

A Case Study Evaluation of Curriculum of English Subject for Lower Secondary School in Cambodia

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Abstract

English Language is one of the most spoken languages in the world of today. English becomes a popular language being used by world communities and is being recognized for global interaction especially when nations that speak different languages are involved in business and diplomatic relations. English as Foreign Language is a common subject which set up in school curriculum in educational system in most of the non-English native countries. With the formation of the Royal Government of Cambodia after 1993 UNTAC-sponsored elections, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) started to introduce English as foreign subject in the curriculum from lower-secondary schools to tertiary education institutions. Currently, English language is the main concerning issue of Cambodian people especially for the students who need to get the qualified English to challenge in ASEAN integration as well as to keep Cambodia regionalization and globalization. This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of English language curriculum of the public lower secondary schools namely grades 7th, 8th, 9th and to identify strengths and weakness of the existing syllabus. The qualitative method were applied by using semi- structure interview in this study. The model used for evaluating the program was one proposed by Kirkpatrick (1998). This model entails 4 levels of evaluation to carry out while evaluating education programs. Reaction, Learning, Behavior and Results. The research questions focused in this study are all in line with these four levels. The data were collected from three subjects of participant such as students, teachers and principals by interviewing include class observation at the fieldwork in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Results of the study indicated that the English curriculum of lower secondary school in Cambodia not yet meet the target goal and still keep in consideration to revise and update due to several issues.

Keywords: Curriculum, Curriculum Evaluation, English Language Teaching, Evaluation Model

1. Introduction

English language has been a worldwide language for over a century and it has been recognized in many countries around the world. English becomes a popular language being used by world communities and is being recognized for global interaction especially for nations that speak different languages when involved in business and diplomatic relations (Crystal, 1997).

English language education and policy in Cambodia has a long history since the nineteenth century. From 1864 to 1953, a French-based educational system was in practice with the traditional system. But the French educational system did not touch the lives of Cambodia's peasantry, which continued to be educated at the temple schools (wat or pagoda) without such modern developments as curricula, time tables, inspections, or examinations. From the time of the French protectorate up to 1970, the foreign language in Cambodia was French (Mao, 2014).

From 1970 to 1979, the education system in Cambodia suffered seriously due to the unfortunate social and political upheavals that had wracked the country over the preceding several decades. This culminated in the period 1975 to 1979, when the education system was completely destroyed. The Khmer Rouge, leaders' team of Democratic of Cambodia destroyed educational facilities and killed students, teachers, and other scholars. Some schools were used as prisons. From 1979 to 1989, under the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), progress was made in restoring education, and the situation was generally more improved. English language teaching and training was not taking place in a formal way, and indeed English was forbidden in Cambodia. Russian and Vietnamese were introduced into the system (Neau, 2010).

According to Neau (2010), the beginning in 1989, Cambodia commenced the teaching of English as a foreign language from a very low resource base: no curriculum, no textbooks, and few teachers of English. Between 1989 and 1990 the government of Cambodia made the decision to change foreign language instruction from Russian and Vietnamese to English and French, but there were very few teachers. Over the next four years English classes were provided in some secondary schools, and in 1995 a learner-centered approach to teaching English was introduced, though the country had very few qualified teachers.

Nonetheless English became the most popular choice among school-going Cambodians. From the early 1990s to present day under the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), after years of reconstruction, the education system has been rebuilt from pre-school to tertiary education (Neau, 2010).

The Paris Peace Accord, signed by the four main political parties in Cambodia in 1991, has thus far brought a tremendous change to Cambodian society as a whole. The arrival of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, known as UNTAC, has undeniably made Cambodian people view English as an internationally important language.

More significantly, they are strongly convinced that anyone who can speak English will definitely have a fruitful chance to find good jobs, thus making much, or at least enough, money to support their living. For this very reason, most people start learning English; consequently, the number of classes, centers, schools, institutes, and universities very quickly has begun to mushroom throughout the nation. English has become very popular amongst Cambodian students ever since (Mao, 2014).

Several factors have been driving the needs and demands for English. First is the presence of NGOs and international aid agencies whose common language is English. In addition, the government also needs to communicate with donors and other foreign agencies, which almost all use English as their official language. This requires all levels of the domestic authorities to learn English to work with those agents. Beyond these internal drivers, the government needs to communicate with the countries in the region, ASEAN, all of whom use English as their medium of communication (Clayton, 2007).

With the formation of the Royal Government of Cambodia in 1993 (after the prolonged civil war ended), the official policy concerning foreign language was that there would be two languages, French and English, which were equal in status. However the internal atmosphere within Cambodia since then has led to increasing demands for English to be the first language of choice. English is a subject included in the school curriculum from grade fourth onward. It is learned and taught as a foreign language (EFL). Khmer language is used as a medium of instruction for all subjects at public education system (MoEYS, 2004). If the new language curriculum comes into effect in the new academic year 2018-2019, English will be taught and learnt from grade one in primary school. The number of teaching hours is two hours per week in the primary school and 6 hours per week in the secondary school (MoEYS, 2016).

Although English subject is becoming increasingly more important, the new language curriculum, the quality of language curriculum, language syllabi and textbooks is still questionable. These problems are as follow: there is very little research on situation and needs analysis before the design and development. Curriculum designers, and textbook writers are not qualified enough in these areas and there is also low participation from relevant departments, and teachers. Students are not invited to give inputs on curriculum design and textbook writing. The contents may not be personalized nor contextualized. Moreover, foreign languages are taught as a subject and they are not compulsory for grade twelfth national examination to graduate the upper secondary school. More importantly, most of teachers of English are not oriented to the language curriculum and they are not trained to use the language curriculum due to no government's budget on these activities. In this context, many teachers of English language are not experienced with new methods of teaching but to train students to memorize chunks of English language, with more focus on grammar and vocabulary as pointed out Keuk's research, 2009. The same study found those teachers whose majors were not English but who knew English better than others were asked to teach English to students in schools (Keuk, 2009).

As mentioned above, quality of curriculum, textbooks, and teachers is very important for the quality of learning. Is the national language curriculum qualitative, relevant and practical? Do English classes have a good quality of education by implementing the national curriculum?

II. Literature Review

Definition of Curriculum

Curriculum is defined as a very general concept which involves consideration of the whole complex of philosophical, social, and administrative factors and evaluation which contribute to the planning of an educational program, while syllabus is a subpart of curriculum which is concerned with the specification, sequencing, grading and organization of contents, units or lessons to be learned, taught and assessed (Richards, 2001). Not only the learners but also the teachers as components of the educational system put a lot of effort into this educational attempt through organizing the lessons, selecting or adapting the teaching materials and applying their plans in the classroom (Richards, 2001). An effective language curriculum is not just related to the pure action of teaching but it also includes the procedures of planning, designing and implementation. According to Richards (2001), the main focus of curriculum development is on deciding which knowledge, skills and values to be taught, how to reach the intended outcomes, and the learning and teaching processes (Richards, 2001).

Curriculum means much more than subjects to be taught, transmitted or delivered (Kelly, 2004, p. 1). An effective definition of the curriculum should provide the information on why are we teaching, what could be the possible effects of the transmission of the information, what are the outcomes (Kelly, 2004). Curriculum can be seen as a detailed manual for teaching and learning process.

Although, some educators define the concept of curriculum as subjects or subject matters. The others define it as experiences that a learner has under the guidance of the school. Five different definitions for the concept of curriculum which can be listed as follows:

A curriculum can be defined as a plan for action or a written document that includes strategies for achieving desired goals or ends. A curriculum can be defined broadly- as dealing with experiences of the learner. Curriculum can be considered as a system for dealing with people and the processes or the organization of personnel and procedures for implementing that system. Curriculum can be viewed as a field of study. Finally, curriculum can be considered in terms of subject matter or content (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004).

Curriculum refers to the specific blueprint for learning that is derived from desired results that is, content and performance standards be they state-determined or locally developed. Curriculum takes content from external standards and local goals and shapes it into a plan for how to conduct effective teaching and learning. It is thus more than a list of topics and lists of key facts and skills (the ,input). It is a map of how to achieve the ,outputs of desired student performance, in which appropriate learning activities and assessments are suggested to make it more likely that students achieve the desired results (Wiggins &McTighe, 2006, p. 5-6).

Drawing a distinction between education and curriculum, curriculum has a crucial place if how effective an institution is the question. The curriculum contains many questions within itself and listed the questions that curriculum holds within itself , “What should be taught, to whom, under what circumstances, how, and with what end in mind? Put more concretely, what should be taught to these students, in this school, at this time, how, and to what end? What process should we use to decide what our curriculum ought to be within a particular school, college, or university context?” (Null, 2011, p. 5).

Curriculum Evaluation

Curriculum plays important role in education and its evaluation is necessary to inform and direct teaching and learning process. It can be stated that the main purpose of evaluation is to obtain information about student and teacher performance along with classroom interactions. In the same way, the aims might also include to identify strengths and weaknesses of particular activities in a program.

Moreover, evaluation was conceptualized by Ralph Tyler (1991) as a process essential to curriculum development. The purpose of evaluation was stated as to determine the extent to which the curriculum had achieved its stated goals. Evaluation was the basis for the identification of strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum, followed by re-planning, implementation and evaluation. Similarly, Worthen and Sanders (1998) stated that evaluation is the formal determination of the quality, effectiveness or value of a program, product, project, process, objective or curriculum. There are many aspects we can evaluate in a curriculum such as the needs of the curriculum as a whole or of the learners, sources, the system including curriculum, in-class implementation, the achievement and motivation of the learners, the success of the school staff including teachers and principal, and the conditions under which learning-teaching situation is carried out (Weir & Roberts, 1994).

According to Kelly (1999), curriculum evaluation defined as the process by which we attempt to gauge the value and effectiveness of any particular piece of educational activity. The two common goals of program evaluation, as stated by Lynch (1996) are evaluating a program’s effectiveness in absolute terms or assessing its quality against that of comparable programs. Program evaluation not only provides useful information to insiders on how the current work can be improved but also offers accountability to outside stakeholders. It aims to discover whether the curriculum designed, developed and implemented is producing or can produce the desired results. The strengths and the weaknesses of the curriculum before implementation and the effectiveness of its implementation can be highlighted by the help of evaluation (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1998).

Mackay (1994) stated that in the field of foreign language teaching, the term program evaluation is used to a wide variety of activities, ranging from academic, theory driven research to informal enquiries carried out by a single classroom. Thus, evaluation may focus on many different aspects of a language program such as curriculum design, classroom processes, the teachers and students.

More than this, Scriven (1991) introduced into the literature of evaluation the concept of Formative and Summative Evaluation. Formative evaluation is conducted during the operation of a program to provide program directors evaluate information useful in improving the program.

For example, during the development of a curriculum package, formative evaluation would involve content inspection by experts, pilot tests with small numbers of children and so forth. Each step would result in immediate feedback to the developers who would then use the information to make necessary revisions. Summative evaluation, on the other hand, is conducted at the end of a program to provide potential consumers with judgments about that program's worth or merit. Summative Evaluation is the final goal of an educational activity. Thus, summative evaluation provides the data from which decisions can be made. It provides information on the product's efficacy (Scriven, 1991).

English Language Teaching

English language teaching is an important involvement in curriculum development and evaluation because teachers know what is actually happening in the classroom and can perceive what policy-makers cannot. Due to their close, direct contact with curriculum issues, teachers can see the usefulness and weakness of any given curriculum (Banegas, D. L.,2011).

English Language Teaching is one of the areas of curriculum practice in which a formal research and applications have been conducted for improving the effectiveness of teaching English. English Language Teaching has taken on many different forms. There have been many different approaches described in curriculum in general, for example techniques and methods in teaching the English language starting from methods and approaches such as Audio-lingualism, Community Language Learning, Total Physical Response and the Communicative Approach. All approaches and methods have their own advantages and drawbacks, however, there has always been one main aim of each which is to teach the English language in the most appropriate and effective way. The need for all these changes in English Language Teaching has arisen from the possible drawbacks of each proceeding method (Harmer, 2002).

The vast educational opportunities existing in the field of English language teaching could not operate effectively without the dedicated efforts of such teachers dedicated for the cause. Maintaining the interest, creativity, and enthusiasm of experienced language teachers in their profession is one of the challenges faced by program coordinators and teacher-educators. To overcome this challenge, teachers need to expand their roles and responsibilities over time if they are to continue to find language teaching rewarding in the term of curriculum development. The field of language teaching is subject to rapid changes, as the profession responds to new educational trends as a result of changes in curriculum, and needs of the learners. As a result, teachers need regular opportunities to update their skills for professional development. English language teaching is an important part of curriculum evaluation because teachers are the first person who direct in curriculum implement. Thus the ability of the teacher must be aligned with the curriculum objective.

As far as English language curriculum is concerned, certain teaching methodology and pedagogy as well as assessment methods are clearly prescribed in it so that school teachers can effectively implement the curriculum. Communicative language teaching approach and inductive grammar teaching is employed in the curriculum (MoEYS, 2016). These aspects of curriculum provide basic devices for research on curriculum evaluation.

English is a subject included in the school curriculum from grade fourth onward. It is learned and taught as a foreign language (EFL). However, the instruction of English in primary schools is dependent on the availability of English instructors. In addition, foreign languages are also used at certain higher education institutions depending on the language used by the lecturers available at those institutions. Khmer language is used as a medium of instruction for all subjects at public education system (MoEYS, 2004).

The third cycle education process (grade seventh to ninth) consists of thirty-two to thirty-five lessons which are allocated for seven major subjects included English (Foreign language) which is taught in six lessons per week. The objective of English education in this level has not been mentioned in the curriculum. The curriculum just mentions on the general attitude of all subjects taught in this stage of education process. The attitude focus on love and value the lifelong study and preserve, and develop culture, tradition, arts of nation, region and international. For this level, some problem exists, some schools they don't have professional English teachers to teach the students, so school principals need to direct some teachers who are not professional in English language teaching to teach English subject. In so doing, it makes the quality of teaching and learning quite low. This situation also happens in some high schools throughout the country (MoEYS, 2015).

Evaluation Model

Evaluation has a long history, which ultimately lead to the use of various evaluation models by curriculum specialists. Evaluation models differ greatly with regard to curriculum evaluation approaches. The underlying reasons behind this variety of classifications are generally related to evaluators' diverse philosophical ideologies, cognitive styles, methodological preferences, values and practical perspectives.

As Erden (1995) stated, researchers can choose the most appropriate model in terms of their purposes and conditions during their curriculum evaluation models or they can develop a new one making use of the existing ones. The model or models to use while evaluating a program or course is decided by those who are doing the evaluation study or by the implementers of the program. The model that is chosen to adopt will depend on the purpose of the evaluation and the context of the school or institution.

Kirk Patrick Model of Education Evaluation

Kirkpatrick's four level evaluation model is extensively employed to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs (Gill and Sharma, 2013). Donald Kirkpatrick formulated the four levels of evaluation and each level presents an order of steps to evaluate educational programs (Meghe, Bhise and Muley, 2013). Reaction level evaluates the approach of the student towards the program; learning level evaluates the knowledge achieved by the sample population having been exposed to the education; behavior level measures how properly the knowledge achieved, and results level measures how appropriately the major aim of the education is attained (Alturki and Aldraiweesh, 2014). The Kirkpatrick four-level evaluation model has acted as the fundamental regulating scheme for educational evaluations for about more than 40 years and there is no questioning about the model's having made significant supplement for educational evaluation practices (Bates and Coyne, 2005). According to Kirkpatrick's model, evaluation is a series of steps that begins with level one, and moves sequentially through the levels to level four. Each level provides valuable information to help determine the effectiveness of the overall training program. However, as you proceed through each of the levels, the evaluation becomes more challenging, more expensive, and requires more time to complete.

Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation:

Level 1 – Reaction

Reaction is Kirkpatrick's first level of evaluation, which evaluates how the participants living the learning experience perceive the action (Kirkpatrick, 1998). Nelson and Dailey (1999) put forward that reaction is mainly acquired at the final stage of education by basically asking the participants, for instance; "How did the education feel to you?". Generally formed as a survey or questionnaire, participants hint this level as "happy sheets" or "feel-good measure" and an organized way as to participants' respond to the program. Kirkpatrick (1998) states the aim of measuring reaction is to guarantee that participants are motivated and involved in learning.

Level 2 – Learning

Kirkpatrick's second level of evaluation is learning. Kirkpatrick describes this level as the scope in which participants in the program alter approaches, enhance knowledge, or develop skills in lieu of the program (Kirkpatrick, 1998). Kirkpatrick's Level 2 evaluation measures the acquired knowledge a student has achieved joining the training. Learning evaluates the amount of participants' achieved experiences, attitudes, and principles involved in the education process. We can evaluate if specific abilities or awareness levels have been transformed into more developed ones as a result of the program and some other measurable acquisitions contain the followings as well.

Level 3 – Behavior

Kirkpatrick's third level of evaluation is behavior. This level refers to "To what degree do the learners apply what they have learnt during education?" (Kirkpatrick, 2011). That's to say, behavior level points out whether the participants are really employing what they have acquired during the program (Schumann, Anderson, Scott and Lawton, 2001). Although learning has taken place, it doesn't mean that this learning transforms into new behavior in real life (Nelson and Dailey, 1999). Behavior evaluation suggests that learners apply the pre-learnt items afterwards and change their behaviors as a result, and this might be instantly or much time after the education process, based on the position (Topno, 2012). Third level makes us conclude whether alterations in behavior have happened as a result of the program, and also Kirkpatrick points out the necessity of having data on the 1 and the 2 levels to clarify the outcomes of the 3 level evaluation (McLean and Moss, 2003).

Level 4 – Results

Results is the fourth level of evaluation in Kirkpatrick's Framework. J. Kirkpatrick (2009) and W. Kirkpatrick (2009) state that Results Level can be referred as to what and skills. The aimed outcomes occur as a consequence of the outcomes of the learning activity and following reinforcement. The fourth level or results level is the most challenging part to evaluate adequately and this level describes results to contain an organization's ability to learn, alter, and improve in agreement with its specified objectives (McNamara, Joyce and O'hara, 2010). "What impact has the change produced on the organization?" (Monaco, 2014). Although we have just evaluated the initial three levels of a program, we are still unaware of what influence the program has on the institution (Nelson and Dailey, 1999). Kirkpatrick (1998) states that results mean the scale at which the institution's output has developed in lieu of the program.

This level means the hardest educational outcome to determine and as well as specifying the extent to which education makes a change in specific outcomes. The objective of Kirkpatrick's 4 level evaluation is to determine organizational outcomes in terms of performance, developments and benefits as well. The aim of the 4 level of evaluation is also to measure the influence of the arranged event on the institution's goals. This should obviously show the student's ability to perform more successfully as a result of the education conducted (Dhliwayo and Nyanumba, 2014).

Kirkpatrick's framework as inquiries about the impact of educational programs are generally pursued by questioning of effecting in term of Reactions, Learnings, Behaviors, and Results. Kirkpatrick's four-level model of program evaluation is mostly employed model and the four levels measure the followings (Austrac e-learning, 2008):

Level 1: reaction of student - what students thought and felt about the training (reaction to training). It measures how those who participate in the program react to the learning experience.

Level 2: learning - the resulting increase in students' knowledge or capability (achievement of learning).

Level 3: behavior - extent of behavior and capability improvement and implementation/application (application of learning).

Level 4: results - effects on the business or environment resulting from the student's performance (organizational effectiveness).

The Kirkpatrick Model is an evaluation framework organized around four levels of impact: Reaction, Learning, Behavior, and Results. The Kirkpatrick Model provides the foundation for evaluating almost any kind of social, educational training program and also curriculum evaluation.

III. Research Methodology

In order to achieve the study's objective, this study employed qualitative methods. The qualitative method used for data collection was semi-structured interviews consisted of individual questionnaires and classroom observation.

In this study, Kirkpatrick (1998)'s model for evaluating education programs was primarily implemented as the theoretical framework in guiding the fieldwork for this study. According to this model, evaluation should begin with the first level and move sequentially through levels two, three, and four. The four levels in order from first to last are reaction, learning, behavior, and results.

The four steps of evaluation consist of:

Step 1: Reaction - How well did the participants/ students like the learning activities, methods and processes?

Step 2: Learning - What did they learn from the English curriculum? (the extent to which the learners gain knowledge, skills and attitudes as prescribed in the curriculum)

Step 3: Behavior - What changes in class performance resulted from the learning process? (Capability to perform the newly learned skills while on the class)

Step 4: Results - What are the tangible results of the learning process in terms of improved quality, increased production, efficiency, etc.?

The subjects of this study are school principals, teachers, and students. They are mainly from two public schools. The Researcher went to the field directly after getting the permission from the local school. The data were collected from eight teachers and eight students from two secondary schools in Phnom Penh with semi-structure interview method.

The individual semi-structured interviews were conducted using guiding questions to collect related information from respondents to cover the problems and classroom observations. Each individual interview was conducted for approximately twenty minutes.

The questions were formulated under the headings of the four levels of evaluation proposed by Kirkpatrick (1998). Each level of Kirkpatrick's model was taken as a basis in formulating the main research questions which were accompanied by sub-questions and were developed by the researcher herself. The questions design were selected some dimensions of from participants such as curriculum objective/ content, textbook, teachers, classroom activities, methodology, learning process, course time/ length, material and classroom environment. The interviewed questions were different from subjects group of study. Each level were applies only the appropriate groups that could be collected.

Class observation was conducted on a forty-five minutes class for each teacher to further understand and to ensure validity of answers related to sensitive questions. The checklist used to assess the class performance of the teachers and students during class. It is a detailed observation sheet that includes aspects such as general information about the participants, the aim of the lesson, the classroom atmosphere, the teacher's personal qualities, language, preparation of the lesson, execution of the lesson and the classroom management skills.

IV. Research Finding

The purpose of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of English Curriculum in public secondary school in Cambodia through the perspectives of school principals, teachers and students. Results presented in the light of the research questions posed in the study after a brief description of participants and the summary of Evaluation Model designed by Kirkpatrick (1998).

Level 1 Reaction

Result related to Reaction Level referred to how well the participants like the learning process and what the participant's personal reactions towards the curriculum according to students, teachers and school principal.

According to the teachers, they express their opinions of the English class is much better than before due to the updating of the new textbook in these recent years. Most of them have positively views of the new textbook is contextualized that contain a variety activities, good contents and vocabularies. The new textbook has been changed the name from English for Cambodia to English is Fun for grade seventh, English for grade eighth and English for grade ninth. Even though the new textbooks have been used and most of the teachers have felt positive about them, but there are still many negative opinions on the English language policy and practices related to the implementation of the curriculum.

All of the teachers complained about the teaching hours that they don't have enough time to finish the book as the syllabus had been set for an academic year. In real practice, they have two hours only for their teaching of English subject. It is not balanced between what they have to teach and the number of teaching hour that they got. Most of them are concerned with the student's outcomes because of using only this textbook as the material and just follow the school syllabus. Additionally, student work books and teacher guidebooks are not available to be used especially there is no audio scripts for the listening sections as well as the equipment to play in class.

Another common issue that the researcher got from all of the teachers was that the new textbooks do not fit the levels of the students in class because of disparity between levels of English of urban students and rural students. In classrooms, they always face the mixed abilities or heterogeneous classes. This posed a lot of difficulties for the policy makers and curriculum designers to design their school syllabuses or their lesson plans as well as the classroom management and assessment. The collected data from the student's reaction showed that most of the students do not like their English class in school. Sometimes they felt bored during class because many students seemed not to pay enough attention to the lessons and they always made trouble in the class due to their teacher and class environment if compared to private English Language School.

On the other hand most of the students felt incompetent in analyzing English language curriculum and textbooks in terms of form, meaning and function, asking oral questions, stimulating and participating in informal conversation with learners, being able to use classroom materials appropriately, identifying personal needs in order to further develop as a professional, being able to use language for general purposes, collaborating and sharing ideas with other professionals, having an awareness of the need for ongoing professional development, reading efficiently, improving knowledge of grammar, improving knowledge of vocabulary and improving knowledge of language as communication.

According to school principals who were in charge of one secondary school in Phnom Penh, he expressed his ideas that English subject was still under consideration to be developed. He said that his teachers of English could not finished the assigned teaching schedules adopted from the school syllabus which was set by Ministry of Education Youth and Sport. There are only two hours per week for English subject in his school that was opposite from national language curriculum stated there are 4 hours per week for foreign language teaching and learning. They found it difficult to design the school syllabus accordingly by following the national curriculum because there were many other subjects like sciences and socials that were considered as compulsory courses for students to attend.

Learning 2 Level

The resulted related to Learning Level referred to whether the English class in Secondary public school progress in relation to their teaching, learning and attitude and What they have learn, which skills and attitudes developed or improved as a result of the class according to the student' and the teacher' perceptions. Qualitative data analyses showed the students was a little learned from the sessions in general. It was focused on four competencies such as Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking for the student's outcomes resulted from class attention.

The response came from some selective students through interview stated that they have got little improvement of reading skill because the newly designed textbooks contained many practical activities that made students more active and productive during the class. A half among the interviewees said that they could learn how to read and memorize the meaning of the words or structures including sentences. However, the students were also able to do the comprehensive reading in the basic way and simple texts.

Refer to the writing skill, the answers were common that they have learnt to write a short paragraph of their backgrounds. Year by year, they upgraded to write their background longer and longer. However, some students said that they only learnt and practiced dictation because class teacher mostly gave score to dictation for the monthly assessment in the school.

Although, students had learnt some skills and knowledge but their speaking skills still were poor. In fact, English was not spoken much in the class, so there was no chance for them to practice English orally. By the way, most students were very shy to speak English and there was not any motivation or encouragement for them to speak English. They were worried that their English was not correct when they spoke out. Normally, they could make very simple conversations like greeting (hello), asking for social information (how are you? what is your name? and so on). Most of them could use the spoken language as their grammatical structures were not accurate.

The interviews' data gathered from all the students were that they had little improvement of their listening skills. Some students said they could not understand even what their teacher talked about. About what they had gained in their listening skills, one female student said that she could answer what the teacher asked in comprehension questions, and the sound was clear enough. Another student admitted that she could listen to some words or sentences read by the teacher or when their classmates spoke English in the class due to the absence of cassette players. Because there was no audio scripts to use in the listening section; thus, all the students never experienced the native English speaker's pronunciation. The students also raised that teacher always skipped the listening parts because there was no material to play and practice.

According to the findings, some teachers mentioned that they got experience that they had developed in all teaching skills throughout the sessions. They also admitted that they got new experience of teaching in terms of some methodologies that was designed as guidelines in the syllabus and textbooks English is Fun. One teacher said that the book English is Fun had good contents, which helped him to prepare the lesson plan easily for their classes.

Techniques for teaching Reading

All participants shared the same views that the new textbook English is Fun helped them a lot in teaching skills. There were some techniques proposed for teaching reading. Teachers read for the whole class, and then asked students to read individually and silently. After that, teachers asked them to work in groups and answered the questions. Answering questions or doing tasks based on reading texts, teachers designed techniques or activities that were suitable and workable for reading for main (extensive reading), reading for detail (intensive reading) by using true/false statements, multiple choice questions, and then they were asked to answer questions in groups and report the answers to the whole class. Another technique for teaching reading was that teachers asked students to read from textbook and contextualized students with real pictures and real situation of the students.

Techniques for teaching Writing

Most of participants viewed that students needed to improve writing sentences, letters, paragraphs, compositions, and essays. Accordingly, teachers raised some techniques for teaching writing. First, teachers could give simple topics such as writing about student's family, student's village or student's pet and so on. The assigned topics must have been relevant to what students knew and experienced. They also said it was about free writing but based on writing outline. Second, teachers had to teach students the steps of writing and outline of writing with the model text, but they could not select texts from the textbook as a model of writing because teachers did not conduct needs analysis on learning writing and as a result, they did not understand the levels of their students or they did not choose a model text that matched student's levels and lessons. Some teachers mentioned that texts in the book were not contextualizing and personalizing. Therefore, they were so complex and descriptive. Moreover, another teacher also stated that the textbook did not focus much on writing process. The book focused on product writing without expressing writing format. Students only saw writing topic appeared in the exam, but not in classrooms. Some teachers did not teach by focusing on process writing with clear instruction. They just expected to see the result of student's writing.

Techniques for teaching Speaking

Based on the collected data from teachers of English, there were some techniques raised for teaching speaking from the perspectives of participants. Teachers asked students to work in pairs or in groups after providing topics for discussion. Teachers assign students to make conversation within closed pairs or open pairs. Another technique employed in the classroom was that teachers gave topics and students were asked to brainstorm ideas. Then, teachers provided students with inputs as model to make students familiarized with the topics. Students were assigned to do role-plays, interviews, and play games. Some teachers said they had to make sure that other activities helped and interested students. Consequently, they learned well to ensure the development of pronunciation and fluency.

Technique for teaching Listening

Through interviewing eight teachers of English, they all were concerned about listening lessons to teach the students. They had some ideas and suggested some techniques. They said as routine they read the listening texts for students to listen to. This technique shared the same strategy from participants as the only listening technique in public schools. Students had to listen carefully when teacher read the texts for them. Then students answered the questions based on what teachers had assigned to do. Another technique was about recording teacher's voice of reading text. By this recording, teacher could use speakers or cassette players to play his or her voice once or many times based on students' needs. They added that another technique was to refer to selecting outstanding students to read for the whole class. All of them admitted that this technique could assist them from their effort in reading too.

By reading listening texts for students to listen to, recording teacher's voice, and asking outstanding students to read brought about the lacks of fluency offered native speech sound. Another teacher added that students were not interested in listening to Khmer-English pronunciation by doing so. Choosing other audio file from internet that had similar topics to the lesson was quit crucial in terms of English native pronunciation to attract learner's interest in learning English language said by most of the teachers. The main problem was the lack of the equipment for listening skills such as audio script, cassette players or CD players and so on.

They also added more about the materials, some of them could find the effective materials such as flipped chat, handouts, and so on for each lesson. Apart from this, another teacher mentioned that she could make her class more active by using the student-centered approach. This new book, the English for Fun, helped her perform new techniques of teaching that she had never done before. All of the teachers who were parts of these interviews were sure that the new textbooks from the new curriculum could help both teachers and students improve the learning outcomes as well as the teaching skills.

Level 3 Behavior

The result of Behavior Level referred to what changes in the class performance resulted from the learning process and how the behavior changes the students and teachers also to what degree institutional support creates the necessary condition for change through curriculum evaluation.

Qualitative analysis from these instruments revealed that the expectations from the course of English subject as expressed by the students and teachers were in fact to improve themselves in terms of knowledge and skills in teaching. In this level, students and teachers were ready to change their behaviors. The result showed that most of the students participated in the English class more than before. They expected to learn English to have a productive result. According to teacher's response, they noted that they had self-improvement related to their teaching skills. They tried to push the students to do some activities in the class by finding any strategies as well as any approaches.

Most of them really wished to have a better salary and some rewards to get self-motivation or any encouragement. Some teachers also said they should have more chance to have some training courses in order to improve and upgrade their teaching skill.

In this level, data also collected from school principals about school institutional support for creating the necessary condition for change. Based on the response, the institutional support was always provided. All the staff and principals could work well together. Every end of the month, there was a staff meeting so the teachers could raise up any issues and make some requests or other suggestions during the meeting. The principal said that the necessary condition was provided by allowing teachers to voice the opinions meetings and morally supporting the program and also providing and updating the necessary equipment.

One of the main problems was that the English class had only two-hour learning per week and there was no properly solutions to deal with this issue. Another problem was the equipment in classroom for teaching such as CD player, speaker, and some other facilities to facilitate the learning process in the classroom were not in place. The principal also forwarded this issue to discuss and find out the solutions with management team and still kept those problems as the main impact.

Level 4 Results

The result related to this Level referred to what are the tangible results of the learning process in terms of improved quality, increased production and efficiency. Data obtained from these instruments were analyzed qualitatively and the analysis revealed that for the students there were certain attainments from the class as well as aspects which they still needed to develop in themselves. They were evaluated by the result of the semester examinations and the finally result in the end of the years. All of them promoted to the next grade and the majority of them received high score. The teachers usually used attractive techniques and activities to encourage students to be more active in learning English.

For the teachers, they obtained the benefits of the program, learned and developed in the long run with their willingness to work for institution. Most of the teachers admitted that they gained new techniques and changed their teaching styles as well as their approach to teach in the class. For the teachers, they obtained the benefits of the program, learned and developed in the long run with their willingness to work for institution. Most of the teachers admitted that they gained new techniques and changed their teaching styles as well as their approach to teach in the class. The teachers sometimes raised the importance of English, especially for ASEAN community by 2015, when Cambodia became a part of the community and English was only official language for communication within its territory and for middle governmental officials. Thus, to get benefits and advantages of integration, students needed to strengthen English for opportunity competition and challenges. According to the opinion of two principals, they revealed that their schools were being up to date year by year. They also added that the number of the new English teachers increased so that they could work in the match subject of the class. Unlike before, some teachers were assigned not to teach in the same subject as filed. For example teachers who had majors in Geography or Biology were assigned to teach English or besides their specialized subjects because of lacking the teachers of English and being poor in teacher management. On the other hand, it was still difficult about the class division and schedules. It was hard to balance and fairly design the lessons by following the national curriculum and school syllabus.

Result Related to Classroom Observation

This study also conducted the classroom observation to see the real teaching and learning in the class. This fieldwork took place in one secondary school in Phnom Penh in grade 9th of English class. It took forty-five minutes of the session period. During the observation process, it has been recorded by following the classroom observation check list sheet and video recorded.

Based on the class observation record, it revealed both good points and bad points. The good points were shown that the class progressed smoothly without any student making trouble. The teacher and students had good interaction with each other. The students paid attention while their teacher was talking. Moreover, teacher used only English in the class and tried to explain and encouraged his students to speak. Besides this, teacher had very good voice. His aloud voice could make students hear him very clearly. Moreover, the teacher used his own talent to attract the student's attention. In addition, his classroom management skills were very good. All the student's seats were very organized and all the students were able to see the white board and to hear the teacher speaking clearly. At the meantime, teacher also gave a chance for the students to make a group discussion.

In contrast of good points, there were also the bad points happening at the same time. The teacher seemed too much active in his teaching. He talked a lot and even sometimes he didn't give time to students to think of answers to the questions. Referring to the aim and the objective of the lesson, they seemed to be not clear and they were broad topics. Moreover, classroom teacher did not have the lesson plan, he just taught following the textbook.

Also, the extra materials were not used too. Most of the noticeable was that the majority of the students in the class did not have textbook to use. Based on the observation on the student's ability, they seemed not catch up with what the teacher said. Their facial expressions appeared not to understand at all what the teacher talked about. At the end of the class, teacher did not give any homework to the students.

V. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the Curriculum of English Subject in the secondary school in Cambodia. The aim of evaluating the curriculum was to examine the effectiveness of the existing English syllabus and textbooks used in secondary school of Cambodia whether they were aligned with expected learning outcome stated in the curriculum. Finally, the aim of this evaluation was to seek for the policy improvement that supported and contributed to quality language curriculum and to suggest ways of improving the English program in the future.

When examining the reactions of the students toward the English subject it can be stated that students were not satisfied with their learning English due to some points according to the evaluation. Related to those points there were problems with the quality of teachers, textbooks and classroom environment. They felt disappointed with those teachers who do not perform their duties and responsibilities well. More than this, the textbooks designed were too simple for the students who had English background already, but they were very difficult for students whose English proficiency was very basic especially those who were living in rural areas.. Of course, schools and class environment were the important part of the curriculum development. In every class there were a lot of the students, it was over fifty students studying in one class. This large number of students was not comfortable for teachers to teach effectively.

Overall, the teacher's reactions toward the new syllabus together with new textbook English is Fun had been made. They felt better at using and following it. The matters still existed because of their being updated. In addition, all of the teachers felt upset that the teaching hours were not enough, two hours per week. This worried all teachers since they

could not finish the lessons on time by following the syllabus. By the way, the mixed level students also made them feel hard to deliver the lesson plans as well as the methodology to teach the classes productively. More importantly, the materials were not enough to use especially the audio players or video players. The extra materials were also the burden of teachers in terms of spending their own money, so they decide not to use them in order to save.

School principal's reactions toward the English learning process were that the newly revised textbooks were of importance for teachers and students. They still had their concern about the assigned schedules to implement the national curriculum at schools as they had only two hours per week to teach English at secondary education; while in the national curriculum it wrote six hours for foreign language teaching per week. This was a big challenge currently.

According to the school principals, curriculum is really important to benefit students, teachers, community and the nation as a whole. The new syllabus that was put into effect by MoEYS enabled schools to gain more benefits as well as the teachers and students. By maintaining the development of education in English language subject, all the school principals always welcome the suggestions and criticism and accepted all the negative points and appreciated all of the feedbacks. By the way, every school should be applied the school-based management model that was imposed by MoEYS effectively for the needs of any curriculum evaluation related.

VI. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study and discussions, it was found out that the English curriculum needed some revisions in order to make it more practical and responsive. This study indicated that the instructors and students expressed discontentment about the context component of the English subject. The results of the interviews and research on written documents revealed that the current curriculum lacked well defined objectives. Thus, a detailed English syllabus could be designed including all the dimensions clearly indicated. More specifically, as the instructors provided different perceptions about the objectives of the program during the interviews, they could be defined and stated in an organized and understandable way. Besides, it is necessary that the teachers are well-informed about the goals and objectives to be achieved.

This study also revealed that the students perceived themselves less competent in listening and speaking skills. The related reading and writing is full of practical solutions for the aforementioned problems, which might be overcome by applying suitable instructional methods such as listening practice, drill work, speaking activities. Thus, in order to increase the competencies in speaking and listening skills, a more communicative approach could be implemented. Communicative language teaching often uses language functions or speech acts for example asking questions, reporting, making requests rather than pure teaching of grammatical structures. Additionally, in-service training might be arranged so as to provide the instructors with the opportunity to witness the curriculum and keep up with the current improvements in language teaching and help them implement more communicative and learner centered teaching. Besides, communication with native speakers during the classes can provide good language practice.

The teachers and students also expressed that the English class received very short time in terms of time allocating to teaching and learning English within a week. In order to handle this problem, the weekly schedule could be six hours so that the teachers could find the curriculum and apply various effective teaching methods without being too dependent on the course book.

Indeed, this research study was to make an evaluation of the English curriculum of the secondary school in Cambodia based on students', teachers' and principals' perspectives. The researcher only collected data from the field located in Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia. The result of this study showed that the quality of current English language curriculum was under consideration in terms of revision and upgrading because it still has the some problems. Most of the secondary school English teachers do not have the right qualifications such as certificates or degrees of Teaching English. They just complete two years of pedagogy course in other majors rather English major before working as teachers in school. For the objectives stated in national curriculum, it made it clear that students could use the four language skills. It seemed not yet to reach the national goals because they still face several problems. About the language policy to support the good curriculum, it should focus directly on each secondary school where they implement the curriculum and practice teaching and learning English. In this context, although the director of curriculum development department already set the good policy but the schools do not apply it effectively, it does not have positive impacts. This is the lack of constant observation, evaluation and audit from the Ministry of Education to each public secondary school. For the future research, the researcher recommend that they go to the fieldwork in other provinces throughout Cambodia in order to get more holistic and reliable data for such as evaluation of the English language curriculum.

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