	3.51-4.50
5	Extremely satisfied	4.51-5.00

For the purpose of data analysis, IBM SPSS Statistics version 19, a statistical software tool, was employed. Based on using this software package, some statistical results were computed, for example, sample means, standard deviation (St.Dev.), Cronbach's Alpha, Correlation coefficients, and so forth.

2.5. Reliability analysis

In terms of reliability of the questionnaire, reliability analysis offered by the IBM SPSS Statistics allows us to "study properties of measurement scales and the items that make them up" (Dastjerdi, 2009). In addition, the analysis reflects the consistency of a set of scale items in measuring a particular concept, and checks the internal consistency of all items. From this point of view, a Cronbach's Alpha was computed to verify the reliability of the study.

As summarized in the majority of scales that represent the observed constructs appear to have a good degree of reliability since each computed statistic (Cronbach's Alpha) was above 0.70. As a conclusion for this test, overall observed constructs (of 7 items), with the Alpha of 0.847, significantly represent a very good degree of reliability to the current study.

3. Results

3.1. Demographic profile

In this section, the demographic profile of 160 respondents was shown in Table 4, since the sample at each place is randomly set to be balanced, the interesting point to notice is the age of students; there are 22 correspondents from CU who are above 21 years old, while at SU only 15. Another interesting thing is that since the prospective numbers of students at both places were randomly selected, we obtain a good balance in the number of students at each grade of each institution respectively.

3.2. Student perceptions to curriculum

Students' opinions towards their curriculum are represented in Table 5. Table 5 illustrates the perspectives of students toward the English language curricula at each university, SU and CU. By gathering general information from students: how students like the programmer, how difficult is it, how much they understand it, and how students like each course., gives us more understanding about how appropriate the curriculum has been designed for teaching English to students at each place.

From Table 5, it is interesting to notice the observed item No. 7, asking how much they like studying their current programme at each institution. The findings point out that students from SU have a mean value of 4.06, as interpreted into "Appreciated", while CU's with a mean value of 4.56 are equivalent to "Very Appreciated". Two other items, number 8 and 9 have the same value, as the students find the programmer difficult and those who understand the whole programmer are about 61-80%.

Table 3: Reliability Analysis (N=160)

Observed Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Questions	Question ^{&} No.
Attitudes towards Curriculum	.841	4	7, 8, 9, 10
Attitudes towards Teaching	.853	3	16, 17, 20
Overall observed constructs	.847	7 ^{**}	

^{**}Sum of all questionnaires in computable forms

[&]questionnaire number (orders) as shown in a survey form.

Once we compared the result of item No. 10, asking how much students like each course: grammar, vocabulary, reading, and so forth; surprisingly we found, on average, a neutral level from CU, which had “very appreciated” with the programmer at the beginning, while SU with average level of “favorite”.

Table 4: Demographic profile (n=160)

Item No.	Valid responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
1. SU Gender		80	100.0
	Male	40	50.0
	Female	40	50.0
1. CU Gender		80	100.0
	Male	40	50.0
	Female	40	50.0
2.SU Age		80	100.0
	> 21 yrs	15	18.75
	< = 21 yrs	65	81.25
2. CU Age		80	100.0
	> 21 yrs	22	27.5
	< = 21 yrs	58	72.5
3. SU Nationality	Lao	80	100.0
3. CU Nationality	Lao	80	100.0
5. SU Grade		80	100.0
	Year 2	20	25.0
	Year 3	20	25.0
	Year 4	20	25.0
	Year 5	20	25.0
5. CU Grade		80	100.0
	Year 2	20	25.0
	Year 3	20	25.0
	Year 4	20	25.0
	Year 5	20	25.0

Another interesting point to note from Table 5 is that there are very different perspectives toward accessing course materials, course content age, and needs for course modification or development. The observed item No. 12 shows the difference between SU and CU on accessibility to course materials. Students at SU find it easier to access any

course materials compared to CU's, with a mean value of 4.53 at SU and 3.03 at CU. Less access to the course materials may result in less interesting course content, as we found a low level mean from CU for item No. 10. The study also illustrates that the course content updated status is different at each place, a low level of course content updated status appears in CU with a mean value of only 3.01 compared to SU of 4.15. Lastly, the need for course modification or development at CU is significantly higher than at SU, as the mean value of 4.96 (definitely yes, we need the development) at CU and 3.5 (at neutral level) at SU.

3.3. Student perceptions of teaching

This section aims at providing descriptive statistics for attitudes of respondents towards teaching performance given by their respective teachers. In Table 6, it is interesting to observe some items with different mean values between SU and CU. Only two observed items in No. 15 and No. 18 share similar findings, in which students at each university like learning with their teachers but if they could choose, both groups of students prefer to learn English with a native speaker or foreigner. However, item No. 16 gives us different findings about how resourceful teachers are. SU students find their teachers resourceful with a mean value of 3.91, in contrast to CU students who find their teachers resourcefulness at a neutral level with a mean value of 3.45. No. 17 points out those students at SU believe in their teachers' qualification and capability with a mean value of 3.84 while CU has a lower mean value of 2.84. The most interesting point from Table 6 is that most SU students are satisfied with their teachers in terms of the teaching methods provided, while most CU students are not very satisfied with their teachers' qualifications and teaching methods.

Table 5: Perspectives on curriculum (N=160)

Item No.	Description	Souphanouvong Uni.			Champasak Uni.		
		Mean	Std.	Meaning	Mean	Std.	Meaning
7	How do you like your program?	4.06	0.766	Appreciated	4.56	1.223	V.Appreciated
8	How difficult your course it?	4.02	0.732	Difficult	4.33	0.799	Difficult
9	How much you understand contents?	3.93	1.01	61%-80%	3.73	1.003	61%-80%
10	How do you like your course?	3.80	0.91	Favourite	3.46	1.070	Neutral
10.1	Grammar	4.07	0.915	Favourite	4.01	1.446	Favourite
10.2	Vocabulary	4.07	0.773	Favourite	3.85	1.664	Favourite
10.3	Pronunciation	4.01	0.919	Favourite	2.98	0.846	Neutral
10.4	Reading	3.46	0.795	Neutral	3.37	0.873	Favourite
10.5	Listening	2.98	1.131	Neutral	3.05	0.951	Neutral
10.6	Speaking	4.3	1.162	Favourite	3.08	0.742	Neutral
10.7	Writing	3.74	0.66	Favourite	3.89	0.966	Favourite
11	How many time review lesson/wk?	3.41	1.019	5-6 times/wk	4.21	1.569	5-6 times/wk
11.1	How long at e.a time?	3.59	1.109	51-90 min/e.a	4.01	1.139	51-90 min/e.a
12	How much access to course materials?	4.53	1.086	81-100%	3.03	1.116	41-60%
13	How much update course?	4.15	0.705	Updated	3.01	1.705	Same
14	Need update/modification course?	3.5	0.96	Neutral	4.69	1.262	D.Yes

Table 6: Perspectives on teaching (N=160)

Item No.	Description	Souphanouvong Uni.			Champasak Uni.		
		Mean	Std.	Meaning	Mean	Std.	Meaning
15	You like learning with your teachers?	4.05	0.794	Yes	4.17	1.226	Yes
16	How resourceful your teachers are?	3.91	0.795	Resourceful	3.45	0.968	Neutral
17	How believe QA of your teacher?	3.84	0.818	Trustful	2.84	0.994	Neutral
18	Foreign Teacher?	4.85	1.971	Yes	4.95	1.884	Yes
19	Prefer Foreign teachers?	3.81	0.821	Yes	4.58	1.351	D. Yes
20	Satisfy your Lao teachers?	3.95	0.885	satisfied	2.58	0.891	No (Neutral)

3.4. Student assessment

Table 7 illustrates student assessment via their test score of general English testing (GET) conducted at the time of the survey implementation. It shows average scores of SU and CU students from second year, third year, fourth year, and fifth year.

The test was designed to have the same content at each institution and also was for the same duration (testing time). At each grade (2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th), the contents of the test were constructed differently, a higher grade with a more difficult level. From Table 7, it is interesting to notice that almost all the female students of CU received a lower average GET scores compared to their male counterparts, only in the fourth grade do female students have a slightly better score than the male students.

Another thing to note is that female students at third and fifth grades at SU have a greater average GET score compared to the male students. The last interesting thing to observe is that there is a very low average GET score from second grade female students of CU. To sum this up, even though the displayed scores cannot represent exactly how they are caused by the current curricula and teaching methods given by teachers, they give us some information regarding the students' capacity and ability in terms of academic achievements. The lower overall average scores surely inform us about curricula contents and teaching methods by teachers, maybe some content in curricula needs to be modified, updated and developed in order to help strengthen student performance., and at the same time teaching methods may need to be adjusted and improved.

Table 7: Student assessment score

		Average GET Score (100 ptn)	
		SU	CU
Year II	Male	78	55
	Female	67	39
Year III	Male	88	78
	Female	91	77
Year IV	Male	77	82
	Female	65	84
Year V	Male	89	84
	Female	92	77

4. Discussion

The purposes of this study is to give general information about each of the English departments of the Faculties of Education of the two universities: Souphanouvong University and Champasak University, and to show the perspectives of respective students towards curriculum and teaching methods by teaching staff at each institution, and to provide some recommendations on curriculum development and teaching methods to the two institutions. The main findings from the study conclude that the English language teaching programme provided by each institution, in terms of the curriculum's contents, can be difficult for students to learn because they only understand about 60-80% of the content on average. However, most students enjoyed studying their current courses. In addition to curriculum development at each institution, there is a significant need for educational policy makers and managers at each institution to develop their existing curricula because they need to be updated. Students can enjoy learning materials and understand curriculum, if provided with ease of access to course materials such as textbooks, learning reference sources and so forth. It is important for each institution to upgrade qualifications or increase the capacity of their teaching staff, since most students would prefer excellent teachers.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings from interviews with some teaching staff are some recommendations to both institutions from this study which can be applied to both Departments of English:

- Provide sufficient resources to develop new up-to-date curriculum.
- The development of curriculum processes needs the involvement of experienced teaching staff, local and foreigner experts, and most importantly student engagement.
- The new curriculum development needs to address the five dimensions of education taxonomy declared by the Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao PDR.
- Provide more learning materials for students and give them full and easy access to those materials.
- Allow teaching staff to have a chance to train and upgrade qualifications in specific English teaching programs.
- Allocate or recruit foreign teaching staff (native speakers of the English language) to help teach and promote the student-centered learning approach.

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