

THE POLICY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN
LAO PDR

Mr. Khonesavanh Xayavong



จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

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By	Mr. Khonesavanh Xayavong
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Accepted by the Graduate School, Chulalongkorn University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree

..... Dean of the Graduate School
(Associate Professor Sunait Chutintaranond, Ph.D.)

THESIS COMMITTEE

..... Chairman
(Professor Amara Prasithrathsint, Ph.D.)

..... Thesis Advisor
(Associate Professor Montira Rato, Ph.D.)

..... External Examiner
(Supanit Kulsiri, Ph.D.)

จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

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ภาษาอังกฤษได้ถูกบรรจุไว้ในระบบการศึกษาของประเทศสาธารณรัฐประชาธิปไตยประชาชนลาว (สปป ลาว) หลังจากที่ได้รับเอกราชในปี ค.ศ. 1975 และภายใต้นโยบายจินตนาการใหม่ในปี ค.ศ. 1986 ได้ถูกบรรจุไว้ในหลักสูตรการศึกษาระดับมัธยมต้นจนถึงมหาวิทยาลัยอย่างเป็นทางการ ในปัจจุบัน ความต้องการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษอยู่ในระดับสูงมาก โดยเฉพาะเขตเมือง ในการประกาศหางาน ความเชี่ยวชาญด้านภาษาอังกฤษเป็นคุณสมบัติสำหรับผู้สมัครงานในทุกภาคส่วนของประเทศ สปป ลาว ซึ่งได้ตระหนักถึงความสำคัญของภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาสากลและภาษาทำงานของอาเซียน ในปี ค.ศ. 2009 ภาษาอังกฤษได้ถูกบรรจุไว้ในหลักสูตรของระดับประถมศึกษาชั้นปีที่ 3 จนถึงระดับมหาวิทยาลัย โดยกำหนดให้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษสัปดาห์ละสามชั่วโมง อย่างไรก็ตาม สปป ลาว ยังคงประสบปัญหาหลายด้านในการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ เช่น นักเรียนในพื้นที่ภูเขาและพื้นที่ชนบทห่างไกลไม่สามารถเข้าถึงการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ ดังนั้น วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้จึงมุ่งศึกษานโยบายและสภาพปัญหาของการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษของ สปป ลาว และวิเคราะห์ปัจจัยหลักที่ส่งผลต่อการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ ได้แก่ ปัจจัยด้านวัฒนธรรม สังคม เศรษฐกิจ และโครงสร้างพื้นฐานอันส่งผลกระทบต่อคุณภาพของการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษใน สปป ลาว จากการศึกษาเอกสารและการสัมภาษณ์ผู้กำหนดนโยบาย ผู้บริหารมหาวิทยาลัย อาจารย์สอนภาษาอังกฤษ และนักศึกษาชั้นปีที่สี่ของมหาวิทยาลัยสามแห่งจากภาคเหนือ ภาคกลาง และภาคใต้ ของ สปป ลาว พบว่าปัญหาหลักของการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษในลาวได้แก่ปัญหาด้านตำรา หลักสูตร ชั้นเรียน บรรยากาศของการเรียนการสอน อาจารย์ผู้สอน วิธีการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ และตัวนักเรียนเอง

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English was introduced into Lao Education System after Laos gained independence in 1975. And under the *Chintanakan Mai* (new way of thinking) policy in 1986, English was officially included in the curriculum from the lower secondary school to the university level. The demand of learning English is now very high, particularly in big cities. Indeed, it can be noticed from job advertisements in Laos that English proficiency is required for applicants in all sectors. The important role of English as an international language and working language of ASEAN is now recognized in Lao PDR. In the year 2009, the English started to be taught from the third grade of primary school to the university level for three hours a week. However, there are still many problems concerning English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR. For example, students who live in mountainous and rural areas still have difficulties in gaining access to English language learning. Therefore, this thesis is to study the policy of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR and to identify problems of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR. It also analyzes key factors, namely cultural, social, economic, and infrastructural factors, affecting the quality of English language teaching and learning. The data was obtained from document research and from interviews with policy makers, university directors, university teachers, and current year 4 students from three parts of Laos (North, Central, and South). It is found main problems in teaching and learning English in Lao PDR concern curriculum, textbooks, classrooms and learning environment, teachers and teaching methods, and students themselves.

Field of Study: Southeast Asian Studies Student's Signature

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CONTENTS

	Page
THAI ABSTRACT	iv
ENGLISH ABSTRACT.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
CONTENTS.....	vii
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1. Background.....	1
1.2. Literature Review:	4
1.3. Objective.....	8
1.4. Major arguments/Hypotheses	8
1.5. Research Methodology	9
1.6. Significance and usefulness of research	9
Chapter 2 Policy of foreign languages in Lao PDR.....	10
2.1. History of foreign language education in Lao PDR.	10
2.2. Policy of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR.	31
2.2.1. The situation and policy of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR .	33
2.2.2. Policy of English language curriculum for grade 3, 4 and 5 of primary schools in Lao PDR.	44
2.2.3. Policy of English Language Curriculum for Lower and Upper Secondary Schools.	46
2.2.4. English Curriculum of Bachelor of Arts in English Programme at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.....	47
Chapter 3 Problems and Factors	51
3.1. Problems of English Language teaching and learning in Lao PDR	51
3.1.1. Curriculum.....	52
3.1.2. Classroom and environment.....	58
3.1.3. Textbooks	61
3.1.4. Teachers and teaching methods.....	66
3.1.5. Students	72
3.2. Factors affecting English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR.	74

	Page
3.2.1. Cultural factors	74
3.2.2. Economic factors	77
3.2.3. Social factors	79
3.2.4. Infrastructural factors	82
Chapter 4 Conclusions and Suggestions	85
4.1. Conclusions.....	85
4.2. Suggestions for policy makers.....	86
REFERENCES	90
APPENDIX.....	93
VITA.....	148



Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Background

Education is the most important thing in life because education is the process of teaching and learning in science, technology, and humanities in order to produce human resources with the knowledge to contribute in developing the country. The policy of education is the process of changing and developing all population, classes into the system of self-improvement; to follow the rules of the government of each country in each period in accordance with the demand of developing country to be civilized. Therefore, the policy of education is the most important thing because it is the tool to redirect the administration and provide data for administrators when making decisions. It is impossible for management without policy because policy comes from objectives and targets of management; but the targets can be performed according to the set policy. If there is no policy, there is no objective and target of management. Therefore, policy is important in management because it will help the managers know the how to perform and have confidence in performing other works. The policy is also a work plan, a direction indicator, an insurance that all levels of managers have to follow. It supports managers to use their power to enforce the policy correctly, reasonably, and fairly. The policy will help all levels of staff in their organizations understand their organizations' missions, including how to succeed in their function. Additionally, the policy will help cooperation between units of an organization (Saignaleuth 2008:4).

Rapid changes in the globalization, economy and rapid development of technology, knowledge, and worldwide education reform have brought changes to learning and teaching, and of course the process learning and teaching. The problems of English language teaching and learning as the second language in each country are different. It depends on the educational policy and environment of teaching and learning of each country. As a result of this, Laos' educational system has to adapt to

the development of English language learning and teaching and find the right solution. This thesis aims to study the policy of English teaching in Lao PDR and to examine the problems and factors affecting the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR.

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is one of the least developed countries in the world with the population approximately 6.9 million (2014) which ranks 106th in the world. It is a land-locked country in Southeast Asia, bordered by China, Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Cambodia (Nations 2014). In Lao PDR, there are three main groups namely Lao Loum, Lao Theung, and Lao Soung. The majority of Lao people live in mountainous areas and scattered along the main rivers.

In the past, Laos suffered from many wars that led to a complicated educational system. During the colonial period, Lao education system was replaced by the French education system from 1893 to 1955 (Khamphao 1985:28). With the purpose to control Laotian secondary education, French is the official language of instruction. The French influence is found in the powerful Lao elite, and at a comparatively modest cost (Halpern and Tinsman 1966:502). French was the language of instruction after the second or third grade. During that time, Lao people still had a tradition of formal education in the Buddhist temple schools (widely known as Wat Schooling) where the monks taught novices and other boys to read both Pali and Lao scripts. A lot of villages established Wat schooling to teach novices and village boys. However, only ordained boys and men in urban monasteries had access to advanced education.

After Laos was liberated the nation in 1975, the government restructured and improved the educational system. The French system of education was replaced by Laotian curriculum. People who lived in urban and village neighborhoods were educated in basic reading and writing. It was estimated that by 1985, 92 percent of men and 76 percent of women aged 15 to 45 were able to read and write. School enrollment has increased since 1975. However, the education still has problems because of limited resources and lack of teaching materials. Most schools are poorly constructed with bamboo and thatch and run by one or two teachers with low wages. Several village schools had only one or two grades (Laos 2005).

After Lao people liberated the country on 2 December 1975, Lao government developed the educational system. In 1978, the government issued a decree about modern educational work. The decree was about an education plan for 1975-1985, and it stated that educational work should be done before other works (Khammee 1985:120)

During the French colonial period, education was taught in French (Khamphao 1985:28), but after Lao gained independence in 1975, the government put English language into a new curriculum of teaching from primary school to the university levels. It is found that English is more popular for the new generation. Additionally, in 1997, Lao PDR joined the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and English was used as an official and working language between ASEAN members. Laos has attracted several foreign investment companies to invest in the country. The number of foreign companies, organizations, and travel agents has increased. Hence it is necessary for Lao people to have English proficiency in communicating and negotiating with foreign investors and organizations. English has always played a key role in the Lao's development, but the English proficiency level of Lao students is still far from satisfactory (Ming, Ling et al. 2011:40).

English has been a *lingua franca* in communication of many countries and disciplines namely science, technology, international relations, international business, and academic conferences. Because of the importance of English, the demands of English skills are needed for globalization (Khamkhien 2010:757-764). The English language has become an official international language, accepted by a majority of countries in the world. The position and character of the English language which would be used in all international encounters is not only the property of the English speaking countries like Britain, American, Canada and Australia, but it should become the concern and interest of the whole world (Britton, Shafer et al. 1990: 317).

The English language has been considered to be a neutral language for a few decades that many countries around the world agreed to use as an international and official language. It is not only used as an official language in several nations, but also plays a vital role in many diverse cultures in a large number of countries. It is the central language of communication world-wide (Axelsson 2007:1).

Since English is an international language used to communicate in many fields such as relations, trade, technology, education, and politics, it is taught as a foreign language in many countries around the world. In Laos, English is used for communication in trade, science, technology, education, and politics as well. The Lao government tries to promote English communication skills for Lao students. Therefore, Communicative Language Teaching was introduced into the curriculum of Lao higher educational institution in 2005 (Vongxay 2013:2).

Nowadays, all job vacancy announcements in Lao PDR require candidates who have a good level of English proficiency to work with private and foreign companies with higher salaries than the state organizations. The demand for English is increasing within the government organizations as well, where officers are selected with English competency in order to attract foreign supports for economic development (Bouangeune 2008 :49). If students do not have English skills, they will not be considered for the interview test or called to the next process of selection. This is the significance of the English language in finding a job in Lao PDR at the present time. Therefore, English language is very important for Lao people. Also the ASEAN Free Trade Areas and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) among ASEAN members will be opened in 2015.

1.2. Literature Review:

There are several studies about teaching and learning English as a second language related to this research topic. There are also some books providing the valuable information about the policy of English language teaching and learning, problems of the English language teaching and learning, and factors affecting the problems of English language teaching and learning. The interesting details of the English teaching and learning will be presented as follows:

This part will start with the journal, “Factors Causes Students Low English Language Learning: A Case Study in the National University of Laos” (Souriyavongsa, Rany et al. 2013). This book mainly explores students-teachers’ weakness towards English language teaching and learning as a foreign language of a

Continuing Summer Program for Bachelor's Degree of Teachers Education in English at Faculty of Education (FOE), the National University of Laos (NUOL). Based on the findings of this research, first, the majority of students reveal that the English teachers are not well-trained. For example, they speak Lao when teaching English, so they cannot perform well to attract the interest of the students. Secondly, students are lacking of English foundation background. Third, students are lacking of confidence to use English because they are afraid of making mistakes and shy to speak English. Fourth, the curriculum is unsuitable for helping students to develop students' English proficiency. Last, English language is difficult to learn due to the fact that students are not well-motivated, encouraged and gained proper learning strategy. Moreover, students do not have a chance to practice speaking English with English native speakers, and class environment is crowded and noisy.

Another interesting research is The Implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in an English Department in a Lao Higher Educational Institution: A Case Study Vongxay (2013) stated that, the findings show the result of CLT in the Lao context are connected to teachers' performance and teaching methods, like traditional grammar-based teaching approach as well as misconceptions of CLT, teachers' English proficiency and lack of training in CLT. The issues raised from students consist of low English proficiency, styles of learning and behaviors of students, and lack of motivation to develop communicative competency. The difficulties of educational system consist of the influence of the examination, large size of classrooms, and lack of funds to support CLT and the last factors caused by CLT itself consist of the lack of CLT interaction in school and the public. It seems that there are not only graduate students, but there are also students who are now studying in the Department have poor writing, listening, speaking, and reading skills, which are key elements of the communicative competence.

As mentioned in this book, the general problem found in classroom is that students do not pay attention to learn and participate in communicative English activities. They choose to learn linguistic knowledge namely grammar structures, which they think that it could help them to pass the examinations. Besides, the majority of them cannot use the knowledge that they have studied from the

classrooms to use in the real life situations. Although they have learned enough English linguistic knowledge during their five-year study in university, they have no speaking or listening skill. The researcher thinks that she and other teachers have not got enough opportunity to train or to develop their English skills. Only some teachers from primary to higher education institutions around the country are selected to train or participate in TESOL conference and workshop each year. Therefore, the researcher does not have enough opportunity to learn communicative English teaching skills.

Another interesting research is “Common problems in learning and teaching English at Faculty of Education, national university of Laos” (Souvanhxay 2011). Its objective was to survey common problems in learning and teaching English on teachers, students, curricula and textbooks, and administrations. The population in this study was 20 English teachers and 297 students who study English in year 4 at the Faculty of Education, National University of Laos. Questionnaire samples were given to teachers and 169 students. It can be briefly summarized that both lecturers and students express that more than half of the expected performance weaknesses exist in the four aspects: teachers, students, curricula and textbooks, and administrations of educational practices at Faculty of Education.

Another interesting study is “Factors lowering English speaking ability of English major students at NUOL” (Pathammavong 2009). The purpose of that study was to investigate factors lowering Year-Four BA Special English Program students’ English speaking ability at the National University of Laos. The study also aims to suggest some factors improving students’ speaking ability. Year-Four BA Special English Programme students in the Department of English, Faculty of Letters, the National University of Laos took part in this study. Questionnaires were used and distributed to students in the Department of English for data collection.

This particular study is to investigate the factors lowering four year BA English special program students’ English speaking ability at the National University of Laos. The paper has explored some of the factors influencing the efforts to improve students’ English speaking competence. The results of the study show that education,

age and vocabulary size are the main factors lowering students' English speaking ability.

It is concluded that vocabulary size is the main factor to enhance students' English speaking ability. It is also recommended that more students participating in further study would provide a clearer picture of the factors lowering students' English speaking ability. In addition, the study needs to be included interview as well as statistics for further development of the project. The results show that conversation, ages and vocabulary size are the key factors that lowered students' speaking ability.

From the literature review, it is shown that problems of teaching and learning English in Lao PDR is that used English as a second or foreign language. Those studies are useful for this research because they can be models for study and the methods used can be applied to projects on the problems or factors affecting the quality of teaching and learning English in Lao context.

Lao Based on the real situations in English teaching and learning in schools and universities in Lao PDR nowadays, most of the students both current and graduated students have low English proficiency in four skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing skill. This thesis will be based on document research, interviews and classroom observation at four universities in three parts of Laos (North, Central, and South).

Lao PDR's socio-economic conditions also cause problems for English teaching and learning environment. Therefore, there are some foreign and Lao researchers, especially in the educational sectors, have intended to find the suitable solutions for these problems. This research proposes to study the problems of teaching and learning English in Lao PDR and focus on four universities as mentioned above. Interviews with current university directors, teachers, and year 4 students are carried out for insightful information. It will also study the policy of the Lao government in promoting English as a second language by interview three current policy makers of the Ministry of Education and Sports. Hopefully this thesis will provide useful information for the development of English teaching and learning in the future. There are not many research works about problems of teaching and learning English in Lao

PDR. Therefore, this thesis will benefit Lao universities, colleges, and the author's workplace (Banking Institute) for improving their quality of English teaching and learning.

After reviewing the literature about English teaching and learning in Lao PDR, not many people have written about the policy of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR. Therefore, it was interesting to study the policy of English teaching and learning in Laos. There are some studies about the problems and factors affecting the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR. However, this thesis proposed to survey the policy of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR and study the problems and factors affecting the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR, too. This work is related with some of the works reviewed and it will be studied more in detail. The thesis will also mention the problems and factors of English teaching and learning with deeper and updated information through in-depth interviews of key informants from three parts of Laos; namely policy makers from the Ministry of Education and Sports, university directors, teachers and students. Therefore, this work will be useful for policy makers and people who are interest about problem of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR because it add more information from those works.

1.3. Objective

The aims of this study are:

- To study the policy of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR.
- To examine the problems of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR and factors affecting them.

1.4. Major arguments/Hypotheses

ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) will be opened in 2015 and the English language is used as an official language to communicate among ASEAN members. After Lao PDR became a member of ASEAN country in 1997, Ministry of Education

and Sports launched a policy to promote English teaching and learning in both public and private schools throughout the country in order to increase English proficiency among students. However, it is noticeable that there are many problems in English teaching and learning in Lao PDR such as lack of qualified teachers and classroom resources. Also, most of English schools or centers are located in big cities whereas people living in rural areas gain limited access to education. Additionally, the thesis argues that there are several factors affecting the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR such as lack of suitable school buildings, language learning facilities, and qualified language teachers. Moreover, the financial factor also affects Lao student's accessibility to English courses.

1.5. Research Methodology

Information was obtained from different sources such as books, newspapers, articles, journals, official documents, case studies, and websites relevant to the topic of this study. Official documents and reports from government offices will be included (mainly from Ministry of Education and Sports, National University of Laos). The study is based on document research from both primary and secondary sources both in Lao and English language. Besides, the study is based on the interviews with three policy makers from the Ministry of Education and Sports, four university directors, 14 university teachers, and 50 current year 4 students from three parts of Laos (North, Central, and South). It is also included the field observation at the Banking Institute's English classrooms.

1.6. Significance and usefulness of research

- This study will provide useful information for policy makers in promoting English teaching and learning in Lao PDR.
- This study can be a reference for those who are interested in the problems of teaching and learning English in Southeast Asia.

Chapter 2

Policy of foreign languages in Lao PDR

2.1. History of foreign language education in Lao PDR.

The history of foreign languages education in Laos can be divided into five periods as follow:

1. The starting of French language in Laos.
2. The starting of English language in Laos.
3. The starting of Russian and German language in Laos.
4. English was introduced into the curriculum of secondary school.
5. Other foreign languages were taught at the National University of Laos.

More information on each period will be given as follow:

2.1.1. The starting of French language in Laos.

Khamphao (1985:25) stated that, Laos used to be colonized by French for a long period of time. At that moment After France signed a treaty on October 3, 1893, Lao Lanxang became a colony of France. After that, the French started to change the administrative systems in Lao Lanxang. “Lao people had no right to gather into groups or organizations, and no freedom. Males, who were over 18, were forced to do hard work at least 100 days a year such as road construction, airport building, working in organizations, army camps, and houses construction (Lengsavath, Yialiher et al. 2010:208). Lao people became poorer, and the French also set up more armed force units to control Lao ethnic people. They set up foreign military bases everywhere. Even the majors of districts and provinces were also the French army officers. Moreover, they brought in western education. The French tried to prevent Lao children to enter the priesthood of Buddhism, but the plan of expanding western education was still limited. They just only built schools in some districts with a specific reason to serve the foreigners and high ranking officials’ children. This is to train them for the military units.

This situation caused the problems to Lao education system, economy, infrastructure, socio-culture, and national identity. This is because the French brought the western culture into Lao society and also tried to make Lao people forget Lao language, culture, tradition, and religion.

The French divided their administration into several departments. One of them was a Director General of the Public Instruction Department who was responsible for Indochina's teacher training, curriculum management and publishing textbooks for teaching and learning in the Indochina's primary schools. They used all French curriculum and textbooks which published from France for learning and teaching from lower and upper secondary school levels. Even though the Indochina's education at the primary school level was a bit different from education levels in France, students had to start learning French language since the first grade of primary school. They tried to make teaching and learning process relevant to the students' living condition, tradition, and culture of each country. The quality of education was set in the same standard. It means that students who were under 18 years old could continue to study at superior primary school level. If they were over 18, they could work to serve other organizations of the Indochina everywhere because they could speak French language fluently

Khamphao (1985:37) stated that, Laos was governed by the French colonial administration for many years from 1893-1955. During the French colonial period, the educational system of Laos was controlled by the French from the primary school level to higher education level. It means that teaching and learning during that time was copied and taught after the French model. In the French Protectorate, French language was used as a vehicle in teaching and Learning in all subjects and fields. At the same time, apart from French language, there also were other foreign languages such as English language. Students had to study French which was a main subject for them, but they also studied English only 1 to 2 hours a week.¹ Consequently, a lot of

¹ Interviews with a Vice Rector of the National University of Laos on January 31, 2014, at the office of the Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital; a Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology (a Former Head of Russian Language Department), interviewed on January 24, 2014, at the office of Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology, Vientiane Capital; a retired staff (a Former Teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools, and a former Head of Teacher

Lao people had to learn all subjects in the curriculum of schools and colleges in French language. Lao people did not learn Lao language which was the language of the nation. A majority of them used mainly foreign languages simply. (Pictures of textbooks can be seen in an appendix: 7)

The policy of French Education in Laos during the French colonial control shows that the French did not pay attention to the development of Lao educational system. “France controlled Laos (1893-1930) and they did not want to establish any schools in Laos, there were not many schools, but most of them were built to serve Foreigners’ and official’s children who served the French colonial government” (Lengsavath, Yialiher et al. 2010:209). After the World War II, more government schools were built in villages. When the French came, Wat or temple, school system was widespread.

Lao education during that time was not match with the real situations because the education in Laos exactly followed the French systems. So the educational policy in Laos during the war was not very different from the period before the World War II in the essence of education. The second time of French colonial’s return to govern Laos, they tried to educate Lao people to look down upon Lao language and culture and admire French culture” (Lengsavath, Yialiher et al. 2010:209). Khamphao (1985:93) states that, the French proposed to change Lao alphabets and use Roman alphabets instead, but it was unsuccessful because most Lao people studied at temples (Wat Schools) before the arrival of the French. However, the structure of educational system and educational policy of Laos had to follow the French study plan and curriculum. Because of this reason, Laos could not decide how to improve educational system by itself. The education during that time was divided into 2 types namely Public and French type. Sometimes, both types of education could be combined together. In some cases there was a controversy which made most of Lao people hesitate and did not want to cooperate with the government. Sometimes, the government built schools for people, but Lao people did not send their children to study regularly. In some areas people could not attend the French schools and people

Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports) interviewed on January 29, 2014 in Dongdok Campus, Vientiane Capital; and a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos on January 30, 2014, at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

asked the government to establish more schools. The secondary schools following the French model were lacking of Lao teachers. There were only French teachers. According to the statistics, the number of secondary schools did not increase from 1947-1962. However, the numbers of secondary students had an increase from 200 to 2,917 around the country in the academic year of 1961-1962. There were a lot of students who finished primary schools and had to leave education every year because they could not pass the entrance examination to continue their study in the French secondary schools.

A vice rector of the National University of Laos; a director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology; a former Head of Russian Language Department; a retired staff, a Former Teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools and also a former head of Teacher Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports, and a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos said that, teaching and learning during that time was a part of human resource development. Both foreign languages (French and English) were taught during that time. Students might not study English because they wanted to study in France. It was not necessary for them to study English language. As for Russian, it was the language of revolution which was brought together with the supports of the Soviet Union. The Lao Patriotic Movement or Lao People's Movement fought against the enemies the country because of the support of the other countries including the former Soviet Union. Therefore, the Russian language was also brought with the full support of Soviet Union in the past.²

In short, from 1946-1954, it was a period that we can see obviously that Lao education was expanded rapidly in quantity and quality. However, if we compare to the education in Vietnam and Cambodia during that time, it was a big difference in

² Interviews with a Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, on January 31, 2014, at the office of Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital; a Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology (Former Head of Russian Language Department), on January 24, 2014, at the office of Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology, Vientiane Capital; a retired staff (a Former Teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools, and also a former Head of Teacher Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports) interview on January 29, 2014 in Dongdok Campus, Vientiane Capital; and a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, on January 30, 2014, at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

the quantity because there was only one Lycée-Pavie Secondary School established in Laos. The education in Vietnam and Cambodia was expanded since the World War II, especially Vietnam which had received rich heritage from the French authorities of the Indochina-France.

If we evaluate the education system in Laos during the period more than 60 years of the French period from 1893 until 1955, there were no evidences to show that the French developed education system. A few primary schools established before the World War II were no longer seen in the present, and the Teacher Training School built by the French after the World War II remained only “classrooms” and “bedrooms”. As for the famous Pavie College, it was not a permanent building and also could not be called Teacher Training School. There was only one Pavie Secondary School building before the World War II and after the war. It was later changed to be Lycée-Pavie School that can be seen until today. It was the only one building that can be an evidence to show the development of Lao education during the French period.

Nowadays, the Lycée-Pavie School building is used to be a dormitory of the Medical School. This situation is different from Vietnam and Cambodia because there are many traces of French education development there such as National Library of Vietnam, and universities which consist of many diverse faculties in Hanoi and Saigon. Indochinese Museum, Institute of Oriental Culture Research in Hanoi from 1900 to 1945, even though they were affected by the wars, but they still remain until today. In Laos, the French did not want to pay attention in reforming the education system in Laos because Laos is a land locked country with the majority of population living in mountainous, rural areas and scattering along the main rivers. Besides, Lao people were familiar with the education in temples since the ancient time so the education that the French established in Laos was not popular among Lao people. In addition to this, the lives of Lao people were related to nature such as working in rice fields, hunting, catching fish, finding mushrooms, bamboo shoots, vegetables for living. Therefore, it is not surprising that during the French period of more than 60 years (1893 to 1955); the French colonial education produced just only 7 Lao technical staffs who graduated at high level or university level namely one doctor, two

engineers, two lawyers and one linguist. Temples provided sufficient knowledge to be heads of families, farmers, and Lao language teachers during the French colonial period.

2.1.2. The starting of English language in Laos.

A vice rector of the National University of Laos; a director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology; a former Head of Russian Language Department; a retired staff, a Former Teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools and also a former head of Teacher Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports, and a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos stated that, In 1954, America replaced the French colonial government in Laos. The American administration developed educational system establishing Fangum Comprehensive High School, taught in Lao language, in each province. When Laos liberated from France, the teaching and learning taught in Lao language. Schools in Vientiane still used both French and Lao language in teaching and learning at primary school level. But before Laos liberated in 1975, there were teachers who came from England and America to teach at the Teacher Training College. At the Fangum Comprehensive High School, students not only studied Lao language, but also English. At the French school system, students did not study English, they studied only French. During that time, students who wanted to further study in foreign countries, they all have to come to prepare in Vientiane. The Fangum Comprehensive High School has had an important role in teaching English since 1962. The Vientiane Fangum Comprehensive High School and Vientiane Lycée High School had foreign teachers teaching French language and English volunteer to teach English. But Lao language was not contained in the curriculum during that time. In 1962, the first Teacher Training School in ViengXay district, Nakhao campus, was established and mainly taught in Lao language. It consisted of only a few majors for three year course. Hence, the primary schools levels were expanded in every province, lower secondary school levels in many provinces. And there were upper secondary schools in more than a half of all provinces in Laos. There were

approximately 40 students of the first generation graduated from ViengXay Teacher Training School.³

Khamphao (1985:87) stated that, when the French colonial government was defeated in Laos, the same year as in Vietnam and Cambodia, France accepted to sign a Serneo Treaty on July 21, 1954 to acknowledge the complete independence of these three countries of Indochina. The US government who won the World War II replaced the French colonial government completely in Laos, not only in politics, and economy, but also in education.

During the American era, Lao language was used as a vehicle in teaching in all levels of educational system. Lao language teaching and learning was expanded widely in primary school level. However, the use of Lao language in education system still had several problems and difficulties, especially from the primary school level to the university level. This is due to the fact that Laos used to be governed by the French in the past. Hence, Lao people forgot and were not capable of Lao language which was the language of the nation, especially people who were responsible for education. A majority of them used mainly foreign languages.

Teaching and learning in Lao educational system still lacked of Lao teachers in secondary school levels. Hence, there was an inequality in the education. It was believed that Lao teaching and learning was impossible because the lack of Lao teachers. Children, whose parents were rich, would have a better opportunity than the poor ones. Because the rich children would have more chances to learn foreign languages. Because of this reason, to solve the problems, it was necessary to have teaching and learning in Lao language in order to provide the equality in education for all children. And at last, it was successful. Teaching by using foreign language had

³ Interviews with a Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, on January 31, 2014, at the office of the Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital; an interview with a Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology, a Former Head of Russian Language Department, on January 24, 2014, at the office of Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology, Vientiane Capital; an Interview with a retired staff, a Former Teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools, and a former Head of Teacher Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports, on January 29, 2014, in Dongdok Campus, Vientiane Capital; and an interview with a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, on January 30, 2014, at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

obstacles in transferring knowledge. If students lacked of knowledge in foreign languages, they would have disadvantages in their study (Khamphao 1985:87).

Khamphao (1985:90) stated that, Education became the tools to develop the country. The Ministry of Education established educational System and known from the year 1962 as “the Educational Reform in 1962”. The content of this educational reform gave more space to Lao people, country, and culture more than other subjects. And the government in Vientiane accepted the project of reforming education in 1962. Not only the government in Vientiane accepted this project, but the king also signed to accept this project. Therefore, there was a decree issued No. 248, dated on July 30, 1962. After that, the government required foreign countries and organizations to fully support this educational reform project.

Khamphao (1985:93) said that, according to the statistics, in academic year 1962-1963, there were 87 percent of primary school students who did not have any chance to continue to study at the secondary school level anywhere. Therefore, to solve this problem the secondary schools were urgently established as many as possible and the teacher training colleges produced more teachers to serve the teaching and learning at the secondary school level. However, the demand of learning French language was still the same as in the past because there were no other ways. There is only one foreign language (French) that would help students open their world to technology and sciences during that time.

Khamphao (1985:96) stated that, in order to build secondary schools quickly, the government decided to ask for support from foreign countries, for example from the US government. USAID which was an organization from USA agreed to cooperate by establishing three Teacher Training Colleges in Luang Prabang, Savannakhet, Pakse, and one Teacher Training University in DongDok Campus. During that time, it could only produce teachers to teach at primary level. When students finished Normal Schools, they had to take extensive course for another year (6+1), but this system ended in 1964.

The USAID still had an agreement with the Lao government to send students from DongDok campus to continue their study in Hawaii University and some states

of America to get a Bachelor degree in order to become English teachers in Fangum Comprehensive High School. For teachers having excellent performance in teaching at lower secondary level for at least 2 years, they would be supported to upgrade to study Master Degree.

Lao government also cooperated with the US government (USAID) to establish Fangum Comprehensive High School which was a high school system. In 1965, the survey committees of Hawaii University came to meet the committees of the Ministry of Education to decide to establish 5 secondary schools around the country named “Fangum Comprehensive High School”. In 1966, the first Fangum Comprehensive High School was established in Vientiane. The second one was built in Phonmee, Phonehong district. A year later, the third one was established in Savannakhet, the fourth one was in Luang Prabang, and the last one was in Pakse. It was taught in Lao language during that time.

The curriculum of Fangum Comprehensive High School was similar to the curriculum of American secondary school, but it was also adapted to the French system such as 4 years spent for lower secondary school, and 3 years for upper secondary school. All subjects were taught in Lao language. The first language taught in the curriculum was Lao language, the second was French language, and the third was English language.⁴ In the past, in the French system, all teachers had to teach every subject in French language. Therefore, it was difficult for teachers to conduct teaching and learning in Lao language.

Teaching in the lower and upper secondary school followed the Educational reform in 1962 such as to have real practice for students’ daily life or activities which were very different from the French system. For year one and two of lower secondary level focused on the theories (Mathematics, Literature, Lao Culture, English, and General Science). For year three and four students were separated apart to study any other areas that they wanted such as elective courses which students had to study many hours a week (Khamphao 1985:96).

⁴ An interview with a Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, on January 31, 2014, at the office of the Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital.

In short, from the year 1955 to 1975 Lao education was expanded and developed after western style. Khamphao (1985:98) stated that, the educational reform in 1962 allowed more schools to be established for Lao people. It can be said that, during more than 60 years of the French colonial period, no Lao people graduated from university, and also there were not many students graduated high schools. Therefore, with the education development from 1955 to 1975, it seemed there were more students attending schools. For example the UNESCO came to survey the quality of Lao education since 1957 and this lead to the improvement of all Lao educational levels from the primary school to the university.

Although Lao education during 1955 to 1975 expanded much more than the Lao education in the French Colonial period, it did not directly respond to the need of the country. The country in the post-conflict needed to be rebuilt. However, the educational system could only produce enough human resource with knowledge of science and technology.

Khamphao (1985:109) stated that, the education development during the American period (from 1954 to 1975) can be divided into 4 periods: 1954 to 1961, 1961 to 1967, 1967 to 1973, and 1973 to 1975. From 1954 to 1961, education was not expanded much in two provinces of the Liberated Areas due to conflicts. Some educational foundation was established but unable to run regularly and had no conditions in expanding. There was only a small boarding school in two provinces near border of Vietnam with nearly 300 students from 10 to 18 years old. At last, it was closed at the end of 1957. The majority of students were sent to study abroad. Every year, Revolutionary Movement's children in the Liberated Areas were sent to study abroad such as China, the former Soviet Union, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Besides, a boarding primary school level was also established in the Liberated Areas which had nearly 1000 children.

From 1961 to 1967, the Central Party launched the educational policy of Lao Patriotic Movement on September 11, 1961, in order to eliminate the former colonial education system completely and establish the of revolutionary educational foundation in the Liberated Areas. Since then, the education was established in full scale from the central to the local areas in the whole Liberated Areas. On April 10,

1964, the Central Party expanded that the 1961 educational policy to be a modern guideline of national education of the party in the Liberated Areas. At the end of 1962, the first Primary Teacher Training School was established with 59 students, and they finished school in July, 1963. The second generation of students finished in academic year 1963-1964 with 96 students. The first Secondary Teacher Training School was established in 1962 in Samnue province. It is the first time that Lao language was used as a vehicle in the curriculum of teaching and learning and the textbooks were also written in Lao language.

In 1965, the Central Education Committees were established to be responsible for educational affairs and also performed the duty of the Ministry of Education in the Liberated Areas. At the same year, the staffs of Training School were appointed to run educational works. Generally speaking, the situation in the Liberated Areas from 1961-1967 was complicated because of the Vietnam War which caused difficulties in running educational policy. However, during this time, the educational foundation of the revolution was officially established and expanded widely in the Liberated Areas, especially educational administration work started to take shape, from the Central Education Division to provinces, districts and it can be said that Lao education was improved step by step since then (Khamphao 1985:109).

2.1.3. The starting of Russian and German language in Laos.

Khamphao (1985:130) said that, after Laos was liberated on December 2 1975, the Lao People's Revolution Party and the government of Lao People's Democratic Republic set the policy on Education by developing human resources in order to develop Lao country. The Lao People's Revolution Party had a policy that the development of new people was the most important and urgent task. Consequently, every resolution of the party about educational work from 1975 to 1985 followed this statement "move the education work before other works one step". The policy of the Lao party and the government for education will be described as follow:

Lao education system was divided into:

- School system, People's classroom study and culture-technique training.
- Kindergarten system
- Normal school system
- Vocational and university system

In short, during 10 years (from 1975-1985) the Lao People's Revolution Party and the government of Lao People's Democratic Republic started development plan for the education around the country despite the fact that the country still faced many difficulties. However, in this 10 year period education was expanded from the center to rural areas to serve the revolutionary tasks of the party and the government. This was a base for developing education in the future. Lao language, which lost its roles for several decades, resumed its important role in Lao society again. Education was then owned by Lao people (Khamphao 1985:130).

A vice rector of the National University of Laos said that, later on, after Laos was liberated in 1975, Lao language was used in teaching and learning system. For this reason, French language has become a foreign language like other foreign languages. Lao language was brought in and used in educational institutes, especially in secondary schools and other school levels whereas French was taught as a foreign language. It was also taught as a technical course in the curriculum of some institutes, especially at the Vientiane Teacher Training College in Dongdok campus. After Laos gained independence in 1975, French language was further taught in Lao Educational System, but the status of French teaching and learning became a foreign language the same as other foreign languages such as English, Russian, German, Chinese, Japanese, etc. However, French language was still emphasized in some programs to produce French teachers. French was a main language to teach in some faculties of the National University of Laos like Engineering, Laws, and Economics. During that time, Most of teachers who taught French language at the universities in Laos were French. There were also some Lao teachers.

After 1975, the status of French and English language was still the same as the previous period. That is Lao language was the first language taught in the curriculum, the second one was French language, and the third was English language. Later on, other foreign languages were introduced in Lao education such as Russian, Spanish, German, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese. Nowadays, these foreign languages are still taught at the National University of Laos.

Teaching and learning during that time was a part of human resource development. Both French and English were taught during that time. However, students might not study English if they were good at mathematics. They would choose French language because they could go to study in France. It was not necessary for them to study English language. After Laos gained independence in 1975, French and German languages were taught. Russian was considered as the language of revolution. East Germany supported Laos by building schools and teaching German language. These foreign languages were taught at the secondary school level. Russian language was taught in secondary schools for many years after liberation, but German language was not able to remain due to the lack of teachers and it was not included in the national curriculum.

Other languages such as Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese were introduced later. Spanish language was brought to teach in the National University of Laos. Laos cooperated with Cuban experts in human resource development. There was also cooperation with Japan. Laos also had cooperation with France, England, Russia, Germany, China, Vietnam, and Korea through education programs at the National University of Laos.

English was taught in Normal Schools along with French language. Schools could make their own decision if they wanted to teach French, English or both English and French. At the beginning, the majority of Normal Schools taught French and English. After liberation in 1975, the Lao government tried to support Russian

language, but it was taught in the curriculum of educational system for a short period of time.⁵

A vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos said that, from the year 1980 the Teacher Training College in Dongdok Campus selected students to study in the college from their entrance examination. If they could pass the exam, they were allowed to study in college. The same system has been applied up until now. In 1985, there were foreign teachers from East Germany teaching at the Teacher Training College. Before Laos was liberated, there were teachers from England and America teaching at the Teacher Training College. The objective of English teaching and learning at the Teacher Training College was to produce students to become teachers for secondary school level. During that time, English, French, and Russian were taught at the Teacher Training College. These three foreign languages were also contained in the curriculum of the secondary school level. Some schools did not include Russian language in the curriculum. In 1984, German language was taught at the Teacher Training College and followed by Spanish.

The Teacher Training College became the National University of Laos in 1996. For the curriculum of English teaching and learning at the Teacher Training College mainly focused on General English, Grammar, Reading, Pronunciation, Lexicology, and Methodology. There were not many students, about 25 students, in each class. However, there were some problems in English teaching and learning such as the lack of teaching facilities. Only tape recorders were used for listening. There were not any computers and internet access. When the Teacher Training College was changed to the National University of Laos in 1996, some organizations handed in to support.⁶

A Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology (Former Head of Russian Language Department), a Former Teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools, and a former Head of Teacher Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports said that, at the beginning, the

⁵ An interview with a Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, on January 31, 2014, at the office of Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital.

⁶ An interview with a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, on January 30, 2014, at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

Teacher Training College was divided into 4 divisions: Mathematics-Physics, Chemistry-Biology, Geology-History, and Literature-Linguistics division. As for literature section, it was called, “Literature and Russian”. It means that year one students studied together. In year two and three upward, students were divided to study their own majors. Because of high demand of Russian learning during that time and Laos also had a good relation with the Soviet Union; Russian language was therefore put in a separate section in 1977. At first, there were only 5 excellent students selected to teach and work in the Literature and Russian department which was later called, Linguistics-Russian-Literature Department. Students studied all subjects with a few hours a week. There were only 5 students were selected to study Russian specifically. When it was divided to be a class of Russian specifically, students had to study all day in the morning, afternoon, and evening session of an extensive course in the conditions that they studied only two years. After finishing the course, students would get a Bachelor degree.

In 1977, the Viengxay Teacher Training College in Viengxay district, Nakhao campus and the Vientiane Teacher Training College in Vientiane were combined together to be one Teacher Training College in Vientiane. It was opened officially in the same year. This time the numbers of students increased because it was situated in the center of Vientiane Capital. This time the new Teacher Training College opened bigger classes than usual. Some experts were invited from Vietnam.⁷

One informant is the first founder of the Teacher Training College and started teaching in 1977. It is revealed that students had a training program in Russia at the end of the course. They went to Russia for one year for training. In the academic year 1979-1980, about 20 students of the first class who studied Russian language graduated. Some of them were sent to Russia for training because their Russian knowledge was still poor. Consequently, in the academic year 1980-1981, they were

⁷ Interviews with a Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology (Former Head of Russian Language Department), on January 24, 2014, at the office of Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology, Vientiane Capital; an Interview with (retired staff), a Former Teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools, and a former Head of Teacher Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports on January 29, 2014. Dongdok Campus, Vientiane Capital.

sent to study for Master Degree for a year at the Russian language Institute in the Soviet Union. The graduation of the Master Degree in Russian called, “Margit”. After they finished training, they were sent back to Laos. Some excellent students were selected to be teachers to replace the Russian experts.

At the beginning, the Russian language was one department of the college and offering Bachelor Degree. After that, it was separated apart from other departments. As for English language, it was less important. At that time Russian was taught for 8 hours a day, the same as Mathematics. Department of Foreign Language was established to produce teachers. Students had to take other subjects like Philosophy, Social Science, Politics and Economics but they were taught in Lao Language by Lao teachers from other departments of the college. After having finished this course, students would get a diploma or Bachelor degree. They could work as Russian language teachers.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, many projects were withdrawn from Laos. The Lao government launched the open-door policy to cooperate with the outside world. Finally, Russian language was not included in the Secondary School level curriculum any longer. And nowadays, it is just only a small division at the National University of Laos.

2.1.4. English was introduced into the curriculum of secondary school.

According to a brochure⁸ of the French Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, mentioned that, after the National University of Laos was established in 1996, the French Division was a part of the Faculty of Languages-Literature-Humanities. In 2000, the Faculty of Languages-Literature-Humanities was separated into 2 faculties: Faculty of Letters and Faculty of Social Science. The French Department has belonged to the Faculty of Letters until now. The French Department offers a bachelor degree in French language. After graduation, students could work in public, private or international organization. For students who want to

⁸ A brochure of the French Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

be teachers of French language in lower and upper secondary schools around the country, they have to study more courses at the Faculty of Pedagogy.

A Vice Rector of the National University of Laos; a Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology. (Former Head of Russian Language Department); a Former Teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools; a former Head of Teacher Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports, and a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos,⁹ stated that, in 1986, the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) supported many projects in Laos and there were many volunteers from the UNESCO. Some projects were supported by America and Australia. Since then, the Teacher Training College began to have teaching tools for English language such as tape recorders. Since then, the development of English has developed English language teaching and learning step by step until now. After the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, many Lao students did not go to study in the Soviet Union. The Lao government had a new policy called “New Way of Thinking”. There were many students applying to study English language. Because of high demand in English language, the Ministry of Education assigned the Faculty of Letters of the National University of Laos to develop English teaching and learning. In order to serve the need of English teaching and learning at the National University of Laos, the Faculty of Letters of the National University of Laos offered a Bachelor of Arts in Special English Program for students who wanted to study in the afternoon session. Students applying for Special English Program had to pay money for tuition fee, except government scholarship students. After students who received the government scholarship graduate, they had to serve the government as teachers or did other works related to education. They did not have to find a job by themselves.

⁹ Interviews with a Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, on January 31, 2014, at the office of Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital.; an interview with Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology. (Former Head of Russian Language Department), on January 24, 2014, at the office of Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology, Vientiane Capital; an interview with (retired staff), a Former Teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools, and a former Head of Teacher Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports, on January 29, 2014, in Dongdok Campus, Vientiane Capital; and an interview with a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, on January 30, 2014, at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

According to a vice dean¹⁰ of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos stated that, due to the Lao government's policy of New Way of Thinking, it means that the government opened the country to the world and English language becomes an important language attracting many Lao students' interest. English language has gained more popularity than other foreign languages in Laos. The Faculty of Letters, the National University of Laos decided to establish another Bachelor of Arts in Special English Program for the evening session program in 1997 to serve the increasing demand of learners. A reason why many students want to study English is that almost job vacancies in PDR require applicants to have knowledge of English language, good demand of English, and computer skills. Therefore, there are many students of other faculties in the National University of Laos also enroll to study English at the Faculty of Letters. Besides their technical subjects, students also study English language in order that they would get a good job.

In 2013, the Ministry of Education did not allow the National University of Laos to establish Special English Program because of quality control policy. Because of this reason, a lot of students have to study two faculties at the same time. The quality of their English cannot be guaranteed. They have problems in applying jobs because of their poor English. Nowadays, there is only English teaching and learning in Normal English Program. Most students study English for many reasons. One main reason is for finding good jobs. Another reason is to apply for scholarships. There are many foreign scholarships around the world are available such as AUS Aids (Australian Scholarship), New Zealand Scholarship, Fulbright Scholarship, and JDS (Japan Development Scholarship). Students must pass the standard scores of the IELTS, TOEFL before applying for scholarship or studying abroad.

According to an interview a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, stated that, there are two English Departments in the Teacher Training College. The first one is English Department at the Faculty of Letters with a main purpose to train students to work as translators or interpreters in offices, companies and organizations. And the second one is English Department at the

¹⁰ An interview with a vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, on January 30, 2014, at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

Faculty of Education for training students to be teachers at the secondary school level. Nowadays, the Department of English, Faculty of Letters, has foreign teachers from an ELI project (English Language Institute) to teach English.

English is used as a means for research and communication with the outside world. Consequently, Department of English is playing an important role in developing human resource of the Lao PDR. Now the Department of English Language, Faculty of Letters, has English teachers with Master and Ph.D. Degree. However, there is a few Linguists in the English Department and there are not any native speakers. There is also a lack of budget and facilities to support the English teaching.

At the present, the Ministry of Education and Sports of Laos has a new policy in containing the English language into the curriculum in the Normal School from the third grades of primary school level to upper secondary school level. However, there are still many difficulties in English teaching and learning. Nowadays, the popularity of French language is less than English language because the English language is a global language. In short, after Chintanakan Mai (New Way of Thinking) in 1986, English education has been contained in the curriculum of Lao Educational System from the secondary school to the university level. Due to the fact that English is an international and official language to communicate between ASEAN member countries, the Lao government reformed and promoted English teaching and learning as a part of the preparation for the ASEAN community in 2015.

2.1.5. Teaching of other foreign languages in Laos.

Apart from English, French and Russian, other foreign languages taught in Laos include German. The Department of German Language was established in 1981, and German was taught in the National University of Laos for a period of time. Then, It was taught as a second language from 1993 to 2002. From 2003 to present, a Bachelor of Arts in German language is offered with the period of study between 24 and 30 hours a week. After the year 2000, other languages have been introduced into

the Lao PDR. For example, at the National University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, there following foreign languages are taught:

1. Vietnamese Language (since October 23, 2003)
2. Chinese Language (since the academic year 2003-2004)
3. Japanese Language (since the academic year 2003-2004)
4. Korean language in Laos (since the academic year 2004- 2005)
5. Spanish language (since the academic year 2012)



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Figure 2.1 Faculty of Letters, Department of English



Figure 2.2 Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos

Table: A summary of history foreign language education in Laos

No	Periods	Foreign languages
1	1893	French
2	1955	English
3	1977	Russian
4	1981	German
5	2003	Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese
6	2004	Korean
7	2012	Spanish

After France's colonization of Laos in 1893, French was used as a vehicle in teaching and learning in all school levels during that time until 1955. After that, when America replaced the French colony in 1955, English was adopted to teach in the

curriculum of schools established by Americans. With Lao's independence in 1975, English and French were still taught in Vientiane Teachers Training College (National University of Laos at present). After Lao 1975, It seems that French and English were less important than Russian. The Russian played a key role in Lao societies when it first came, during that time there were many Lao people sent to study in Soviet Union because it was a revolutionary language that came with a full support of the Soviet Union. It was taught in secondary school levels for a period of time and ended after the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991. During the period of Russian teaching and learning, German was brought in to teach at the the Vientiane Teachers Training College with the German Democratic Republic's support in establishing a building for the Vientiane Teacher Training College in Dongdok campus. In 1996, the Vientiane Teachers Training College was changed to be the National University of Laos. and after that, there were other foreign languages brought to teach at the National University of Laos in 2003 namely Vietnamese, Chinese, and Japanese. In 2004, Korean was taught and in 2012, Spanish was also taught officially in the faculty of Letters, National University of Laos. The foreign languages mentioned above are still remained kept as an individual department and taught at the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos until today. However, there was only English which is the number one language and French that is number two language that were taught in the Normal Schools.

2.2. Policy of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR.

There is limited source on the situation of English teaching in Lao PDR. Therefore, in order to gain insight information, this thesis is based on interview with policy makers, those who work in teaching institutions and students as shown below:

- 1) 3 policy makers of the Ministry of Education and Sports as follow:
 - 1.1) A head of the Department of Teacher Training on March 4, 2014;
 - 1.2) A deputy Director of the Institute of Science Research, on March 28, 2014;
 - 1.3) A head of Department of Planning, interviewed on March 13, 2014.

- 2) 4 university leaders as follow:
 - 2.1) A head of the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, National University of Lao on March 7, 2014;
 - 2.2) An Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos on February 21, 2014;
 - 2.3) A Rector of the Champasack University of Laos on February 28, 2014;
 - 2.4) A Director of Sahakitsamphan College, Higher Diploma of English on January 22, 2014.
- 3) 14 university teachers as follow:
 - 3.1) 02 teachers of the private Sahakitsamphan College were interviewed on 21 February 21, 2014; at the private Sahakitsamphan College, Vientiane Capital.
 - 3.2) 03 teachers of the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department were interviewed on January 29, 2014, at the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department, Vientiane Capital;
 - 3.3) 05 teachers of the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department, were interviewed from 25th to 28th of February, 2014, at the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department in Luangprabang province;
 - 3.4) 04 teachers of the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education English Department were interviewed on February 28, 2014, at the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department, Champasak province.

2.2.1. The situation and policy of English teaching and learning in Lao

PDR

Head of the Department of Teacher Training and an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos¹¹, stated that, After Laos was liberated in 1975, the Lao government improved the educational system. The Lao government had launched a policy in promoting English teaching and learning, but at the beginning it is not spread widely. This is because the role of English language during that time was still not important. The popularity of English was not widely seen in Lao society. Later on, the Lao government developed and spread English language widely throughout the country to provide opportunities for Lao students to learn English. The Ministry of Education and Sports reforms Lao educational system and the government considered that education is the most important sector to develop the country. The Lao government also supports English teaching and learning in Lao PDR strongly by allowing the private sectors to establish English schools, colleges, universities, centers and institutes to improve Lao students' English skills because English language is a key to becoming internationalized. Therefore, modern Lao society people are keen to learn English for many different purposes such as to find good jobs, further study, communicate with foreigners for trading, tourism, etc. According to an interview a head of the Teacher Training Department, Ministry of Education and Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos, the majority of Lao students learn English, but they do not use it or to get benefit from it because most of students learning English because they see it as a trend. It shows obviously that students who graduated from universities or other English institutes cannot speak English or do not know English well. They study English, but are not good at English.

A head of the Department of Teacher Training; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Science; and a head of Department of

¹¹ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education on March 4, 2014, and an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos, on February 21, 2014.

Planning¹² said that, English learning and teaching took place in only schools in big cities where there are English teachers and it was contained in the curriculum of learning and teaching from secondary school level to the university levels. Since Laos became a member of ASEAN countries in 1997, English has become the important language in the whole Lao country because it is not only an international language, but also an official language used in negotiating between members of ASEAN countries. The fact that there were many foreign organizations; companies come to invest in Lao PDR encourage Lao people to see the importance of the English and prefer to learn English rather than other foreign languages in order to find good jobs. Moreover, Lao will enter the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 that is a big challenge of the Lao PDR in preparing the readiness in English for the AEC. The majority of Lao people or students are poor in English; therefore, Lao PDR will face problems in working with the members of ASEAN countries after entering the AEC. In preparing for AEC, Lao PDR has to have enough qualified human resources with English knowledge in order to negotiate, communicate with foreigners. Because of the importance of English language, the Lao government and the Ministry of Education and Sports has a policy for improving the quality of English in the education by containing English into the curriculum of primary schools.

The policy makers of the Ministry of Education and Sports stated that, “In 2009, the Ministry of Education and Sports had a new policy on English teaching and learning in Lao PDR, English was put into the curriculum from the third grade of primary level to university level. The target is to make Lao students who finish upper secondary schools can communicate in basic of English language or can continue their learning in college or university levels in the next step”.

A Head of the Department of Teacher Training; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute of Education Science; and a head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports¹³, said that, The policy makers of the

¹² Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Science, Ministry of Education and Sports on March 28, 2014; and a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports on March 13, 2014.

¹³ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute of Education Science, Ministry of Education

Ministry of Education and Sports stated that, even though, the Lao government launched the policy of English teaching and learning in the curriculum from the third grade of primary school level to upper secondary school, the situations of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR at the present is still facing difficulties, especially in the primary level. For instance, there is problem in the supplying of teaching materials, and teachers who teach English still have problems because the teachers who teach in primary schools studied in the Teachers Training Schools' curriculum that did not contain English subject. Therefore, the majority of schools in rural areas, where there are not any teachers, cannot manage to have English teaching and learning, especially, in primary and secondary school levels, but some can organize to have the English teaching and learning.

Two policy makers ¹⁴ of the Ministry of Education and Sports concluded that at the beginning stage of the new policy, the Ministry of Education and Sports, Department of Teachers Training still cannot support teachers who would teach English at the primary level yet. It means that we do not have enough teachers because according to the new policy of English language teaching and learning, all teachers who will teach at the primary level must have abilities in teaching all subjects in the curriculum by themselves. But in the past, English was not contained to teach in the curriculum of the Teacher Training Colleges, therefore, teachers who graduated from the Teachers Training Colleges, did not study English at all. This is the reason why they cannot teach English. Because of this problem, even though the Ministry of Education and Sports will have new policy of English teaching and learning in the primary levels, we cannot manage to have the English teaching and learning entirely, especially, in rural, remote, and isolated areas where there are still no English teaching and learning in many schools until now. And nowadays, there is only 10% to 20% of the English teaching and learning that can be managed to teach in the primary levels.

and Sports, on March 28, 2014); and a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 13, 2014.

¹⁴ An interview with a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 13, 2014, a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 13, 2014.

Trying to solve this problem, the school directors of some schools first manage to have English teaching by allowing teachers who used to study or have knowledge of English to teach English in schools even though most of them are not trained for the English curriculum or graduate from English institutes. Secondly, some directors rely on the nearest secondary teachers because those primary schools are located near the secondary schools. English teachers from these secondary schools help teach English at the primary school levels. The most important thing for English learning and teaching is that, teachers must have good quality. If teachers are poor in English, it is certainly that students will be very poor. Therefore, some schools lacking of English teachers used other subjects instead of English. Teachers who do not know English and also do not study English teaching methods, techniques how to transfer knowledge to students cannot ensure the quality of the English teaching and learning.

A lot of Lao students are still unable to access to English education entirely; especially students who live in rural, remote areas will have problems in learning English because there were no English teachers. Although, English will be contained to teach in the curriculum of education in Lao PDR for years, but it still has not had a unity yet because some schools can manage to have English teaching and learning, some cannot, and some schools contain French mix with English in the curriculum. English teaching and learning is managed to teach specifically in schools in big cities and some schools where there are convenient conditions. All policy makers and University Directors¹⁵ said that the education in big cities have more progress than the education in rural areas. Even though the Lao government will expand the education widely to the rural areas, it cannot be done entirely.

¹⁵ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Science, Ministry of Education and Sports on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 13, 2014, a Head of the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, National University of Laos, on March 7, 2014; an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos, on February 21, 2014; a Rector of the Champasack University of Laos, on February 28, 2014; and a Director of Sahakitsamphan College, Higher Diploma of English, on January 22, 2014.

A Deputy Director¹⁶ of the National Research Institute for Education Science, Ministry of Education and Sports' stated that, for private schools, they have good conditions and can afford in hiring English teachers or even foreign teachers with good English to teach. It is of course the private schools' fees are more expensive than the government schools. In term of the quality of English knowledge, students prefer to study at the private schools where there are foreign teachers or native speakers because students want to practice English skills. However, for poor students whose parents cannot support them in learning, they are unable to study at the famous institutes. If we compare students' English skills of the government schools and students of the private schools, it shows clearly that, students' English skills of the private schools are far better than those in the government schools'. It we compare students' English skills in big cities with students' English skills in rural areas, it has a big difference because students in big cities can have enough money and also have good conditions in choosing to study at the English Institutes that they think it is the best for them. Meanwhile, students in rural areas cannot afford in spending money to study in big cities and also there is a lack of good English Institutes, or schools in their areas. Besides, English is not fully taught to follow the curriculum of English teaching and learning because students have limit time in learning. As a result, students are poor in English skills.

The Ministry of Education and Sports, Department of Teachers Training also has the English curriculum for the primary teachers including kindergarten teachers in order to help them improve capacities in teaching English at the primary and kindergarten levels. This is the total policy of the Department of Teachers Training (Ministry of Education and Sports) to supply English teachers for the normal schools.

In short, although the Lao government or the Ministry of Education and Sports have had policy for English teaching and learning at the secondary levels for many years, the English teaching and learning is not performed adequately the same as in the primary school levels. The Department of Teachers Training, the Ministry of Education and Sports cannot achieve its target to supply enough teachers to teach

¹⁶ An interview with a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Science, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 28, 2014.

English at the lower, upper secondary, primary, and kindergarten school levels. Even though, the Ministry of Education and Sports is trying to produce teachers to teach English at lower, upper secondary schools, but there is still the lack of English teachers of kindergarten, primary, secondary to teach students, especially in the rural and remote areas.

According to an interview a deputy director of the Institute of Educational Science Research, Ministry of Education and Sports said that, the policy of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR was not developed. English language subject was considered as an unimportant language because it was not the subject that students have to take for leaving examination and entrance examination to continue their studying at the university level. Therefore, most of school teachers emphasized only the subjects that students had to take for entrance examination such as Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and so on. Some school teachers used the timetable of English teaching subject to teach other necessary subjects in order to assist their students to pass the entrance examination to continue to study at the National University of Laos. This practice was performed for several years until the time member when Lao PDR became a member of Asian countries in 1997. Before Lao became a member of ASEAN countries, the National Education System of the Lao PDR was reformed two times and English was not emphasized in the curriculum. For example, in the reform from the year 1975 to 1994; English subject was not contained into the curriculum of Lao educational system. After 1994 it was contained in the curriculum to teach from the first year at lower secondary school to upper secondary school level only three hours a week.

A head¹⁷ of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, stated that, the Lao government began to pay attention to English education in Lao PDR. Therefore, the Lao government has policy to develop English education widely in order to make Lao people have knowledge of English language equivalent to international standards. There are a lot of private and government schools as well as colleges were established everywhere in the countries. Moreover, the Lao government

¹⁷ An interview with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, on March 4, 2014.

launched a policy to develop economics and cooperation with foreign countries to attract them come to invest in educational sectors, especially English language by allowing foreigners to establish English schools, universities, institutes or centers in Lao PDR.

A head¹⁸ of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, stated that, actually, the policy of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR was set clearly, but in the real practice, it still does not meet the needs of English teaching and learning. According to the policy of the Lao government and the Ministry of Education and Sports, it is required all people have a chances to study English, and all teachers have to know English. Teachers not only have to know English, but also can communicate well with foreigners. It is hoped when Lao PDR will integrate into the ASEAN Economic Community, teachers must be able communicate in English. English language is used as an official language between members of Asian countries. Therefore the policy on teaching English was reformed again after year

A head¹⁹ of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, stated that, Lao teachers also have exchange program for knowledge and lessons, and teaching experiences with teachers from other ASEAN countries members each year. However, there are teachers who are excellent in teaching and have teaching experiences for many years but are not selected to take part in the exchange program because they do not know English. Some teachers have teaching experience more than 10 or 20 years old, but they cannot exchange the experiences with foreigners. The Lao government has scholarships to send them to exchange experiences, train or upgrade their knowledge, and go further study to obtain knowledge from foreign countries to develop the country in the future. But they cannot go because they do not know English and cannot communicate in English with foreigners.

¹⁸ An interview with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, on March 4, 2014.

¹⁹ An interview with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, on March 4, 2014.

A head²⁰ of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, stated that, Lao people also have to know English because the English is used as an official language to communicate between ASEAN member countries. Therefore, the government invited foreign teachers and experts come to teach and train Lao government officials, teachers selected from every university and organization for short terms such as 3 months or 6 months. This is to help Lao government officials and teachers have better English knowledge and skills to communicate in English language with foreigners. If Lao people do not know English language, it will hard for Lao people to be able to relate, negotiate, exchange culture, education, workforce, etc with the ASEAN members countries. Lao education will not be able to link to the ASEAN countries' education, for example if Lao students finish secondary schools in Lao PDR, they will not be able to continue their learning in other ASEAN countries because they are poor in English.

A Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Science²¹ stated that, there is a big gap of Lao people's English knowledge comparing to other members countries. Hence, the Lao government reformed its policy in English teaching again in year 2009. After that, English language was considered as a compulsory course which was taught from the third grades of primary school level to the upper secondary school level three hours a week in order to increase the efficiency of English in the education system and to prepare for the AEC. This is a long term plan of the Lao government in improving the qualities of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR. Nowadays, the Lao government advises to use a new form of teaching. From the year 2015 to 2016, the new curriculum will be taught at the first year of three years course of upper secondary school. New textbooks will be used to teach from year 2016 to 2017.

All policy makers and university directors²² stated that, Lao government pays attention to promote English teaching and learning with the hope that when students

²⁰ An interview with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, on March 4, 2014.

²¹ An interviews with a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Science, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 28, 2014.

²² Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, interviewed on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the Institute of Science Research, Ministry of Education and

finish upper secondary school, they will be able to communicate in English language and use it in applying to continue their studying. And teachers who graduated from universities or Teachers Training Colleges must have knowledge of English and be able to communicate with foreigners in English. This is the overall policy but there are many problems in real practice. Nowadays, for the administration of English teaching and learning still has not met the policy set by the Ministry of Education and Sports in Lao PDR yet. For example, some schools have not followed the curriculum. There is no unity or similar standard in the whole country. There is lack of teachers and poor basic infrastructures, namely lack of school buildings, teaching facilities, libraries, materials, and textbooks to serve the needs of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR.

A head ²³ of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014 stated that, from now on it is required that graduated teachers will be guaranteed about the quality of English. A standard of teachers has been set. This is also a policy framework. For students, it is planned that the government will manage to have entrance examination for students who graduated from upper secondary schools in order to obtain students who have English knowledge with standard level which is set in the curriculum. When the Ministry of Education and Sports supply enough teachers, enough conditions in teaching and learning management, it is certainly that the quality of students will be improved increasingly.

A rector ²⁴ of the Champasack University of Laos said that, the policy of Lao government in promoting English teaching and learning in Lao PDR is good. However, in real practice, it is not performed well; especially most schools in isolated areas have no English teaching and learning. In contrast, in big cities students can

Sports interviewed on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, interviewed on March 13, 2014; a Head of the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, National University of Laos, interviewed on March 7, 2014; an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos interviewed on February 21, 2014; a Rector of the Champasack University of Laos, interviewed on February 28, 2014; a Director of Sahakitsamphan College, Higher Diploma of English, interviewed on January 22, 2014.

²³ An interview with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education), on March 4, 2014.

²⁴ An Interview with a Rector of the Champasack University of Laos, on February 28, 2014.

learn English from the primary levels and also have extra tuition in their free time. Therefore, the levels of English knowledge of students in rural areas and students in big cities are different obviously. Students in rural areas cannot access to the English lessons since the early ages due to lack of English teachers. These will affect the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR. Besides, the Lao government has policy in sending teachers and staffs to improve their English in foreign countries, but it is not performed widely and firmly especially in provincial level. This is because there are not many teachers and staffs sent to continue to upgrades in foreign countries, only one or a few teachers and staffs joining the program. Normally, all official staffs and teachers have to take training English in order to have knowledge in English language to cooperate with other works.

All policy makers and university directors²⁵ mentioned that, according to the statistics every year there are many Laos students graduate from the Teachers Training Colleges from all over country, but some of them choose not be teachers. The Ministry of Education and Sports should make contract with them and send them to help teach students in rural areas where there are many students need to learn English. If the government would like to produce human resource in the future, this will help fulfill the government plan. Lao government should spend enough budgets to build school buildings in isolated areas and provide enough modern teaching facilities, and equipment. However, the teachers who teach English is the most important factor because if there are not any English teachers, the English teaching and learning will not happen. If the government will mainly focus on producing human resource in only big cities or town, it is not enough to serve the demands of English learning and teaching in the future. Laos will enter into the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015; it is big challenge for Laos to work with the members

²⁵ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Science, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 13, 2014; a Head of the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, National University of Laos, on March 7, 2014; an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos, on February 21, 2014; a Rector of the Champasack University of Laos, on February 28, 2014; a University Director of Sahakitsamphan College, Higher Diploma of English on January 22, 2014.

of ASEAN countries if Laos has not enough qualified human resource in English knowledge.

According to an interview with a head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014 stated that, according to a decree and an agreement of the Ministry of Education and Sports, both government and private school in the Lao PDR have to follow the same curriculum compositions. Vocational education and all levels of normal educational have to follow the same curriculum composed by the National Education Curriculum of the Ministry of Education and Sports. In the past, the Ministry of Education and Sports had the Private Education Department to monitor and evaluate the private schools in Lao PDR, but nowadays there is not the Private Education Department. Hence, the private and government schools use the same curriculum and follow the policy of the Ministry of Education and Sports. However, the quality of English teaching and learning is still different because it depends on the teachers, findings teachers, and conditions of each school. Some schools arrange to have entrance examination to measure learners' levels but some do not. The performing of English teaching and learning are quite different because private schools spend more time for English teaching and learning than government schools. Some private schools are able to hire native English teachers to teach while the government schools have only Lao teachers. Therefore, the qualities of English teaching and learning between the private and the government schools are different. Students who graduated from the private schools will be better at English than students who graduated from the government schools.

At the university level, they will have committees for developing their curriculum. The majority of state universities will compile materials from foreign textbooks or use foreign textbooks directly the same as private universities. It shows that English teaching and learning in university level is set to meet the purposes and targets of each university. Each private university will use different textbooks, but for foreign private universities, they will select textbooks that they think will make

students be able to learn English quickly and effectively. An Acting Dean²⁶ of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos, said that, besides, the teaching's wages of private schools' teachers are higher than the government schools and the salary of teachers is also higher than the government teacher. For example the government universities' wages is about 15,000 kip per hour, but for the private colleges is about 25.000 kip per hour. Therefore, the majority of government teachers like to go to teach at the private colleges if they can. It can be noticed that almost teachers who teach at the private schools or colleges are teachers from government universities. They are invited to teach at private schools in the evening session. Some private schools or colleges borrowed diplomas and qualifications of government teachers. Because of this problem, the Ministry of Education and Sports had an agreement to suspend private colleges' teaching and learning at the bachelor degree. It means that, the private colleges are not allowed to receive new students at the bachelor degree. For the teaching and learning in the evening session of the government universities are also suspended because the wages of morning and evening session of the government universities are different, and most of teachers would like to teach only in the evening session.

2.2.2. Policy of English language curriculum for grade 3, 4 and 5 of primary schools in Lao PDR.

The policy²⁷ of English teaching and learning for grade 3, 4, and 5 of primary schools in Laos, Institute of Educational Science Research, Ministry of Education and Sports (2010:168-182) stated that, since the academic year 2008-2009, new English text books and handbooks of primary schools around the country were used in teaching and learning by performing according to the order of the Ministry of Education and Sports about announcement of using textbooks and handbooks for grade 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 in order of primary level. Those textbooks and handbooks were edited following the new edited curriculum. Therefore, in order to guarantee in

²⁶ Interviews with an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos, on February 21, 2014.

²⁷ A curriculum policy of English teaching and learning for grade 3, 4, and 5 of primary schools in Laos, Institute of Educational Science Research, Ministry of Education and Sports (2010:168-182)

making lesson plans, making local curriculum, evaluation, technical management and so on of the teachers and educational administrators by matching according to the situations of each area. Hence, Ministry of Education issued this curriculum of primary level to use in the whole country.

The policy²⁸ of English teaching and learning for grade 3, 4, and 5 of primary schools in Laos, Institute of Educational Science Research, Ministry of Education and Sports (2010:168-182) stated that Since 1986 Lao government has implemented the open policy, henceforth English language has played a major part in social life of people across the country. In addition, the increase in the ASEAN and international relationships and the dynamic change of the world economy require the knowledge of foreign language especially English language to communicate among nations in the world. Furthermore, teaching and learning materials and other sources of information are written in English language, therefore the need of foreign language skills is indeed necessary for further development of the nation.

Due to the major needs of English language knowledge, the Lao government has a further vision to put English language curriculum into primary education. The curriculum aims to develop learners' basic writing, reading, listening and speaking. It also develops the foundation of foreign language knowledge of learners for their future studies in secondary schools and higher education.

English language in the primary school curriculum provides the first step in learning a foreign language. The learners are introduced to English alphabet, simple speaking for greetings, making conversations and giving and getting simple information, the learners are able to read simple signs, labels and statements. The learners are able to read simple signs, labels and statements. The learners are also able to listen to simple conversations and information. The learners are able to write simple sentences about their own information and daily life.

If we compare policy of English language teaching and learning of the Lao government in the past and nowadays is different because in the past, the English was

²⁸ A curriculum policy of English teaching and learning for grade 3, 4, and 5 of primary schools in Laos, Institute of Educational Science Research, Ministry of Education and Sports (2010:168-182)

less important than other foreign languages such as French and Russian. But nowadays, English language was focused, it is obviously showed that the Lao government has always paid attention in promoting English teaching and learning since Lao PDR became a member of ASEAN countries in 1997 because of the important roles of the English language which used as an official and working language between ASEAN members. Therefore, in order to prepare the readiness for the AEC (ASEAN Economic Community) in 2015, the Lao government had policy in containing English language into the curriculum of teaching and learning from the third grades of primary school level to the upper secondary school level in 2009 in order to teach Lao students to have English skills, and English proficiency in communication. (A curriculum policy of English teaching and learning of the third grades of primary school level can be seen in an appendix: 1)

2.2.3. Policy of English Language Curriculum for Lower and Upper Secondary Schools.

English is required for 99 hours/year (3 hours/week x 33 weeks = 99 hours/year) for lower and upper secondary schools.

The policy²⁹ of English teaching and learning for Lower Secondary Schools (2010:162-186) and for Upper Secondary School (2011:149-231) in Laos, Institute of Educational Science Research, Ministry of Education and Sports stated that, as the interaction among countries is increasing in the world, interdependence among countries is deepening. As a result, along with international competition, international cooperation is becoming more important. Due to the development of information technology, a move towards a knowledge and information-based society requires all components of society, from individuals to government policies, to be able to understand and communicate knowledge and information.

English, being the most widely used language, is playing an important role in the communication and bonding between people of different cultures and languages.

²⁹ The policy of English teaching and learning for Lower Secondary Schools (2010:162-186) and for Upper Secondary School (2011:149-231) in Laos, Institute of Educational Science Research, Ministry of Education and Sports

For secondary school students who have to survive in the highly competitive world in the future, the ability to communicate in English is an essential skill that they have to learn at school. To contribute to the nation and the society, the ability to understand and use English is essential. The ability to communicate in English will act as an important bridge connecting different countries, and will be the driving force in developing our country, forming trust among various countries and cultures in the world.

The English at secondary schools, the interest that students have developed in English since primary school should be continually encouraged, while developing the basic ability to communicate in English. At the same time, students should be exposed to a variety of educational experiences which can develop their fluency and accuracy. Fostering the ability to communicate in English is an important goal of English education. However, humanism is also important, so the lessons should help students to cultivate a sound morality to become a good citizen. Also, proper understanding of foreign cultures, an international appreciation, and a cooperative spirit as a civilized citizen should be developed. Henceforth, the Lower and Upper Secondary School Curriculums are intentionally produced to meet the requirement of the Lao society and highly competitive world economy. (A curriculum policy of English teaching and learning of Lower and Upper Secondary School can be seen in an appendix: 2 and 3)

2.2.4. English Curriculum of Bachelor of Arts in English Programme at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

The English Curriculum³⁰ of Bachelor of Arts in English Programme, English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, Ministry of Education and Sports (2013:81-120) stated that, In this study, the curriculum of English teaching in National University of Laos, Bachelor of Arts in English Program, will be provided as an example.

A. Philosophy and objectives.

a. Philosophy:

³⁰ A curriculum of Bachelor of Arts in English Programme, English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, Ministry of Education and Sports (2013:81-120)

In order to succeed the target of National Socio-Economic Development Strategy of the Lao government from now until year 2020 and to build the nation become prosperity and modernization, every sector has to prepare the readiness in building basic infrastructure, human resource development oneself to be having the quality in management-administration, technique, socio-economic and educational management-administration to be better permanent, improve the used textbook-curriculum, make the new curriculum in quality and concerned with the national socio-economic development plan in each period.

In order to serve the need of the socio-economic, labour market and the need of communication in researching, teaching-learning, tourism, and running other business. Therefore, the English department, Faculty of Arts, National University of Laos makes the curriculum of the four year Bachelor majoring in English language to serve those situations in the future. Due to the English language is one of many components which are able to help succeed the national socio-economic development plan of the government; because of the English language is one of the most important foreign languages in the movement of development the nation. Especially, in educational movement because it is an important vehicle for the teachers and students in researching to bring technical sciences, progress technique from the foreign countries to develop the economy in Lao PDR.

Therefore, the philosophy of the English curriculum is the technical curriculum in a Bachelor level in the National University of Laos. There is the bodied science and concerned with the new changes of the Lao party, and good teaching-learning system which can be accepted of the general society and near the international standard. (A curriculum policy of English teaching and learning of the National University of Laos can be seen in an appendix: 4)

This is a good chance for Lao students will access to the English education since the early young ages due to the Lao government the same as the Ministry of Education and Sports included English subject into the curriculum of Lao educational system from the third grades of primary schools to the university levels. However, at the beginning of performing this policy, it will still have many difficulties because of

Lao PDR still lack of many primary school teachers who will teach English, according to the policy makers of the Ministry of Education and Sports said that, “Lao PDR, has teachers who are able to teach at the primary school level just only 30 percent.”³¹ Therefore, the English teaching and learning will still not have unity around the country yet. Not only in rural areas still lack of primary school teachers to teach students at the primary levels, but also in provincial areas. The reasons that primary school level lack of teachers because of the Ministry of Education and Sports did not include English language in the teachers’ training program at the Teachers Training Colleges before the policy of including English into the curriculum of the third grades of primary school levels was started. Therefore, after having the policy, the preparation still does not serve the demands of English teaching and learning at the primary school levels. Besides, the English subject was contained to teach in the curriculum of primary school levels a few hours a week will still have problem, and also does not match with the levels of students because students have started to learn from the third grades. Before the third grade, they do not learn any English language; therefore, they will have no basic of English when they come up to study at the third grades.

Moreover, the level of primary English textbooks is different from the level of secondary English textbooks. Of course, it will have problems when they finish primary school and continue to study at the secondary school level because both textbooks levels (primary and secondary schools) are different because secondary level English textbooks were compiled and edited by foreign experts. Students have to try to adapt themselves to study at the secondary school levels. In addition, the time of English teaching and learning in the curriculum of all levels in Lao PDR is not enough for students due to the fact that they just only study a few hours a week. Normally, if the Ministry of Education and Sports needs Lao students learn English effectively, the time of learning should be increased. If having limited time, learning by using modern teaching aids, or do other diverse activities will have low quality.

³¹ Interviews with policy maker: 2 (a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Science, Ministry of Education and Sports), on March 28, 2014.

The English textbooks of secondary schools are not suitable with the level of students and also do not link with the textbooks of the university levels. Because the majority of universities in Lao PDR will use the English textbooks written by the native speakers from foreign countries such as General English, Headways, English for Business. Therefore, the English textbooks of the secondary school levels do not link with what is taught in the universities. Besides, the curriculum of English teaching and learning in the secondary school level do not focus on improving students speaking skills. Thus, students will not have opportunities to practice speaking. This will affect their speaking skill.

For the textbooks of the university levels, they mainly focus on subjects in academic writing and grammar. There are not many English textbooks for speaking is not much and apparently lacking of English textbook for specific technical work such as English for Accounting, Banking, and Finance. Therefore, when students graduate from universities and it is still difficult for them to find jobs in the companies or state organizations. They are not able to speak English well.

Chapter 3

Problems and Factors

This chapter will first identify the problems of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR from document research, field observation and interviews with policy makers from different departments of the Ministry of Education and Sports, and interviews university directors, teachers and students of different parts of Laos (North, Central, and South). Then, it will try to analyze the factors affecting English language teaching and learning in primary, secondary, and university level in Lao PDR. It is found that cultural, social, economic and infrastructural factors have an impact on the quality of English language teaching and learning. Towards the end of the chapter, possible solutions will be suggested.

3.1. Problems of English Language teaching and learning in Lao PDR

In order to identify students' problems of English learning and teaching in Lao PDR, the research analyzed data collected from the Educational Reform Strategy from 2006 to 2015 (Ministry of Education and Sports 2008:15), a report of English teacher preparation for primary school level of the Teachers Training Department, Ministry of Education and Sports (Mr. Chantdy Phommaboud 2014:4), the performance summary of Educational Development Plan of a Teachers Training Department (Ministry of Education and Sports 2013:8-9), the Department of English, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos(The Department of English 2014:7), as well as interviews from three policy makers of Ministry of Education and Sports such as a head of Teachers Training Department, a deputy director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, four university directors,

According to the interviews with three policy makers of the Ministry of Education and Sports, 4 university directors, 14 university teachers, and 50 students from four universities from three parts of Laos (North, Central, South) as follows:

1. 09 students (morning and evening session) of the Private Sahakitsamphant College were interviewed from 22nd to 27th of January, 2014 at Sahakitsamphant College, Vientiane Capital.
2. 14 students (morning and evening session) of the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department were interviewed from 27th to 31st of January, 2014, at the Foreign Language Department, Vientiane Capital.
3. 14 students (morning session) of the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department in Champasack province in the south were interviewed from 17th to 21st of February, 2014. At the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department in Champasack province.
4. 13 students(morning session) of the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department in Luangprabang province in the north were interviewed from 25th to 28th of February, 2014, at the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department in Luangprabang province.

It can be concluded that problems of English teaching and learning are related to the problems of curriculum, classroom and environment, textbooks, teachers and teaching methods, and students themselves. These are main problems not only for the Department of English, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos, but also for English teaching and learning in Lao PDR as follow:

3.1.1. Curriculum

3.1.1.1. Problems of the curriculum at the primary school level.

All the policy makers at the Ministry of Education and Sports such as Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, head of the Teachers Training Department, and head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, said that the problems of the curriculum for the primary school level can be summarized as follows:

It is a good opportunity for Lao students to study English since the early ages due to the Lao government policy to use English to teach at primary schools since 2009. However, the curriculum of the English teaching and learning at this level is not suitable with the Lao students' level because the curriculum was compiled by the National Research Institute for Education Sciences cooperated with foreigners. It is quite hard for Lao students who study English as a foreign language because they compiled English textbooks do not match with the situations and environmental conditions of Lao society. Besides, there is limited time for Laos students to learn English as a compulsory subject because there only two hours a week (33 weeks a year). If the Ministry of Education and Sports needs to produce primary Lao students with English skills, the curriculum and time of teaching have to be increased. Nowadays, there are two hours a week in the curriculum of English teaching and learning in primary levels, while three hours a week are in secondary school levels which are not enough for learning foreign languages. If students are to be good at foreign languages; students should learn at least 5 or 6 hours a week or more than 6 hours a week to be effective. Students at this level will remember English words well from doing diverse activities in schools, therefore, the time of teaching and learning in the curriculum must be appropriate the other activities led by teachers.

3.1.1.2. Problems of the curriculum of secondary school level:

Deputy Director³² of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports stated that, before the year 2009, the curriculum system (5+6)³³ was used. In 2009, the Ministry of Education and Sports reformed educational system so a new curriculum system (5+7)³⁴ was introduced. It means that in the new curriculum system (5+7), students will have to study one more year at the upper secondary school level before leaving exam. English language is a compulsory course that was included in this curriculum from the first grade of first grade of lower

³² Interviews with a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 28, 2014)

³³ An old curriculum of teaching and learning that students have to study five years at the primary school level six years at the secondary school level.

³⁴ A new curriculum of teaching and learning that Lao students have to study five years at primary school level, and seven years at the lower and upper secondary school level.

secondary school levels to the upper secondary school levels with three hours a week (33 weeks a year). However, in some schools after students pass the examination to go further study at the secondary school level; they will learn French and other foreign languages, instead of English, two hours a week, it depends on the requirements of those foreign languages in their local areas. Nowadays, there are about eight provinces that still teach French language mainly whereas the English language is not the main foreign language taught as suggested in the curriculum.

Head of the Department of Planning³⁵ proposed that, Therefore, school directors should provide teaching facilities to students to upgrade the quality of English learning and teaching in Lao PDR closer to the neighboring countries. Nevertheless, if we look at the curriculum of English teaching and learning in secondary school levels, the content is quite hard for students to learn. This is because all four English text books for secondary schools were written by the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences that cooperated with foreign countries. After the Ministry of Education and Sports reformed education a new curriculum system (5+7) was introduced in 2009. Nowadays, the Ministry of Education and Sports adapted the English curriculum by changing all four English textbooks of six years of secondary schools to be seven textbooks to teach students from grade one to seven of secondary schools. However, the problems of the curriculum of the secondary school level is quite the same as curriculum of primary school level because of the time of learning and teaching in the curriculum is limited a few hours a week which affect the students' quality of English learning low. If there is a limited time in the curriculum, it is of course, the managing to have activities in the classes will not be effective, students will not gain shortage knowledge from learning, and they will have not enough time to do activities to practice English skill.

3.1.1.3. Problems of curriculum of the university level.

³⁵ Interviews with a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 13, 2014.

An Acting Dean³⁶ of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos According to the principles of the Ministry of Education and Sports, every school, university or college, not only government schools, but also private schools, have to propose their English curriculum to the Ministry of Education and Sports step by step in order to get an approval from the Ministry of Education and Sports before running the English courses. For the government universities such as the National university of Laos, Souphanouvong University of Laos, Savannakhet University of Laos, and the Champasack University of Laos use the same curriculum which have been changed, improved and integrated more daily life situations. In the past, a curriculum system (0+5)³⁷ was used. Nowadays, a curriculum system (0+4)³⁸ is used for English learning and teaching in Lao PDR. It means that students have to study a 4-year course. According to a rector of the Champasack University of Laos said that, it is difficult for teachers in the universities to make the English curriculum of their own faculties. English curriculum is created and adapted by foreign experts who were invited to teach at the universities. Even though the curriculum of English learning and teaching will be edited by the foreign experts, many Lao students face problems in learning because they have no English basics, making it quite hard for them to learn. There is not any technical curriculum for technical fields such as English for finance. Financial, accounting staffs who study English have to learn to know about financial, accounting vocabularies in English. Likewise, for the forestry curriculum, forestry staff have to learn to know about forestry vocabularies in English. It is not suitable for technical staffs to study the same curriculum because the content is general, not specific. They will have problems in translating vocabularies related to their technical works.

The majority of teachers³⁹ of the Champasack University of Laos said that, even though the Ministry of Education and Sports will reform the English curriculum, from a curriculum system (0+5) to be a curriculum system (0+4), but nowadays, all

³⁶ Interviews with an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos, on February 21, 2014; a Rector of the Champasack University of Laos interviewed on February 28, 2014.

³⁷ An English curriculum that students have to study five years.

³⁸ An English curriculum that students have to study four years.

³⁹ Teachers group 3 (the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education English Department) interviewed on February 28, 2014, at the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department, Champasak province;

current year 4 university students are still using the curriculum system (0+5). Sometimes, there are not enough English textbooks and the English Department still uses the textbooks of the curriculum system (0+5) to teach students in system (0+4) which is not suitable. From the interview with teachers, it is mentioned that, the new curriculum (0+4) is suitable for English teaching and learning because it contains more English subjects than the old one. For the old curriculum contains many Lao language subjects. However, the curriculum of some English textbooks does not match with the levels of students who have no basic of English, especially students who get government scholarships coming from rural areas. So, there are difficulties for both teachers and students because students have different levels in the same class.⁴⁰ Normally, before studying at the universities, students should be selected or pass the entrance examination. Excellent students should be separated from the poor ones but we do not have this system in Lao universities. If we do not separate students' levels, making it difficult for both teachers and students in teaching and learning. If teachers teach too fast, the poor students will not catch and do not understand the explanations. In the opposite, if teachers teach too slow, the excellent ones will be bored and annoyed.

The majority of teachers⁴¹ said that, the curriculum of English teaching and learning of 0+5 system was changed and adapted to be a 0+4 system. Students who have no basic English education or are poor in English will think that it is quite hard for them to learn, but students who are good at English will think that it is suitable and have no problems studying. Based on the English curriculum, all English subjects are taught only two times a week. For a subject which has two credits, students have to study once a week, and for a subject which has three credits, students have to study twice a week which starts from 8:00 am to 9:45 am (first period) and from 10:00 am

⁴⁰ Interviews with teachers group 1 (the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department) interviewed on January 29, 2014, at the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department, Vientiane Capital; Teachers group 2 (the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department) interviewed on February, at the at the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department in Luangprabang province; Teachers group 3 (the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education English Department) interviewed on February 28, 2014, at the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department, Champasak province; Teachers group 4 (the Private Sahakitsamphan College) interviewed on January, 2014, at the private Sahakitsamphan College, Vientiane Capital.

⁴¹ Interviews with a Rector of the Champasack University of Laos, on February 28, 2014.

to 11:30 am (second period) in the morning. Afternoon class starts from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm and from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm. For students in the evening session study a few hours a day, too, starting to learn from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm (first period) and from 6:45 pm to 8:00 pm (second period) in the evening on weekdays. However, there is not enough time for English teaching and learning in the curriculum because students do not study all day. Some days, they study only a few hours.

According to the interview with current year 4 university students from four universities⁴² in three parts of Laos, when they were asked about the problems of curriculum of their universities, the majority of students said in the same way that, there are a few compulsory Lao language subjects for the English major, especially in year 1 and 2. It means that students have much more time in learning Lao language than English. Normally, students majoring in English should study English more than Lao language. Besides, the time of English teaching and learning in the curriculum does not match with the content of the lessons. Students have limited time in learning and doing activities such as playing games, work in pairs, groups, and present their works, etc. and the majority of English classes do not have many practices. Students only study theories in the classes, but have no hours to practice speaking, listening, writing, and pronunciation. Students have poor in English skills due to the curriculum does not support students' learning entirely.

⁴² Interviews with students group1 (the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department) interviewed from from 27 to 31 of January, 2014, the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department, Vientiane Capital, Students group 2 (the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department) interviewed from 17 to 21 of February, 2014, at the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department, Luangprabang province, Students group 3 (the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department) interviewed from 25 to 28 of February, 2014, at the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department in Champasack province, Students group 4 (the Private Sahakitsamphant College) interviewed from 22 to 27 of January, 2014, at the Private Sahakitsamphant College, Vientiane Capital.

3.1.2. Classroom and environment

3.1.2.2. Problems of classroom/environment at the primary school level:

According to the policy makers⁴³ of the Ministry of Education and Sports and the university directors said that, the problems of the primary school levels are that, there are a large number of students per class. Especially, some classrooms in big cities or around big cities are quite small, narrow and also there are over 50 students in the classrooms which will cause difficulties in using new teaching methods. Students cannot participate sufficiently in English teaching and learning. Besides that, the management to have diversified activities in the classrooms such as playing games, work in groups, etc still has difficulties. Besides, the classrooms have no standard as in the picture below



Figure: 4.1

⁴³ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 13, 2014; a Head of the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, National University of Laos, interviewed on March 7, 2014; an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos interviewed on February 21, 2014, a Rector of the Champasack University of Laos interviewed on February 28, 2014; Director of Sahakitsamphan College, Higher Diploma of English interviewed on January 22, 2014.



Figure: 4.2

The problems of classrooms are important things for learners at the primary school level. If there are too many students in a class, the quality of teaching and learning will be low because teachers will not be able to take care of all students during the class or doing activities. The majority of classrooms have no standard—are small and narrow. Besides, there are not enough tables and chairs. Sometimes, students have to share one table because of too many students in each class so it is crowded. Noise from outside or nearby classes disturb learners' attention during the class. Therefore, learning at the primary levels must be well looked after by school teachers and directors regarding the situations of the classrooms. The numbers of students in the classes should be suitable with the numbers of tables, benches and the size of the classrooms to make convenient for teaching and learning because learning at the primary school level is the basic education required to progress. If the students have poor basic of learning at the primary school level, they will have problem in learning at the higher level. The reasons that the school directors manage to

contain many students in a class because lacking of school buildings and teachers, especially primary schools in the rural areas.

3.1.2.3. Problems of classroom/environment at the secondary school level:

According to the policy makers⁴⁴ of the Ministry of Education and Sports and the university directors said that, the problems of the secondary school level is quite the same as problems of the primary school levels because. Teaching and learning at this level is still lacking school buildings and English teachers. The majority of classrooms have no standard, small and narrow. There is a large number of over 50 students per class and there are also not enough tables and chairs. Especially, some classrooms in big cities or around big cities that affect the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR because students cannot participate sufficiently in English teaching and learning. Besides, the management to have diversified activities in the classrooms such as playing games, work in groups, etc is still difficult and limited.

3.1.2.4. Problems of classroom/environment the university level:

According to observations at four universities in three different regions of Laos, namely the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department in Vientiane Capital; the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department in Luangprabang province; the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education English Department in Champasak province; the Private Sahakitsamphant College in Vientiane Capital. It was noticed that all universities do not have proper classrooms for English teaching and learning, facing the same problems as the

⁴⁴ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 13, 2014; a Head of the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, National University of Laos, interviewed on March 7, 2014; an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos interviewed on February 21, 2014, a Rector of the Champasack University of Laos interviewed on February 28, 2014; Director of Sahakitsamphan College, Higher Diploma of English interviewed on January 22, 2014.

primary and secondary levels. Students only study in normal classrooms. The majority of classrooms have no standard; not enough tables and chairs; having to share tables. The majority of policy makers, university directors, teachers, and students of four universities of Lao PDR said in the same way that there are too many students in each class due to lack of classrooms, tables, and benches or chairs to serve with the numbers of students. Therefore, the classrooms are over-crowded; with more than 40 students in each class.

Besides, the doors of the classrooms are kept open and cannot prevent the sounds or noises from outside. When teachers turn on tape recorders for listening, the sound is echoed so that students are so confused with the unclear sound of old tape recorders. Some schools buildings of the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, the Foreign Language Department situated near the roads that often get a lot of noises from vehicles. This disturbs students' during the class. For the location of some buildings is not suitable because it is situated very close to the university dormitory where there is lot of noise such as loud music, etc. The majority of classrooms of every university have not enough fans in the classrooms or some fans do not work. Hence, it is so hot in the class especially, in summer. It is difficult for students to pay attention during the English class. Some classrooms have both white boards and blackboards and some have only blackboards. Blackboards and white chalks can cause difficulties for teaching and learning because they are not clear. Moreover, there are not enough classrooms for English teaching in rural areas.

3.1.3. Textbooks

3.1.3.1. Problems of the primary school textbooks.

According to the policy makers⁴⁵ of the Ministry of Education and Sports Nowadays, there are only English textbooks used in teaching students

⁴⁵ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 13, 2014.

of each level. Teachers teach students by following only English textbooks without searching for information and combine it with their teaching or create more diverse activities. The supply of textbooks and teachers' handbook for schools still delay and are not enough for the demand of English teaching and learning. There were instances where only teachers have textbooks; it is difficult for all students to get textbooks. Normally, a few secondary students per one textbook that the government provided, but there are a few students per one English textbook. Therefore, they have difficulty in learning, reviewing their lessons. If students need to have their own textbooks, they have to buy or copy those textbooks by themselves. Students who live in towns or big the cities can afford to buy or copy to be their own, but students in the rural areas cannot afford because of their poverty. Besides, reasons that delay the supplying of textbooks from the central to the school in rural area is that there are not enough warehouses to keep textbooks in order to deliver to other schools in the isolated areas resulting in a lack of textbooks. Primary school texts compiled by the National Research Institutes for Educational Sciences cooperate with the foreign countries, contain content that is quite hard for Lao students who study English as a foreign languages because Lao students are not familiar with the western environment. Besides, the school still lacks teaching facilities, materials, visual aids, etc in English teaching and learning.

It can be concluded that, primary school level lack of textbooks, teaching facilities, teaching tools like tape recorders, laboratories, etc.

3.1.3.2. Problems of the lower secondary school textbooks.

The problems of textbooks of English teaching and learning at the secondary school level is not different from the textbooks of the primary school level because they were compiled by the National Research Institute for Educational Science cooperated with the foreign countries. According to a

head of the Department of Planning⁴⁶ said that, English textbooks are quite hard for students because there were compiled by foreigners which are different from Lao environment, and the English textbooks do not link with the English University textbooks. According to the policy makers⁴⁷ of the Ministry of Education and Sports, there are only English textbooks used in teaching students of each level. Teachers teach students by following only English textbooks. English textbooks which are provided by the Lao government are not enough with the numbers of students. In some cases, three or four students in each level have to share one textbook. It is difficult for all students to have their own textbooks. If students need to have their own textbooks, they have to buy by themselves. Students who live in towns or big cities will have no problems in buying English textbooks, and educational equipment because they can afford to buy or make a copy. But students who live in the rural areas cannot afford because their parents are poor. That is why they will have problems in learning especially when students want to use English textbooks at the same time to review or prepare for the test. Sometimes, the District Education Offices do not distribute textbooks to other schools in local or rural areas, due to lack of teachers and school buildings for keeping textbooks.

It can be concluded that, secondary school level lack of textbooks, teaching facilities, teaching tools like tape recorders, laboratories, etc. (The pictures of the lower secondary school textbooks from grade one to grade four can be seen in an appendix: 5)

⁴⁶ Interview with a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 13, 2014.

⁴⁷ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 13, 2014.

3.1.3.3. Problems of the university level textbooks:

The majority of policy makers and university directors⁴⁸ said that we have a curriculum, but we cannot entirely follow the curriculum due to the lack of teaching facilities in all levels such as tape recorders, videos, laboratories, etc, internet access to find knowledge from outside. Normally, English learning and teaching must have teaching facilities such as laboratories, listening rooms to support learning to be effective. If schools or universities have laboratories, it will help students improve their English skills especially, listening, pronunciation, and speaking skills. If students study English without listening to the original English sound, they will be poor in listening skills. It will be meaningless if students learn English, but cannot communicate in English with foreigners.

According to the interview with university directors, English teachers and current year 4 students of all universities in three parts of Laos⁴⁹, the universities lack of teaching facilities, materials, and sources of information such as laboratories, projectors, LCDs, CD, Videos, tape recorders, etc, to serve the needs of English teaching and learning in order to teach students effectively. The majority of university students complained that some English textbooks are not interesting because they were copied several times that make them unclear and difficult for students to read. If students cannot read because

⁴⁸ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 13, 2014; a Head of the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, National University of Laos, interviewed on March 7, 2014; an Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos interviewed on February 21, 2014, a Rector of the Champasack University of Laos interviewed on February 28, 2014; Director of Sahakitsamphan College, Higher Diploma of English interviewed on January 22, 2014.

⁴⁹ Interviews with students group 1 (the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department) interviewed from 27 to 31 of January, 2014, the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department, Vientiane Capital; Students group 2 (the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department) interviewed from 17 to 21 of February, 2014, at the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department, Luangprabang province; Students group 3 (the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department) interviewed from 25 to 28 of February, 2014, at the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department in Champasack province; Students group 4 (the Private Sahakitsamphan College) interviewed from 22 to 27 of January, 2014, at the Private Sahakitsamphan College, Vientiane Capital.

English textbooks are not clear, teachers will then skip to the next section or other pages. Moreover, teachers and students have difficulties in finding information from the internet because the universities do not have IT centers yet.

The majority of universities use the English textbooks of native speakers directly such as Head Ways, General English, New Interchange, and English Business. Some English textbooks are quite difficult for students whose English is poor. Some textbooks' contents are not suitable with the situations in Laos, especially, General English courses. This is because they were published in foreign countries so that they are quite difficult for Lao students to learn because they do not know and are not familiar with those situations in foreign countries. Some textbooks which were compiled by English Department teachers in some Lao universities are still not interesting and do not have good standard yet. They should be improved in the future.

According to the interview with current year 4 university students from four universities in three parts of Laos, when they were asked about the problems of curriculum of their universities, the majority of students said in the same way that some English textbooks are not taught in all units. For students have to learn the rest of textbook units by themselves. For example, some English textbook was taught only a few units among 10 units in a first term, but in the second term, it was not continued to be taught because time for English learning is not enough. Some universities are lacking of some English textbooks. Some English departments order to publish English textbooks from the central office (from Vientiane Capital) to teach their students. Some English subjects' textbooks were delivered late. Thus, students have to study some English subjects without textbooks for a few months or half a term. After that the English textbooks were sent to bookshops of the English Departments. At that time, midterm or final examination's preparation of the university has started and this even makes students have more difficulties in learning, reviewing, and preparing lessons for their examination

of each subjects. (Pictures of the English textbooks can be seen in an appendix: 6)

In short, the problems concerning textbooks include lack of textbooks, inadequate budgets, delay in supplying textbooks to rural areas and the fact that textbooks do not match with the levels of students. Besides, the university is still lacking of teaching facilities such as laboratories, tape recorders, Videos, etc. these facilities are important tool in developing students abilities in English skills. If there are laboratories, students' English will be better.

3.1.4. Teachers and teaching methods

3.1.4.1. Problems of teachers and teaching methods at the primary school level:

Problems of teachers and teaching methods at the primary school level will be summarized according to an interview with the policy makers⁵⁰ of the Ministry of Education and Sports as follows:

(1) Lack of many people in the primary school level. Nowadays, approximately 30 percent of the primary schools in Lao PDR can manage to teach English. A lot of students in rural areas want to learn English language but they do not have a chance because there are no English teachers.

(2) Using secondary English teachers to teach English at the primary school levels is still not widely spread yet.

(3) The majority of primary student-teachers who graduated from the Teachers Training Institutes in academic year 2012-2013 are still not recruited entirely.

(4) The knowledge and abilities in using the ICT in English teaching and learning and the quality of teachers in the Teachers Training Institutes are limited and

⁵⁰ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 13, 2014.

do not reach the standard which is set (even though most of students in the Teachers Training Institutes get Bachelor degree).

(5) There are still so many full-time teachers do not reach the standard in each levels (3,000 primary teachers are still have only basic education).

(6) Lack of teaching materials.

(7) Most of primary school teachers who are doing their work (teaching) do not have enough knowledge and English skills to teach English language from grade 3 to 5 (nowadays, there is about 10 to 15 percent of the whole primary schools that English is taught)

(8) Teachers who teach English in primary levels nowadays are teachers who were not emphasized on studying English when they studied in Teachers Training Colleges or universities. It means that during their studying, they were not taught English or focus on English to teach primary students, hence it has problems for them. However, it still has training specifically.

(9) It is difficult for them to change their habits to accept new teaching techniques to use in their teaching; they will teach as the ways that they used to teach. This is a big problem, even though they attended training, but they still have not changed their habits of teaching as they used to do.

3.1.4.2. Problems of teachers and teaching methods at the secondary school level:

Problems of teachers and teaching methods at the primary school level will be summarized according to an interview with the policy makers⁵¹ of the Ministry of Education and Sports as follows:

(1) Lack of English teachers, especially secondary schools in rural areas.

⁵¹ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 13, 2014.

(2) Secondary teachers still have some problems such as the quality of teachers who teach English have not reached the standard of real English teachers yet. Therefore, transmission knowledge has problems. To solve these problems, the Ministry of Teachers Building has to contain English into the curriculum of Teachers Building from year 2014 on.

(3) There are still so many full-time teachers do not reach the standard in each levels (approximately 50 percent of secondary school teachers have only middle and higher level education) Generally speaking, we do not have enough teachers.

(4) Teachers in the demonstration Secondary Schools and Normal Schools where university students go to practice their teaching experiences are still unable to be the permanent teachers.

(5) Limitation of facilities.

(6) Teaching load of teachers.

3.1.4.3. Problems of teachers and teaching methods at the university level:

According to the interview with policy makers of the Ministry of Education and Sports, problems of teachers and teaching methods at the university level will be summarized according to an interview with the policy makers⁵² of the Ministry of Education and Sports as follows:

The first problem is the lack of English teachers.

The second problem is that there are only Lao teachers. It is of course the pronunciation of Lao teachers will not be the same as the original sound of the native speakers. The quality of teachers who were selected did not reach the standard. They were not excellent students from teachers' training colleges. So, it means that they are not good at English. The period of teaching and studying is just only 4 years. They are

⁵² Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports interviewed on March 13, 2014.

lacking of basic knowledge before studying at the universities or teachers' training universities. Some students at teachers' training universities face problems when they study a 4 year course of a Bachelor degree because they do not have good knowledge of English from secondary schools. It is difficult for them to transfer English knowledge to their students. They teach English but speak or explain lessons in Lao language much more than English in the classrooms. Students do not have chance to practice speaking English with teachers or friends. Therefore they cannot speak English well and fluently.

The third problem is that teachers' techniques of transferring knowledge to students are still not good. Nowadays, even though policy makers and English teachers focus on the students-centered method. In fact, teachers still use the old teaching methods or teacher-centered. The way of transferring knowledge to students is not interesting because students just only copy teachers' lessons from the blackboards and repeat after teachers. Teachers do not introduce students to play any games or do other activities. Students have no opportunities to practice speaking, listening, writing, and finding more knowledge by themselves. Students do not study all four skills of English, mainly reading skill and grammatical rules. Students' listening and speaking skills are weak because they do not have chance to practice speaking and listening to the tape recorders, CD, or Videos. Some teachers have graduated English major from schools or universities, but some just used to study or train for short courses, and know only basic of English. They have problems in transferring knowledge to students. Students sometimes do not listen to the tape recorders. Sometimes, some teachers provided students a few times of listening to the tape recorders. Sometimes they skipped some listening parts on textbooks because there are not enough tape recorders at the English Department. When teachers provided tape recorders for students to listen, the sound of them is not clear. Those problems affect students' listening skill. Consequently, it affects the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR.

The fourth problem is the majority of teachers and groups of people in the rural areas do not realize the important role of English language. They do not know that what the English will be used for. Even though English is the useful language for

them to go further study or read information written in English, they still do not understand the vital role of English.

The fifth problem is teachers' habits of teaching English language, it is difficult for teachers to change their habits and learn new teaching techniques. They will teach the way that they are used. This is a big problem. Even though teachers attended trainings, they still have not changed their habits of teaching. The majority of university teachers and students of all universities in three parts of Lao PDR revealed that there are not enough teachers to serve the huge number of students. When teachers miss their classes, there are not any substitutes. English teachers also have to help teach other faculties' students such as the case of the University of Laos. Normally English teachers have to teach more than 20 hours a week. Besides, teachers have to be responsible for the administration work, university's activities work, etc. Therefore, they do not have enough time to prepare their lesson plans.

Some teachers said that the methods of teaching are good and teachers know and understand well about techniques how to teach and transfer knowledge to students. Even though teachers used to study or train the methods of teaching, they never use some methods that they are trained because there are teaching facilities or materials to support those teaching and learning methods such as laboratories to listen to the English sounds, etc. Therefore, the majority of teachers still use the old methods of teaching or teacher-centered orientation. Teachers speak much more than students in the classes and students sometimes do not have opportunities to practice speaking English in the classes.

Teachers who teach English are Lao teachers who graduated in Lao PDR. Therefore, it is of course the quality of English teaching and learning is not as good as having teachers graduated from overseas. Besides, the majority of teachers who teach English are new teachers who graduated bachelor degrees from the Teachers Training Universities. Hence, they are still lacking of experience in transferring knowledge to students and also are also lacking of confidence. They cannot explain lessons clearly in details. Their teaching does not attract students to focus on the lessons, do not encourage students to pay attention and participate in English classes. They just follow lessons in the textbooks. They rarely find any other materials related to the

textbooks' lessons or encourage students to learn more from outside classes. Therefore, students do not attentively listen to teachers' explanation and also are not active in learning because teachers speak or explain lessons alone and are not interested in students. Therefore, some students are confused and do not pay attention to learning English by making noises, playing games, chatting on Facebook during the class. Therefore, each university tries to cooperate more with foreign countries for teachers' training programs.

The majority of teachers give explanation in Lao language. Some teachers do not lead students to practice speaking English during the class. This is why students always face problems when they want to communicate with foreigners in English. They cannot speak well and other people do not understand them due to their pronunciation and listening skill. In contrast, some teachers speak only English language and students cannot understand their explanation. They would like teachers to speak English and after that translate into Lao. And some teachers often talk about their own stories or families during the class. Students feel bored and have no chance to practice English.

In short, Lao PDR is still lacking of teachers who can teach English. Many people still do not understand the importance of English yet, especially those living in the rural areas. A lot of teachers do not have experience in teaching and applying techniques of transferring knowledge to students. Most teachers complained that they do not have enough time to research, prepare for lessons and gain more knowledge because they teach too many hours and also have much work to do in the offices.

According to the interview, the majority of policy makers of the Ministry of Education and Sports make an observation that there is no standard of English teaching and learning in the Lao PDR. Some schools teach English subjects but some do not. Some schools teach English and French. Even though the Ministry of Education and Sports has a strategy plan for teaching English language at the primary school level, but in practice teachers who teach English have not been prepared to teach students from the third grade of primary schools upwards yet. Normally, when teachers of primary schools study at the Teachers Training Institutes, they did not study English subject. One teacher has to teach every subject in the curriculum of

primary school accept English. For example, a teacher of third grade is responsible to teach only subjects of the third grade. However, a teacher who knows English is always asked to teach every level of primary schools.

To solve this problem, the Ministry of Education and Sports has policy in containing English into the curriculum of Teachers Training Institutes in the year 2014 in order to produce English teachers for primary level. It means that teachers who study at the Teachers Training Institutes have to study English. After finishing their study at the Teachers Training Institutes, they will be able to teach English from the third grade of primary school upwards. Another resolution is some schools ask the secondary level teachers to help teach at the primary school level and also employ teachers who know English quite well to teach every level (from the primary to the secondary school level).

3.1.5. Students

3.1.5.1. Problems of students at the primary school level.

Primary school students do not pay attention on learning English because they have not known the importance of English language yet. They do not know what the benefits of the English language and how the English language will be used. They study English just only follow teachers in the class and English textbooks, but after the class they do not speak English, they speak only Lao language with their family members and friends and other people in the societies. So, it is difficult for them to remember the English words without practice English skills or motivation from their parents, especially, students from rural areas. If students' family members speak English to each other in the family, it is certainly that, they will remember the English vocabulary automatically.

3.1.5.2. Problems of students at the secondary school level.

The problems of secondary school students quite the same as primary school students, they do not know the importance of English language, especially students in rural areas, therefore, they do not pay attention on learning English, they prefer learning subjects for leaving exams namely mathematics, physics, etc to English subjects. However, the majority of students who live in big cities who get motivations from their parents to go tuitions after schools or at the weekend, they will be good at English better than those who live in rural areas where English is not popular. The majority of students do not good at English because of laziness, they do not want to search, review their English lessons by themselves, especially students in the rural areas, they pay attention on doing other work that related to their families such as do the farm, go hunting, find food, vegetables from the forests for their living after the class and at the weekend. The important thing is that students' parents must motivate and force their children in learning English in order to make them pay attention on learning.

3.5.1.3. Problems of students at the university level.

Based on the interview and observation, the majority of university teachers and students put that the majority of students have no basic of English before studying at the English Department of each university⁵³, especially, students, from rural area, who get government scholarships. Most of them did not have to take the examination before entering to study in the universities. Therefore, it is difficult for them study with student from big cities. It is also difficult for teachers to teach them. For

⁵³ Interviews with students group 1 (the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department) interviewed from from 27 to 31 of January, 2014, the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department, Vientiane Capital, Students group 2 (the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department) interviewed from 17 to 21 of February, 2014, at the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department, Luangprabang province, Students group 3 (the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department) interviewed from 25 to 28 of February, 2014, at the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department in Champasack province, Students group 4 (the Private Sahakitsamphant College) interviewed from 22 to 27 of January, 2014, at the Private Sahakitsamphant College, Vientiane Capital.

example, if teachers explain lessons fast, some poor students will not understand. In contrast, if teachers explain slowly, other students will be bored and annoyed. The quality of education in rural areas is poorer than the education in big cities. Therefore, the basic knowledge of students in big cities are better than those in rural areas. English language is not one of leaving examination subjects for secondary students. Therefore, they do not concentrate on English subject and prepare for their leaving examination.

The majority of Lao students are not good at English because they have little enthusiasm in learning English by themselves. It is noticeable that they are poor in listening skill, grammatical rules, pronunciation, and speaking because lack of vocabularies. They do not pay attention on learning English by themselves, and sometimes do not concentrate on lessons. They do not do their homework either. For English learning, they only focus and follow the English

Lao students have problems with learning because they are shy and are not brave to speak English, especially foreigners. When they speak English, they are afraid of making mistakes. Some students cannot complete their homework because they do not have enough free time to do so. They have to work after schools such as working in restaurants, guesthouses, hotels, etc...to earn money to pay for their university fees, buy or copy textbooks, rent a house or flat, and buy foods.

3.2. Factors affecting English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR.

This part will present factor affecting English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR. It will be divided in to 4 main factors, namely cultural, economic, social and infrastructural factors as follow:

3.2.1. Cultural factors

Lao culture is very different from the western culture. It quite hard for Lao students to learn English as a foreign language due to the environmental conditions of Lao societies is not the same as western's, besides Lao people's lives is familiar with

communication in Lao language as a mother tongue. For English is a language that has just become an important language in Lao societies for a few decades after Lao became a member of ASEAN countries since 1997. Even though Lao people will study English for, but they do not speak English together in the societies. Therefore, it affects students' abilities in English skills. Besides, Lao people are shy to show their real speaking English in the societies among Lao people. Consequently, when Lao people learn foreign languages, especially English language, they always have problems. They dare not ask teachers when they do not understand about their lessons. Even teachers ask them directly, they still keep quiet. If they do not know the answer for sure, they will not speak or answer because they are afraid to make grammar mistakes.

The majority of policy makers of the Ministry of Education and Sports, university directors, teachers, and students said that students dare not speak English because of the impact from the Lao culture⁵⁴ which affects the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR. Even they have questions or do not understand the lessons and how to do homework, they are not brave to ask teachers' question both in the class and outside the class. They will ask their classmates who are quite good at English to explain for them or they sometimes try to find the answers by themselves. And they are also afraid that their teachers will be angry at them when they ask teachers' questions. When teachers ask them questions, they are always silent and have no confidence in answering because they are shy to make mistakes in front of their friends and teachers.

Lao people also prefer speaking Lao language, or local, ethnic languages to each other rather than other languages. When a Lao person speaks English with each other or with foreigners, other people look at that person as if he or she is showing off. This makes Lao people who know and understand English dare not speak English. Normally, in learning English, students or learners have to be active in speaking with friends, teachers, and foreigners in order to practice pronunciation, listening, and speaking fluently. Due to the fact Lao people are timid, afraid and humble, they do not speak English.

⁵⁴ Lao people are always shy, and always speak Lao language as a mother tongue.

Besides, the majority of Lao people live in isolated mountainous areas where people's lifestyles are close to nature. Thus, they have no chances to access to the education and do not know the role and importance of education and English language. Some policy makers said that most of people in rural and isolated areas include heads of schools and teachers, villagers, and students still have not known the vital role of English language yet. They think that education cannot help them to escape from poverty. They do not know the important role of English language. Therefore, they are not interested in learning English for their study or finding jobs. Moreover, students do not want to go to schools because their parents are poor. They leave schools early and they have to go to earn money by themselves. Some go to find forest products such as vegetables, mushrooms, bamboo shoots, etc.⁵⁵ They think that their priority is to earn living, not to go to school.

In addition, the majority of Lao students do not like reading books, articles, journals, magazines, newspapers. They are not keen to seek knowledge or find information written in English language. Besides, they do not want to spend money on books or magazine. According to the interviews with current year 4 university students⁵⁶ stated that, among Lao people, speaking Lao language is more preferable than foreign languages. Even though, they study English, they rarely practice speaking English with friends, teachers, and foreigners. Because of this reason, it will make students forget English words, grammatical rules and they will face problems when they speak English in real life. They will not speak fluently because they do not practice speaking regularly. When learning English, some students are lazy to review, prepare their lessons.

Therefore, the cultural factor affects English learning of Lao students like this:

⁵⁵ Interviews with a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Science, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 28, 2014.

⁵⁶ Interviews with students group 1 (the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department) interviewed from 27 to 31 of January, 2014, the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department, Vientiane Capital, Students group 2 (the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department) interviewed from 17 to 21 of February, 2014, at the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department, Luangprabang province, Students group 3 (the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department) interviewed from 25 to 28 of February, 2014, at the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department in Champasack province, Students group 4 (the Private Sahakitsamphant College) interviewed from 22 to 27 of January, 2014, at the Private Sahakitsamphant College, Vientiane Capital.

Lao students are shy practice speaking English with friends, teachers, and foreigners because they are afraid of grammar mistake in speaking. Therefore, in the real situations of speaking English with others, Lao students are poor, and also lack of confidences due to the effect of the cultural factor.

In short, the majority of Lao students are shy to speak English. Even though, they take English courses, they do not like to practice speaking English with friends, teachers, and foreigners. They prefer speaking Lao to English. Besides, the majority Lao people still do not realize the important role of English language, especially people living in mountainous and isolated areas. Therefore, culture can be seen as a main factor affecting the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR.

3.2.2. Economic factors

As we all know almost English schools, universities and institutes are located in big cities. Thus, students in big cities will have more access to English learning than students who live in remote and rural areas. And the majority of students in big cities can afford to pay for English tuition, and buy books, modern technology and materials such as computers that help them gain access to the internet. With internet and modern technology they can learn more English and find information from many websites. Besides, students in big cities also have many alternatives in choosing the best English courses from schools or institutes for them to study since the early young ages. While the students in rural areas are short of money and have many difficulties in access to the English language learning. There are not any English Institutes established in rural areas no English teachers prefer to work in those areas. If students want to study English, they have to travel to big cities, very far from their hometowns. Due to economic reason, the English level of students in big cities and rural areas is remarkably different.

The policy makers from the Ministry of Education and Sports and university directors said that people who have good economic background will be good at English because they can pay for special English tutorials and afford learning equipment. In contrast, students, who have poor economic condition, are always poor

at English because they have no money to pay for special learning, textbooks, and learning materials. Sometimes, poor students whose parents cannot support them money for education, their parents have to send them to become Buddhist novices in temples in order to have a chance to study and learn English. Besides, the Lao government cannot supply enough English textbooks for primary school levels from the central to rural areas. Therefore, in some schools, one textbook has to be shared by few students and students cannot own English textbooks. Hence, students sometimes cannot take textbooks to study at their homes. They have to take turn to bring the book home. Consequently, the economic factor certainly affects the English teaching and learning.

The majority of university teachers and students said that for students who do not get government scholarships and come from rural areas will have problems in paying tuition fee when their parents cannot send them money. Apart from this, they have to rent a room, buy textbooks, photocopy document, and others cost of living. They have to find part-time jobs such as working in hotels, restaurants, guesthouses. However, students will not have enough time to do their homework, review lessons for their examination. Sometimes, some students are absent from their classes because they have no money in their pockets and they feel shy to go to the university without money. Some students leave to find jobs to make money because of poverty. If they do not have economic problem, it will more convenient for them to learn English more effectively. They will not have be worried about finding money for education and other expenditures.

The majority of university teachers said that English Departments cannot provide teaching facilities so that it is difficult for teachers to manage English teaching and learning. Sometimes, teachers have to spend their own money to buy or copy all teacher's English books, and teacher's workbooks because the universities do not have enough budget to support teachers in copying or buying those materials.

Therefore, the economic factors affect the quality of English language teaching and learning of students in Lao PDR like this:

Students cannot afford for buying and copying English textbooks to learn at their schools, they will be poor in English because they do not have textbooks to reviews, search the lessons. Especially, students in local areas whose family have poverty will have problems in English competency. Most of them have low English knowledge and are poor using in real life.

In sum, economic factor is one factor that affects the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR. The majority of English schools, colleges, universities, institutes, centers are established in big cities while students in rural areas have difficulties in gaining access to English language courses. Because of poverty, they do not have enough money to cover school or university fees, dormitories, English textbooks, educational equipment, cost of living, and other expenses. Consequently, a lot of students do not have a chance to access to education in general and English language in particular.

3.2.3. Social factors

The social factors certainly affect the English teaching and learning in Lao P.D.R. Lao people who live in big cities and rural areas have different view about learning English. For people in big cities certainly understand that English is necessary for them to live in modern world with stream of globalization. Therefore, they concentrate on supporting their children to go to school and gain knowledge from education in order to a find good job, study in a higher level. Meanwhile people who live in rural, mountainous areas still have not known the importance of English yet. Therefore, they do not support their children to study English because they think that it is not necessary for their children. Even though, their children will not get know English at all, they still can live in their society by farming, agriculture and raising animals just like former generations.

It is obviously shown that social environment has an impact on students' effort to learn English. For example, almost Lao students in Vientiane Capital compete with each other to get English education in order to apply for jobs in organizations. If they have no English knowledge, they will not be able to find good jobs. Therefore,

students want to study English at universities, institutes or centers to improve their English. In contrast, people living in the countryside expect their children to work in agriculture. Moreover, teachers and directors of some schools still consider that English language is not an important subject that students should spend much time on it. Some schools only focus on science and social studies because students do not have to take English for leaving exam.⁵⁷

According to the announcement about job vacancies at present, almost workplaces both government and private organizations not only require staffs to have technical knowledge, but also English knowledge and computer. For some organizations in the Lao PDR, if applicants have no English course shown in their certificates, they will not be selected to the next process by the selecting committee. If any candidate has good English knowledge and computer, he or she will be considered by the selecting committee. Besides learning other main technical subjects, Lao students also have to learn English at the same time in order to get two different bachelor degrees. They will have a better chance in applying for job. Even though the majority of students are able to study at two universities at the same time in different field of study, students still have difficulties in arranging their time table to learn English because they do not have enough time to sit in classes and do homework. They study English in order to get diplomas or certificates. Therefore, after their graduation, most students still have no English skills.

English is used an official language among members of ASEAN countries. ASEAN community 2015 plan attracts and encourages people of all ASEAN countries to pay attention to integration into the ASEAN Community. This also makes Lao people of all ages are more interested in studying English. They want to know English for communication, finding jobs, finding data, go further study, using modern technology such as mobile phones and computers.⁵⁸ However, students will be good at English or not, it depends on themselves. Although, they study only English language, with no effort they will not be good in English skills. They often use

⁵⁷ Interviews with a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Science, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 28, 2014

⁵⁸ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, on March 4, 2014.

internet and mobile phone to play games or chat on Facebook, but their English is still not fluent.

Moreover, Lao society is changing rapidly. Young Lao students do not concentrate on learning but they often socialize with their friends in the restaurants and entertainment shops, bars, discotheques to have drink during their free time. They sometimes are absent from school to meet friends. Of course they waste their time on those places and finally they do not have time to do their homework, review, and prepare their lessons. Moreover, it will make them feel sleepy during the class because they stay up late at night. Finally, some students get low grades. Therefore, social factor is another factor that affects the quality of Lao students' English learning.

Therefore, social factor affects the quality of English teaching and learning in Lao P.D.R like this:

People who live in different environmental conditions, they will have different views and performance. For people who live in societies which have high competitions, they will pay much attention on the thing that they set target. For learning English of Lao students in Lao PDR is not different from those societies. Lao people who live in big cities and rural areas have different views about learning English. In big cities, there are high competitions in learning English for many purposes such as finding careers, go further study, etc. Besides, several companies, factories, hotels, hospitals, banks, organizations are located in big cities with high demand in English proficiency in the conditions of employment. For this reason, there are high competitions in learning English in big cities, but for students, who live in isolated areas where there are not any workplaces and employment, they will have not any motivations in learning English for those purpose because of their ways of living is related with the nature, therefore, they do not pay attentions on learning English. Moreover, the most important thing is that, they do not know the important roles of the English language in the globalizations. For this reasons, many Lao students in rural areas are poor in English language.

3.2.4. Infrastructural factors

It is of course the infrastructural factor affects the English language teaching and learning in Lao P.D.R, especially, in rural areas, students cannot access to the education, especially, English education. The environment there is not convenient for English learning due to lack of school buildings with ICT system, materials, computers, projectors, LCD, and other teaching facilities such as libraries, laboratories, suitable English classrooms, tape recorders, English textbooks, exercise books, and other materials. The majority of English classrooms are in poor condition. The number of students is normally over 50 in each class. So it is too crowded and very noisy. Some classes even contain about 80 students and it is very difficult for teachers⁵⁹. It is revealed that there are no more than 10 state secondary schools in Vientiane Capital of the Lao PDR that have laboratories and listening rooms for English teaching and learning. However, almost private schools have proper English classrooms, laboratories, listening rooms, and also other modern teaching aids and facilities to serve the needs of English teaching and learning.⁶⁰

Therefore the infrastructural factor is a factor that should be considered for English learning and teaching because it will help students learn English more effectively. If the university has a laboratory, students will have a chance to practice listening, pronunciation and speaking. It will help students improve their English skills. Because there are not any teaching facilities and teaching aids, teachers use their real experiences to teach students without anything support that affects the quality of English teaching and learning.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, on March 4, 2014; a Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Science, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 28, 2014; a Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, on March 13, 2014

⁶⁰ Interviews with a Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, on March 4, 2014.

⁶¹ Interviews with teachers group:1 (the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department), on January 29, 2014, at the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department, Vientiane Capital; teachers group:2 (the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department) interviewed on February, at the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department in Luangprabang province; Teachers group:3 (the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education English Department) interviewed on February 28, 2014, at the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English

The majority of university directors, teachers and students said that universities do not have enough computers to serve all students. When students are scheduled to study computer subject, student are divided in to a group 3 or 4 students per one computer in each class. Sometimes, some students do not have a chance to practice or use a computer at all. They just stand there to observe while their friends using a computer. Some students do not have their own computers to practice after class either.

However, as revealed by informants, the English teaching and learning in Lao PDR will be improved in the future. Teachers, parents and students will then understand the important role of English language. According to the government policy, students in all areas will have a chance to study English by the year 2015 when ASEAN community is officially started.

Therefore, the infrastructural factor affects the quality of English teaching and learning of students in Laos PDR like this:

In learning English it is necessary for students to have school buildings, English classrooms, tables, benches, teaching materials, and teaching facilities such as tape recorders, libraries, laboratories, etc, in reality in Lao PDR nowadays, there are many primary and secondary schools still lack of school buildings, English classrooms, tables, benches, teaching materials, and teaching facilities such as tape recorders, libraries. Besides at the university levels also lack those facilities as well such as lack of school buildings, English classrooms, tables, benches, chairs, laboratories, and English teaching facilities such as tape recorders, projectors, LCD. Those facilities certainly affects the quality of English teaching and learning of students in Lao P.D.R. if students lack of those facilities, they will have poor performance in English skills such as tape recorders, laboratories, projectors, LCD because those facilities will help students practice speaking, listening, and pronunciations. And school buildings and tables is one factors affecting students' English skills because over 50 students are contained into one class it makes difficulties in teaching and learning, mange to have diversified activities due to a large

numbers of students in a class, and a class also have no standard. Therefore, the infrastructural factor affects Lao students have low English competency, especially, students in remote areas where students cannot access to the education because lacking of school buildings and classrooms.



Chapter 4

Conclusions and Suggestions

4.1. Conclusions

According to document research and interview with some policy makers, university directors, teachers, and students, it is shown that English was not considered as an important language before liberation. During the French colonial period, French language was an official language used in education. After Laos was liberated in 1975, Laos had developed relationships with the Soviet Union. Therefore, Russian language was regarded as an important foreign language in Lao society. It was taught in schools side by side with French and English for many years. However, when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1992, the role of Russian language had decreased because Russian experts went back to Russia.

After that English language is considered the most important language because it is an international language and used as an official language to communicate among countries. At the same time, Lao PDR wants to develop economic cooperation with outside world. Lao government reformed the National Education System in order to improve the quality of Lao education by containing English into the curriculum to teach two hours a week from the secondary school to university level in 1994. In 1997, Lao became a member of ASEAN countries in 1997. The English language is used as an official language between ASEAN member countries. After that, there were many foreigners come to Laos for different purposes like visit, investment, trades, educational assistance, etc. Therefore, English became the most important language and has attracted many Lao students to study at the English schools, institutes, centers in order to get good jobs, and to study in foreign countries.

The Lao government and the Ministry of Education and Sports reformed the English teaching and learning in the year 2000. And in the year 2009, English was included in national curriculum from the third grades of primary school to the university level in order to prepare for ASEAN Economic Community in 2015.

Besides, the Ministry of Education and Sports put English into the curriculum of Teacher Training Schools so that graduates can teach English at the primary school and kindergarten levels. Moreover, the Lao government invites foreign teachers and experts from overseas to train government officials and teachers so that they can communicate in English with foreigners. The Lao government also supports government officials and teachers to continue their study abroad and improve their English in order to gain English knowledge to teach students, develop the country and work with foreign organization in Lao PDR.

Even though the Lao government has the policy to support English language learning and teaching, such as it was included the curriculum of Lao education system for many years, Lao people's English proficiency has not developed. This is partly because it is considered as an unimportant language. It is not the subject that students have to take for leaving examination and entrance examination to continue their study at the university level. Actually, the policy of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR was set clearly, but in the real practice it is still not implemented widely in rural areas. Students in rural areas cannot gain access to English since the early ages because of lack of teachers who teach English subject, lack of classrooms for English learning and teaching, teaching facilities, laboratories, listening room, and other teaching equipment. Therefore, the quality of education, especially, English language between big cities and isolated areas is very different. In big cities English is available in many modern English schools universities, institutes, including private and government schools. Students are able to access to English education more easily than those in rural areas.

4.2. Suggestions for policy makers.

If the government really wants to implement the policy supporting English education in Lao PDR, the government should pay more attention to this issue and spend enough money to develop the education in mountainous and rural areas. This is to offer an equal access and opportunity to the education to all students. More school buildings, with enough classrooms and teaching facilities such as libraries and laboratories, should be built. The most important thing is that the government has to

produce enough teachers to teach in the rural areas. It would be meaningless if there are only school buildings but no teachers. If the government wants to increase the quality of English learning and teaching in Lao PDR, the government has to ensure that there are enough qualified English teachers. The government should also educate people in rural areas to realize the important role of the English language and encourage them to learn English.

The policy makers or university directors should increase more time for all English subjects in the curriculum to make sure that students study all English skills. This will help guarantee the quality of students' English proficiency. Some students will be teachers in the future so that students have to study hard and gain more knowledge to become excellent teachers to transfer knowledge to students effectively.

Lao students have difficulties in learning English language as a second language due to the problems of curriculum, classrooms and environment, textbooks, teachers and teaching methods, and other problems. The curriculum of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR still does not have the same standard for the whole country. Some schools teach English, but some schools do not, especially in rural areas. Some schools still teach French language and English language is considered less important. The English teaching and learning of all levels cannot follow curriculum due to the lack of teaching facilities, laboratories, and classrooms for English teaching and learning, etc. Internet access to find knowledge from outside world is also limited. Besides, the number of hours of English learning and teaching in the curriculum, only two hours a week, is limited and not enough for students to learn and do activities in the class. Some English courses in the curriculum do match with the levels of students. Some students have no basic of English and this causes difficulties for both teachers and students, particularly when there are different levels of students in the same class. Moreover, the curriculum does not include English for technical areas such as English for Banking, Accounting, Finance, etc.

The findings show that there are 4 main factors affecting the quality of English Language teaching and learning in Lao PDR: cultural factor, economic factor, social factor, and infrastructural facto. Lao students are not good at English because they are timid, quiet and humble. The majority of Lao students are shy when learning English,

especially with speaking and pronunciation. Even though they know English, they still prefer speak Lao. Besides, Lao people still do not understand the important role of English language, especially people living in mountainous and isolated areas.

As for the economic factor, the majority of English schools, colleges, universities, institutes, centers are established in big cities while students in rural areas have difficulties to gain access to English language. Because of their poverty, students in rural parts of Lao PDR do not have enough money to pay for school or university fees and cover other expenses like dormitories, English textbooks, educational equipment and food. Consequently, a lot of students do not have a chance to study English.

Social factor is one factor that affects the quality of Lao students' English language learning. Students in big cities are distracted by many kinds of entertainment. Students do not pay attention on their English classes. As for students in rural areas, their daily life activities are related to farming, agriculture, raising animals, and finding vegetables in the forest. Therefore, they feel that English is not necessary for them, and they do not understand the roles of English in contemporary Lao society.

Infrastructure is another key factor affecting English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR. There is still the lack of school buildings, teaching facilities and equipment such as laboratories, libraries, computers, lecture rooms with LCD or projectors, English classrooms, tape recorders, teaching materials, etc. If the Lao government can put more budget on the development of teaching and learning infrastructure, the quality of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR will definitely be improved.

Based on document research and interview with policy makers, directors, teachers and students, some suggestions can be drawn from the study as follow:

The most important factor to the improvement of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR is the quality of English teachers. Teachers should be qualified for English classes they are assigned to teach. If possible, schools should have native English speakers because this is a good way for students to practice their listening and

pronunciation. Training programs on English skills and teaching techniques should be arranged for teachers regularly. Volunteers and experts from overseas should be invited to train teachers and staffs.

Teaching and learning environment is also important. It can be noticed that the size of classrooms in many universities is too small for the number of students. There should be more investment in teaching and learning infrastructure such as bigger and comfortable classrooms, laboratories, listening rooms, textbooks, teaching materials. At least, every school should have tape recorders and video players in order that students can listen to the native speakers' pronunciation and conversations. Internet service and computers should be also provided so that teachers and students can look for useful information or practice English after class.

English curriculum should be improved and evaluated regularly. Time for learning English should be increased. Nowadays, there are two hours a week for primary school level and three hours a week for secondary school level which are not enough for learning foreign languages. If possible, students should learn English at least 5 or 6 hours a week so that they can be familiar with the language and have more time to practice in class. Activities outside classes should be organized and chances to practice English with foreigners should be created so that students' speaking and listening skills will be improved more efficiently.

The government should launch different campaigns to promote the learning of English, like to motivate writers or journalists to write more the ASEAN Economic Community, and the role of English in the 21st century. Then, Lao people and students will realize what benefit they will get from knowing English. English curriculum should look at what is suitable for Lao society development and the preparation for the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015. What lessons should be taught to make curriculum linked with the knowledge of ASEAN and ASEAN members.

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APPENDIX



จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

APPENDIX I

Policy of English language curriculum for grade 3, 4 and 5 of primary schools in Lao PDR.

1. The objectives of English teaching for primary school level are:

- 1). to acquire interest in English.
- 2). to build a foundation for basic communication in English in everyday life.

A. Students should gain basic knowledge:

1. Knowledge of basic of English language: alphabet, simple vocabulary grammar and pronunciation.
2. Knowledge of basic of English language skills: writing, reading, listening and speaking.
3. Comparing the differences and similarities between English and Lao alphabets.
4. Knowledge of simple communication in the classroom and daily life.

B. Learners should have the following skills:

1. Participating in simple interactions in the English language.
2. Expressing simple needs and preferences in the English language.
3. Writing and pronouncing English alphabet and simple vocabulary properly.
4. Reading and writing English expressions, dialogue and short text types learnt through the English lessons.
5. Understanding simple information given in the English language.

C. Teachers should instill these attitudes and values to students:

a. Attitudes:

1. A willingness to use the English language in own interactions.
2. A willingness to learn the English language.

b. Values:

1. Realizing good morality of Lao people.
2. Restoring environment.
3. Being proud of own community and identity.

Primary school students are expected to have competencies in English language skills as shown in the tables below:

Table 1.1 Listening

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
<p>1. Understanding when the English language is being spoken.</p> <p>2. Recognizing simple words and sentences using in classroom and daily life.</p>	<p>1. Listening to simple interaction, distinguishing words and expressions to learn and recall.</p> <p>2. Interpreting meaning of phrases and sentences using in classroom activities and in role plays of social exchanges including: recognizing purposes of speaking, following a series of simple instructions.</p>	<p>1. Listening to interaction, short spoken text, distinguishing more complex words and expressions to learn and to recall.</p> <p>2. Interpreting meaning of phrases, sentences and short spoken text using in routine classroom activities and in role plays of social exchanges, including: identifying main points, making comparisons and responding to a variety of questions.</p>

Table 1.2 Speaking

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
<p>1. Using rehearsed foreign language words and texts in games and songs.</p> <p>2. Responding to questions. Using words or phrases to identify names, numbers or describing objects.</p> <p>3. Using polite routine expressions in greeting, giving basic personal information and requesting.</p> <p>Using approximate pronunciation.</p>	<p>1. Responding in simple, rehearsed interactions, including role play dialogues.</p> <p>2. Responding to more complex questions and describing more complexly.</p> <p>3. Using polite routine expression in introducing, asking personal information of others, and asking for help.</p> <p>4. Making factual statement through word substitutions in rehearsed structures.</p> <p>5. Giving a series of interactions.</p> <p>6. Using improved pronunciation and approximate intonation for very familiar expressions.</p>	<p>1. Responding in more complex, rehearsed interactions, including role play dialogues.</p> <p>2. Responding to more complex questions about a wider range of information.</p> <p>3. Asking for information.</p> <p>4. Giving own information through word substitutions in rehearsed structures.</p> <p>5. Giving instructions or directions.</p> <p>6. Using improved pronunciation and intonation for very familiar expressions.</p>

Table 1.3 Reading

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
<p>1. Recognizing and naming the letters of the alphabet, studied syllables and words.</p> <p>2. Making connections with new written texts by locating familiar words.</p> <p>3. Independently reading short, simple paragraphs constructed of words and expressions already studied (paragraph of 2-3 sentences)</p> <p>4. Reading familiar class instructions, signs, slogans etc.</p>	<p>1. Using knowledge of alphabet to read and pronounce.</p> <p>2. Reading to complete classroom exercises, including matching pictures to simple captions.</p> <p>3. Independently reading longer simple paragraphs constructed of words and expressions constructed of words and expressions already studied or with only a few new words (paragraph of 5-6 sentences) answering questions based on the texts.</p>	<p>1. Reading to complete classroom exercises, including cloze sentences, crosswords.</p> <p>2. Independently reading longer simple texts constructed of words and expressions already studied or with only a few new words (texts of two short paragraphs). Reading longer dialogues, descriptions, recounts, instructions. Identifying main points and sequence in the texts.</p>

Table 1.4 Writing

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
<p>1. Writing to record class learning and to complete class exercises and games, including: copying from the board.</p> <p>2. Selecting known words and copying to use as labels and captions.</p> <p>3. Writing simple texts, based on structure of studied models, but substituting in own information, including: words, phrases, 1 or 2 sentences.</p>	<p>1. Writing to record class learning and to complete class exercises, including: copying correctly from the board.</p> <p>2. Communicating ideas and information by writing simple paragraphs, based on structure of studied models, but substituting in own information.</p>	<p>1. Writing to record class learning and to complete class exercises, including: copying correctly and sometimes write from own knowledge.</p> <p>2. Making own meaning, and communicating ideas and information, by writing simple paragraphs, based on structure of studied models, but substituting in own information.</p>

D. Teaching materials:

The materials that can be used in the teaching of English language of primary school are different kinds of things such as a teacher, students, the English alphabets, posters, pictures, word cards real objects, text books and teacher's guide. Especially, the visual aid will help the teaching become more effective and efficient. The visual aid will make students become more interested in learning the English language,

E. Assessment:

Assessment is a necessary activity that the teacher has to conduct regularly in order to find out the learning of students in the class. Through the process of

assessment the teacher knows who are good and who are not good at their English language study. Indeed, the assessment has two important systems.

a. Formative assessment:

The purpose of a formative assessment is to improve the teaching and learning methods of the ongoing teaching and learning processes. For example, the contents improvement, teaching and learning methods improvement and the way to help weak students. The weak students can be improved by organizing tutorial class for them or assigning special homework to them. By having, tutorial class or special homework the weak students will be able to catch up with their classmates. There are two periods of formative assessment:

- The assessment before teaching: this assessment is to find out the ability of students and their readiness to follow the English learning. Also the record of assessment will be used as the data and reference for the teacher to make a plan and teaching plan that is suitable for the class.
- Informal assessment (during teaching and learning assessment):

This assessment can be conducted informally. For example, ask a student to do a roll-play in front of class, do a small test to check the students' understanding. A teacher can give the point in the class and record it in a special book after students have finished. A monthly test is one of the informal test, which will be conducted every month or after having finished two units. Also a formal assessment can be conducted that means all students have to take the test at the same time and the same test. Therefore, the result of the informal assessment will include the point in the class and the monthly test.

b. Summative assessment:

A summative assessment is a final assessment of the teaching and learning process. For example: the examination of a semester, year and the end of a course. These are the formal assessments or the examinations. The result will help evaluate the implementation of teaching and learning whether or what level has achieved the purposes and aims that defined in the curriculum.

F. Making system and a table of the mark:

a. Marking system:

In the teaching and learning English, the formative and summative assessments have equal importance. The full mark of these assessments is **10**. The monthly mark is calculated from the informative assessment and monthly test. The average of the calculation of these assessments is the monthly mark. In one semester there are 3-4 monthly tests depending on the real situation of each school. The full mark of the semester is **10**.

a. Mark calculation:

Add up the marks in the class. Then divide by the number of times of the formative assessment. After that, add the result and the mark of a monthly test. Finally, divide the result by two. The result of this is a **monthly mark**.

Add up all the monthly marks and divide by the number of times of the monthly test. The result of this will be the **monthly average mark in a semester**.

To find out the average mark of a semester, add the mark of the semester examination and the monthly average mark of the semester and divide by two. The result will be a **semester average - mark**.

Details are shown in the table below:

Table 1.5 Table of assessment mark

Semester.....		
	Month.....	Mark
Monthly average mark	1	10
	2	10
	3	10
	4	10
Monthly average mark in a semester		$40/4=10$
Semester examination	1	10
Semester average mark		$(10+10)/2 =10$

The result of this calculation will be the average mark of one semester. In fact, there are two semesters in one school year. Therefore, a teacher has to provide two tables as above. By using this table the teacher can calculate the average mark of a year. If the teacher needs to know the average mark of the year, he can make a calculation by adding up the two semesters' average marks and dividing by two. The result will be the average mark of the year.

G. Types of the tests:

There are many types of tests that can be used in the assessment process. A teacher can produce his/her own test or use some techniques or activities in the textbook to reproduce the test. This depends on the convenience of the teacher such as:

1. Ask and answer
2. Complete sentences listen and complete sentences
3. Listen and draw
4. Match
5. Read and write
6. Write

The contents of the test can be produced by using some part of Exercises, Vocabulary list and Revision units.

APPENDIX II

Policy of English language curriculum for Lower Secondary Schools in Lao PDR.

English is required for 99 hours/year (3 hours/week x 33 weeks = 99 hours/year) for lower and upper secondary schools.

1. Objectives, Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes and Values.

A. Objectives:

1. Understand the necessity to communicate in English.
2. Effectively communicate in daily life and about general topics.
3. Understand diverse foreign information in English, and put it into practical use.
4. Through English education, appreciate diverse cultures and introduce our culture in English.

B. Knowledge:

1. Be able to communicate with others.
2. Be able to use English for further study.
3. Be able to use English in international relation.
4. Be able to read and listen for information.
5. Be able to express own views in writing and speaking.

C. Skills:

1. Introducing themselves and others.
2. Understanding and using English in the classrooms.
3. Introducing their own country and others.
4. Describing objectives/occasions/cultural activities.

5. Giving information about daily life, family and environment around us.
6. Comparing things, situations, people and others.
7. Reading for information.
8. Writing a short summary of main points.

D. Attitudes and Values

a. Attitudes:

1. Using English in communication and education.
2. Doing research on information written in English.

b. Values:

1. Having self-confidence.
2. Appreciating their cultures and understanding other cultures.

2. Teaching Techniques:

Teaching-Learning Techniques stress on student-centered technique where the condition of classrooms is suitable or combine student-centered with teacher-centered techniques where the condition of classrooms is not well equipped. The following table shows Teaching-Learning Techniques that are used widely in any English classroom. The bold mark techniques are important and basic techniques which will be explained in details in Teacher's guides. The techniques and important skills in the table below can be used as references for teachers and students to use in their Teaching-Learning process easily. The important skills are: **Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing.**

In the past Teaching-Learning process, these four skills were not intentionally stressed and were neglected. The teaching that uses the following techniques will help students acquire all four skills together which will enable them to speak, listen read and write well.

Table 2.1 Four skills

	Four skills			
	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing
Listen and Repeat	•	•	•	
Look and Say	•		•	
Point and Say Say and Point	•			
Read and Say	•		•	
Say and Write	•		•	•
Ask and Answer	•	•	•	
Complete			•	•
Copy			•	•
Games/Word puzzles	•	•	•	•
Listen and Complete		•		•
Listen and Do		•		
Listen and Draw		•		
Listen and Write		•		•
Match			•	•
Point and Write	•			•
Read (and listen)		•	•	
Remember/Recall	•			•
Songs/Chants	•	•	•	
Write				•

3. Assessment

Marking system is the same as the system used for primary school level.

English for Lao Secondary Schools Book 1

As for competencies and skills, students are acquired to have following skills as follow:

Table 2.2 Four skills.

Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Listen to short and simple sentence with simple words about daily life.	Tell and ask the time/days/months/countries/nationalities/ give short answer/ express like or dislike	Read simple sentence/message about family/classroom/daily life	Write simple sentence about family/school and their daily life



APPENDIX III

Policy of English language curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools in Lao PDR.

1. Objectives:

1. To develop Lao students' English language skills,
2. To produce English knowledge and skills from basic to pre-intermediate levels to Lao students,
3. To introduce various Lao events, phenomena, stories in English to Lao students,
4. To introduce English communication skills in different situations and places to Lao students,
5. To introduce various foreign information to Lao students in English,
6. To introduce Laos, people, language, cultures, traditions, believes, custom, festivals and etc., in English.
7. To encourage students to translate English vocabulary, sentences into Lao and vice versa.

2. Knowledge:

1. Knowledge of English language and communication skill from basic to pre-intermediate level,
2. Knowledge of using English as a foundation for further study,
3. Knowledge of using English vocabulary and grammar,
4. Knowledge of using English to describe places, objects, people, simple events etc...,
5. Knowledge of expressing simple needs and preferences in English language,

6. Knowledge of using English to compare the differences in English language,

3. Skills:

1. Applying four basic of English skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking),
2. Applying basic translation skills,
3. Applying Basic English Communication Skills.

Table3.1 Four skills.

Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Listen to short conversations, dialogues in various workplaces, different short and simple stories.	Speak simple and informal discussions and talks about different events, phenomena, stories, foreign information and topics they have learnt.	Read simple and short paragraphs, passages, massages, letters, stories and etc...	Write simple short sentences, paragraphs, passages, massages, letters, stories and etc...

4. Attitudes and Values

A. Attitudes:

1. Willingness to learn the English language,
2. Willingness to use English in communication in daily lives and at different place,
3. Willingness to use English for further Education.

B. Values:

1. Having self-confidence,
2. Appreciating their cultures and understanding other cultures,
3. Realizing good morality of Lao people,
4. Preserving culture and environment,
5. Being proud of own community and identity.

5. The syllabus outlines (Contents)

A. Grade: Mattayom 5

1. Time allotment: 3 hours/week x 34 = 102 hours/academic year
2. Academic: two semesters
3. Semester I: Total: 56 hrs
4. Semester I: Total: 46 hrs

B. Grade: Mattayom 6

1. Time allotment: 3 hours/week x 34 = 102 hours/academic year
2. Academic: two semesters
3. Semester I: Total: 56 hrs
4. Semester I: Total: 46 hrs

C. Grade: Mattayom 7

1. Time allotment: 4 hours/week x 34 = 136 hours/academic year
2. Academic: two semesters
3. Semester I: Total: 74 hrs
4. Semester I: Total: 62 hrs

D. Teaching Techniques:

1. Seminar form (Presentation ➔ Practice ➔ Production)
2. Student centered technique.
3. Substitution-drills
4. Translation
5. Pair work/group work

E. Teaching materials:

1. Student textbook
2. Teacher manual
3. Flash cards, posters, pictures, boards, and other audio-visual aids

F. Assessment:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Attendance / classroom activities participation | 10% |
| 2. Class work / homework | 10% |
| 3. Monthly test | 30% |
| 4. Semester examination | 50% |

Teaching materials and assessment:

The guideline for teaching materials and assessment is same as what is put in the guideline for primary and lower secondary levels.

APPENDIX IV

Policy of English language curriculum for the National University of Laos

English Curriculum of Bachelor of Arts in English Programme at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

1. Objectives:

1. In order to make students can remember 4 skills of English language and be able to use it correctly.
2. In order to make students have knowledge in general English language, English language, technical English and English event deeply.
3. In order to make students have knowledge and ability in using English in a sector that is necessary in ones work. Besides that it is still build students to have knowledge and ability in using English in corporation/communication to build the understanding to each other between nation that have different culture.
4. In order to make students to have knowledge in English language and ability in using English language in administration, technique, translation, tourism, and to be the government staffs of other organizations.
5. In order to make students have knowledge, understanding in changing in Lao society and in the world. Also, know to adapt suitable to the surrounding environment.
6. In order to make students to be good civil population of the nation which full of the quality, ability and ready to contribute in building and developing the country.

This curriculum has been offered from the academic year 2011-2012. There will be an evaluation and improvement after this curriculum has been taught for 2 years.

2. Requirement for admission:

1. Finish the upper secondary schools or post graduate school, graduate from middle grade of the vocational school(post or higher level)
2. People who have good manner.
3. People who have good physical.

3. Selecting method:

1. The selected students to study at the English Department based on the number provided from the Ministry of Education or the National University of Laos.
2. Take the National entrance examination.
3. Take the entrance examination that the National University of Laos and the Faculty of Letters takes place.

Remark:

A student who passes the entrance examination or was selected from the Ministry of Education or NUOL will be sent to study at the Faculty of Letters; the re-examination to measure the students' level will be taken by the Faculty of Letters in case of the scores do not reach the standard of the Faculty(70% of the total scores). Students have to study to prepare the basic of English language 1 or 2 semesters before studying.

4. Teaching and learning administration:

The teaching and learning administration in the curriculum is divided into 2 systems:

A. Full time enrollment:

1. Students have to perform the teaching and learning full time which consists of 4 academic years or 8 semesters.
2. One academic year is divided into 2 semesters.

3. One semester has 20 weeks: the real time of studying is 16 weeks(2 weeks of revision and semester examination, 1 week for other holidays, and 1 week for vocation)
4. Study 5 days in a week (Monday to Friday) or there is 25 hours minimum and 35 hours maximum.
5. Study minimum 5 hours a day and 7 hours maximum.
6. Start learning from 8:00 to 12:00 A.M in the morning; in the afternoon starts from 13:00 to 16:30 P.M which was the normal system of the National University of Laos.
7. All students have to pass the studying, examination and write the thesis 144 credits through 8 semesters.

B. Part time enrolment:

1. A student has to study one session (only morning, afternoon, or evening session).
2. Student has to perform studying 4 academic years or 8 semesters (there are 2 semesters in an academic year).
3. The real time of studying is 16 weeks (one semester).
4. Study 5 days a week (from Monday to Friday), maximum 4 hours a day
5. Starts from 8:00 to 12:00 A.M in the morning, from 13:00-16:30 P.M in the afternoon, and from 17:00 to 20:30 P.M in the evening.
6. All students have to pass the studying, examination and write the thesis 144 credits through 8 semesters.

5. Study periods:

The curriculum of Bachelor of Arts, majoring in the English language is the normal curriculum which has total 4 years of teaching and learning administration (8 semesters), no more than 5 years maximum (10 semesters).

6. Structure of the curriculum.

1. Subject groups:

The curriculum of the Bachelor of Arts, majoring in the English language, is divided into 4 groups such as:

1. General subject groups	19 credits
2. Basic technical subject groups	39 credits
3. Technical subject groups	76 credits
4. Elective subject groups	04 credits
❖ Write and defense the thesis	06 credits
Total: 144 credits	

Table 4.1 Subjects of each subject groups in the curriculum:

General subject groups 19 (17-6-0)

List	Code	Subjects	Credits
1	S00PO101	Politics	2(2-0-0)
2	S00LS101	Lao studies 1	2(2-0-0)
3	900LS102	Lao studies 2	2(2-0-0)
4	610LC201	Lao culture	2(2-0-0)
5	700PY101	General Psychology	2(2-0-0)
6	251AS111	Computer	2(2-0-0)
7	O00ND201	National-peace defense	1(2-3-0)
8	400EV101	Environment	1(1-0-0)
9	610LL101	Lao	3(2-3-0)
10	610LL102	Lao literature	2(2-0-0)

Table 4.2 Basic technical subject groups 39 (0-70-12)

List	Code	Subjects	Credits
1	620GE111	General English I	3(0-6-0)
2	620GE112	General English II	3(0-6-0)
3	620GE213	General English III	3(0-6-0)
4	620GE214	General English IV	3(0-6-0)
5	620GE315	General English V	3(0-6-0)
6	620GE316	General English VI	3(0-6-0)
7	620GE417	General English VII	3(0-6-0)
8	620GE418	General English VIII	3(0-6-0)
9	620RP111	Reading Practice I	3(0-4-0)
10	620RP112	Reading Practice II	3(0-4-0)
11	620WP111	Writing Practice I	3(0-4-0)
12	620WP112	Writing Practice II	3(0-4-0)
13	620PP111	Pronunciation Practice	2(0-4-0)
14	620VS211	Vocabulary Studies	1(0-2-0)

Table 4.3 Technical subjects: 76(12-102-39)

List	Code	Subjects	Credits
1	620CR221	Critical Reading I	2(0-4-0)
2	620CR222	Critical Reading II	2(0-4-0)
3	620WA421	Western and Asian Cultures	3(2-2-0)
4	620CL421	Comparative Literature	3(2-2-0)
5	620TI321	Translation and Interpreting I	3(0-4-3)
6	620TI322	Translation and Interpreting II	3(0-4-0)
7	620TI323	Translation and Interpreting III	3(0-4-3)

List	Code	Subjects	Credits
8	620TI324	Translation and Interpreting IV	3(0-4-3)
9	620LG421	Lexicology I (Word Formation)	3(0-4-3)
10	620LG422	Lexicology II (Phraseology)	2(0-4-0)
11	620PS321	Public Speaking I	2(0-4-0)
12	620PS322	Public Speaking II	2(0-4-0)
13	620CW221	Composition Writing I	3(2-2-0)
14	620CW222	Composition Writing II	3(2-2-0)
15	620AW321	Academic Writing I	3(2-2-0)
16	620AW322	Academic Writing II	3(2-2-0)
17	620AW423	Academic Writing III(Thesis Writing)	1(0-2-0)
18	620EB221	English for Business I	3(0-4-3)
19	620EB222	English for Business II	3(0-4-3)
20	620EB223	English for Business III	3(0-6-0)
21	620EB224	English for Business IV	3(0-6-0)
22	620EB225	English for Business V	3(0-4-3)
23	620EB226	English for Business VI	3(0-4-3)
24	620GR121	Grammar I	3(0-4-3)
25	620GR122	Grammar II	3(0-4-3)
26	620GR223	Grammar III(Intermediate)	3(0-4-3)
27	620GR224	Grammar IV(Advanced)	3(0-4-3)
28	620GR121	Phonetics	2(0-4-0)

Table 4.4 Elective Courses:

List	Code	Subjects	Credits
1	660JA134	Japanese Language	2(0-4-0)
2	630FL_3_	French Language	2(0-4-0)
3	640VI121	Vietnamese Language	2(0-4-0)
4	690KL121	Korean Language	2(0-4-0)
5	650GC131	Chinese Language	2(0-4-0)
6	670GL342	German Language	2(0-4-0)

Final Project 06 Credits

620 FP 521 Final Project 6(2-3-12)

Table 4.5 Lesson Plan of each level:

Year I 38(9-23-6)

Semester I			Semester II		
Code	Subjects	Credits	Code	Subjects	Credits
620GE111	General English I	3(0-6-0)	620GE112	General English II	3(0-6-0)
620RP111	Reading Practice I	3(0-4-3)	620RP112	Reading Practice II	3(0-4-3)
620WP111	Writing Practice I	3(0-4-3)	620WP112	Writing Practice II	3(0-4-3)
620GR121	Grammar I	3(0-4-3)	620GR122	Grammar II	3(0-4-3)
620PP111	Pronunciation Practice	2(0-4-0)	620PP111	Phonetics	2(0-4-0)

Semester I			Semester II		
Code	Subjects	Credits	Code	Subjects	Credits
S00LS101	Lao studies I	2(2-0-0)	S00LS101	Lao studies II	2(2-0-0)
610LL101	Lao Language	3(2-2-0)	700PY101	Psychology	2(2-0-0)
400EV101	Environment	1(1-1-0)			2(2-0-0)
Total		20(5-12-3)	Total		18(4-11-3)

Table 4.6 Year II

35(10-21-4)

Semester I			Semester II		
Code	Subjects	Credits	Code	Subjects	Credits
620GE213	General English III	3(0-6-0)	620GE214	General English IV	3(0-6-0)
620CR221	Critical Reading I	2(0-4-0)	620CR222	Critical Reading II	2(0-4-0)
620GR223	Grammar III	3(0-4-3)	620GR224	Grammar IV	3(0-4-3)
620EB221	English for Business I	3(0-4-3)	620EB222	English for Business II	3(0-4-3)
620CW221	Composition Writing I	3(2-2-0)	620CW222	Composition Writing II	3(2-2-0)
251AS111	Computer	2(2-0-0)	620VS211	Vocabulary Studies	1(0-2-0)
610LL101	Lao Language	3(2-2-0)	700PY101	Psychology	2(2-0-0)
O00ND201	National Defense	1(0-3-0)	610LC201	Lao Culture	2(2-0-0)
Total		16(4-11-2)	Total		19(6-11-2)

Table 4.8 Year III

30(6-22-2)

Semester I			Semester II		
Code	Subjects	Credits	Code	Subjects	Credits
620GE315	General English V	3(0-6-0)	620GE316	General English VI	3(0-6-0)
620EB323	English for Business III	3(0-6-0)	620EB324	English for Business IV	3(0-6-0)
620TI321	Translation/Interpreting I	3(0-4-3)	620TI322	Translation/Interpreting II	3(0-4-3)
620AW321	Academic Writing I	3(2-2-0)	620AW322	Academic Writing II	3(2-2-0)
620PS321	Public Speaking I	2(0-4-0)	620PS322	Public Speaking II	3(2-2-0)
610LL102	Literature	2(2-0-0)			
Total		16(4-11-1)	Total		14(2-11-1)

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Table 4.7 Year IV

32(4-21-7)

Semester I			Semester II		
Code	Subjects	Credits	Code	Subjects	Credits
620GE417	General English VII	3(0-6-0)	620GE418	General English VIII	3(0-6-0)
620EB425	English for Business V	3(0-4-3)	620EB426	English for Business VI	3(0-4-3)
620TI423	Translation/Interpreting III	4(0-4-6)	620TI424	Translation/Interpreting IV	4(0-4-6)

Semester I			Semester II		
Code	Subjects	Credits	Code	Subjects	Credits
620AW423	Academic Writing III	1(0-2-0)	620LG422	Lexicology II	2(0-4-0)
620WA421	Western and Asian Cultures	3(2-2-0)	620CL421	Comparative Literature	3(2-2-0)
620LG421	Lexicology I	3(0-4-3)	620GE418	General English VIII	3(0-6-0)
			620TI424	Translation/ Interpreting IV	4(0-4-6)
			620LG422	Lexicology II	2(0-4-0)
			620FP401	Final Project	6(2-2-6)
Total	6 Subjects	17(2-11-4)	Total	5 Subjects + 1 Project	15(2-10-3)

APPENDIX V

English textbooks for Lower Secondary Schools in Lao PDR.

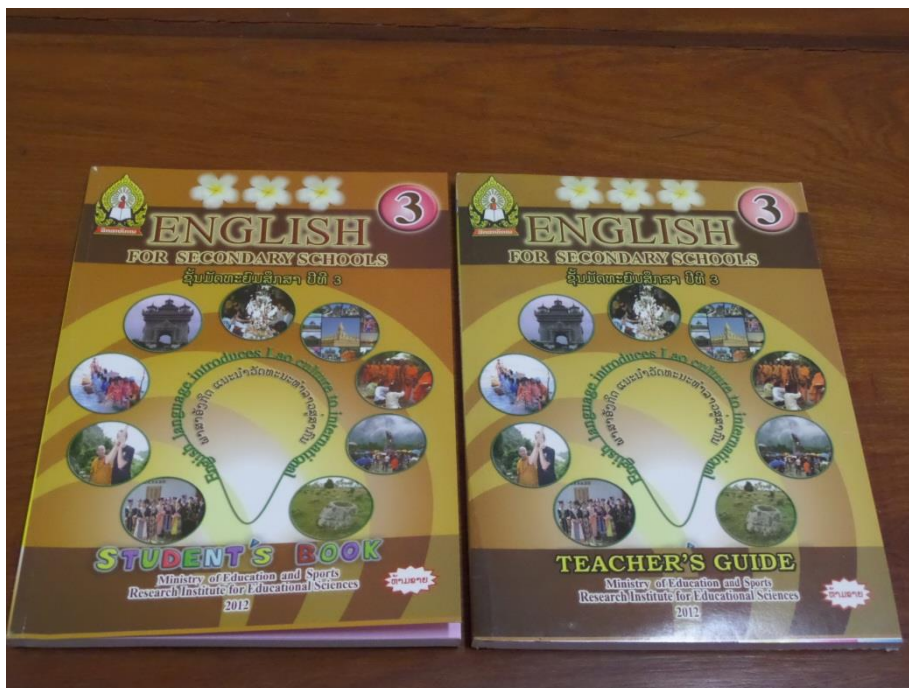
Picture 5.1 Pictures of English textbooks for grade 1 of Lower Secondary Schools.



Picture 5.2 Pictures of English textbooks for grade 2 of Lower Secondary Schools.



Picture 5.3 Pictures of English textbooks for grade 3 of Lower Secondary Schools.



Picture 5.4 Pictures of English textbooks for grade 4 of Lower Secondary Schools.

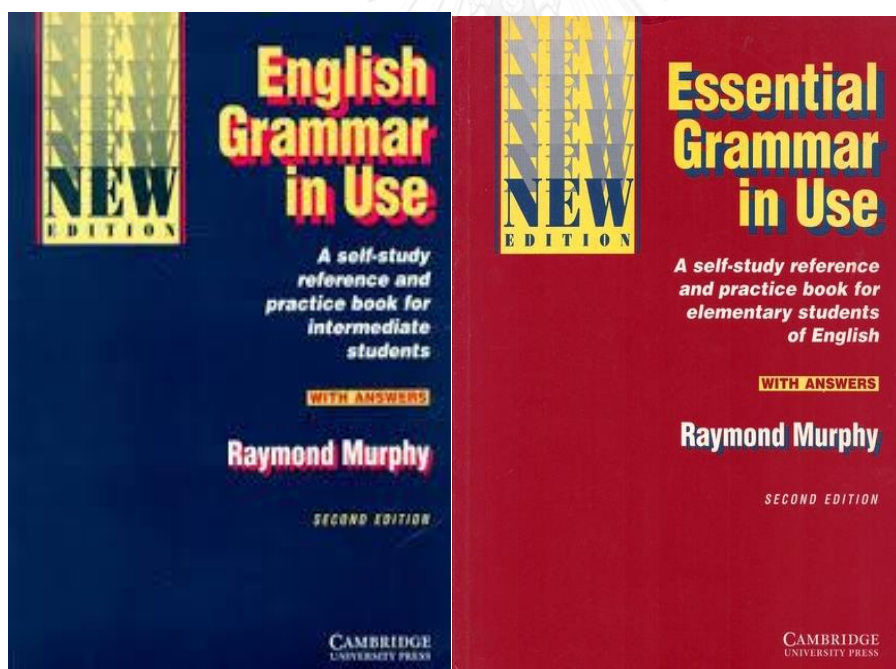


APPENDIX VI

**English textbooks for the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education,
Foreign Language Department.**

Figure 6.1 Picture of English textbooks of the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department.





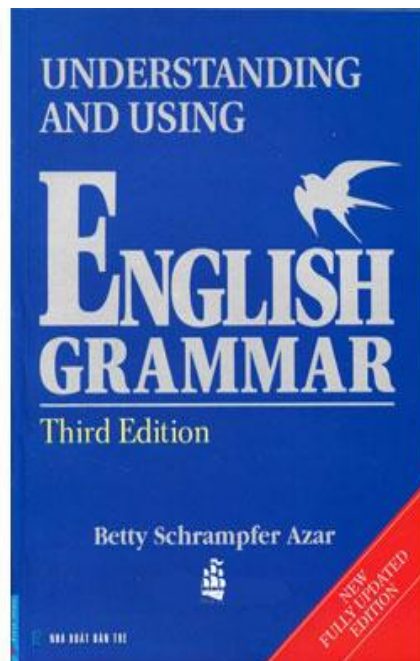
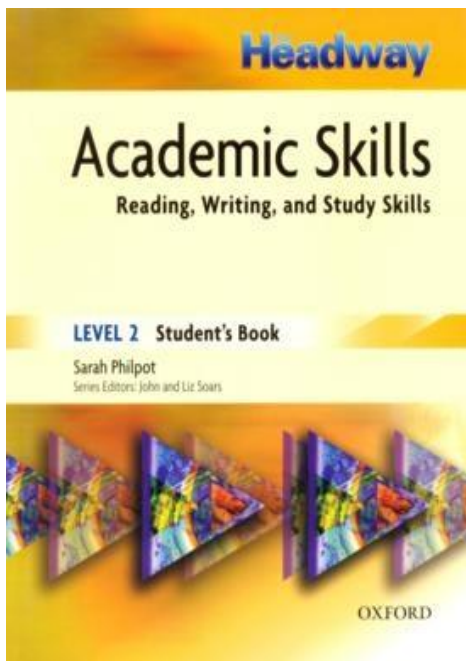


Figure 6.2 Covers of English textbooks of the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department.



National University of Laos
Faculty of Education
English Pedagogy

**Approaches & Methods
In
English Teaching
Theory and practice**

For Classroom Use Only

Methodology in Language Teaching

An Anthology of Current Practice

Edited by

Jack C. Richards
Willy A. Renandya

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Faculty of Education

Literature Material Resources
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Folktale & Legend
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Faculty of Education

Translation Material
First Thing First

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CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

Compiled and written by
Associate. Prof. Athit Outhy CHATOUPHONEXAY

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Ministry of Education and Sports
National University of Laos
Faculty of Education

**Material for
Report and Thesis Writing**

Department of Foreign Languages

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National University of Laos
Faculty of Education

Phonetics
Theories and Practice

Department of Foreign Languages

CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

For Classroom Use Only



National University of Laos
Faculty of Education

Process Writing
Going from sentences to
compositions
Book 1 & 2

Student Workbook

For Classroom Use Only



National University of Laos
Faculty of Education

Foundation English Grammar

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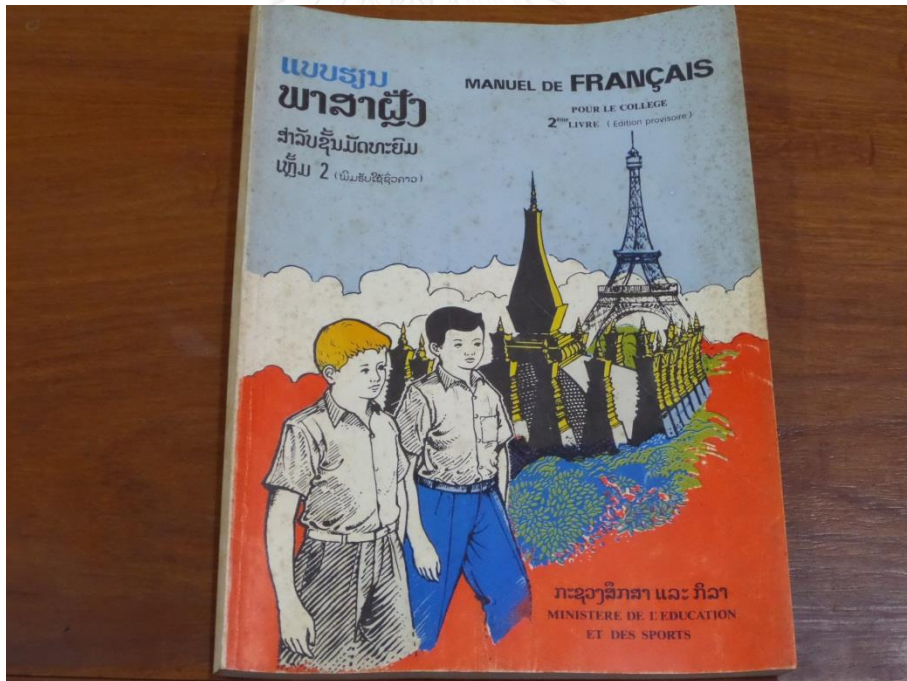
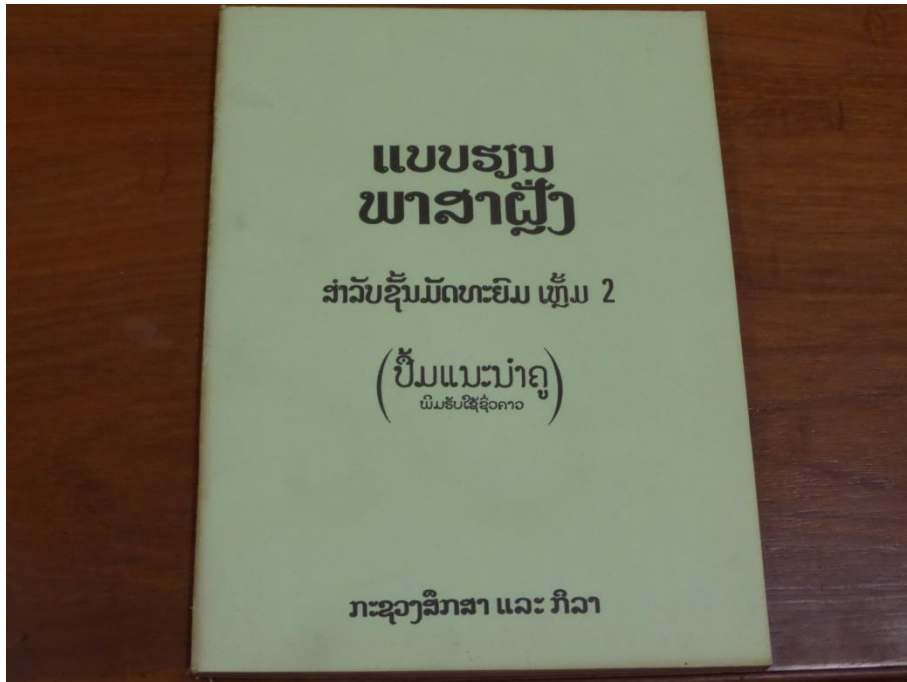
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APPENDIX VI

Textbooks used for teaching and learning in Laos during the French colonial period.

Figure: 6.1 Textbooks used for teaching and learning in Laos during the French colonial period.





APPENDIX VII**A: Questions for students**

1. Do you have any problems in learning English at your schools? If yes, please identify those problems.
 - 1) Curriculum
 - 2) Classroom and environment
 - 3) Textbooks
 - 4) Teachers and teaching methods
 - 5) Other problems, please specify
2. In your opinion, what are the main factors affecting English learning and teaching at your school?
 - 1) Cultural factors
 - 2) Economic factors
 - 3) Social factors
 - 4) Infrastructural factors
3. In your view, how to improve English language learning and teaching at your school?

B: Questions for students in Lao language

ຄຳຖາມສຳພາດນັກສຶກສາ

1. ເຈົ້າຮຽນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ລັກແຫ່ງໃນປະຈຸບັນນຳ?
2. ເຈົ້າມີບັນຫາຫຍັງບໍ່ໃນການຮຽນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ໃນມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຂອງເຈົ້າ? ຖ້າມີກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ ແລະ ບອກເຫດຜົນ.
 - 1./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບຫຼັກສູດ;
 - 2./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບຫ້ອງຮຽນ ແລະ ສະພາບແວດລ້ອມ;
 - 3./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບຕຳລາຮຽນ;
 - 4./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບອາຈານສອນ ແລະ ວິທີການສອນ;
 - 5./ ບັນຫາອື່ນໆ.(ກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ)
 - 6./ ເປັນຫຍັງເຈົ້າຈຶ່ງຄິດວ່າມັນເປັນບັນຫາສຳລັບເຈົ້າ? ກະລຸນາບອກ

ເຫດຜົນ

3. ເຈົ້າຄິດວ່າບັດໃຈອັນໃດທີ່ສົ່ງຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ໃນມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຂອງເຈົ້າ? ຍ້ອນຫຍັງ? ກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ.
 - 1./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານວັດທະນາທຳ;
 - 2./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານເສດຖະກິດ;
 - 3./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານສັງຄົມ;
 - 4./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານໂຄງລ່າງ.
4. ໃນຄວາມຄິດຂອງເຈົ້າ, ເຈົ້າຄິດວ່າຄວນຈະມີການປັບປຸງແນວໃດເພື່ອເຮັດໃຫ້ການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຂອງເຈົ້າດີຂຶ້ນໃນອະນາຄົດ?

❖ ໝາຍເຫດ: - ອາດຈະມີຄຳຖາມເຈາະຈື່ມຕາມຄຳຕອບ.

C: Questions for teachers

Questions for teachers

1. Do you have any problems in teaching English at your schools? If yes, please identify those problems.
 - 1) Curriculum
 - 2) Classroom and environment
 - 3) Textbooks
 - 4) Teachers and teaching methods
 - 5) Other problems, please specify

2. In your opinion, what are the main factors affecting English learning and teaching at your school?
 - 1) Cultural factors
 - 2) Economic factors
 - 3) Social factors
 - 4) Infrastructural factors

3. In your view, how to improve English language learning and teaching at your school?

4. What do you think about Lao PDR policy on English language learning and teaching?

D: Questions for teachers in Lao language

ຄຳຖາມສຳພາດອາຈານ

1. ທ່ານມີບັນຫາຫຍັງບໍ່ໃນການສອນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ໃນມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລທ່ານ? ຖ້າມີກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ ແລະ ບອກເຫດຜົນ.
 - 1./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບຫຼັກສູດ;
 - 2./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບຫ້ອງຮຽນ ແລະ ສະພາບແວດລ້ອມ;
 - 3./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບຕຳລາສອນ;
 - 4./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບອາຈານສອນ ແລະ ວິທີການສອນ;
 - 5./ ບັນຫາອື່ນໆ.(ກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ)
 - 6./ ເປັນຫຍັງທ່ານຈຶ່ງຄິດວ່າມັນເປັນບັນຫາສຳລັບທ່ານ? ກະລຸນາບອກ

ເຫດຜົນ

2. ທ່ານຄິດວ່າບັດໃຈອັນໃດທີ່ສົ່ງຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ໃນມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຂອງທ່ານ? ຍ້ອນຫຍັງ? ກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ.
 - 1./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານວັດທະນາທຳ;
 - 2./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານເສດຖະກິດ;
 - 3./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານສັງຄົມ;
 - 4./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານໂຄງລ່າງ.
3. ໃນຄວາມຄິດຂອງທ່ານ, ທ່ານຄິດວ່າຄວນຈະມີການປັບປຸງແນວໃດເພື່ອເຮັດໃຫ້ການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຂອງທ່ານດີຂຶ້ນໃນອະນາຄົດ?
4. ທ່ານຄິດວ່ານະໂຍບາຍການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ ສປປ ລາວ ເປັນແນວໃດ?

❖ ໝາຍເຫດ: - ອາດຈະມີຄຳຖາມເຈາະຈື່ມຕາມຄຳຕອບ.

E: Questions for policy makers and school directors

Questions for policy makers and school directors

1. What do think about the situation of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR?
2. What are the problems of English teaching and learning in Lao PDR?
 - 1) Curriculum
 - 2) Classroom and environment
 - 3) Textbooks
 - 4) Teachers and teaching methods
 - 5) Other problems, please specify
3. In your opinion, what are the key factors affecting English learning and teaching in your school and in Lao PDR?
 - 1) Cultural factors
 - 2) Economic factors
 - 3) Social factors
 - 4) Infrastructural factors
4. What do think about the policy of English language teaching and learning in Lao PDR?

5. In the aspect of English, is Lao PDR ready to enter the ASEAN community in 2015?
6. What are the similarities and differences between private and the government schools in the policy of English language teaching and learning?
7. What suggestions do you have for developing English teaching and learning in your school or in Lao PDR?

F: Questions for policy makers and school directors in Lao language

ຄໍາຖາມສໍາພາດຜູ້ບໍລິຫານ ແລະ ອໍານວຍການມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລ

1. ທ່ານຄິດວ່າສະພາບການຮຽນ ແລະ ສອນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ ເປັນແນວໃດ?
2. ທ່ານຄິດວ່າບັນຫາອັນໃດທີ່ສົ່ງຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນ ພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ? ຍ້ອນຫຍັງ? ກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ.
 - 1./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບຫຼັກສູດ;
 - 2./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບຫ້ອງຮຽນ ແລະ ສະພາບແວດລ້ອມ;
 - 3./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບຕໍາລາສອນ;
 - 4./ ບັນຫາກ່ຽວກັບອາຈານສອນ ແລະ ວິທີການສອນ;
 - 5./ ບັນຫາອື່ນໆ.(ກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ)
 - 6./ ເປັນຫຍັງທ່ານຈຶ່ງຄິດວ່າມັນເປັນບັນຫາ? ກະລຸນາບອກເຫດຜົນ
3. ທ່ານຄິດວ່າບັດໃຈອັນໃດທີ່ສົ່ງຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນ ພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ໃນມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຂອງທ່ານ ແລະ ຢູ່ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ? ຍ້ອນຫຍັງ? ກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ.
 - 1./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານວັດທະນາທໍາ;

- 2./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານເສດຖະກິດ;
- 3./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານສັງຄົມ;
- 4./ ບັດໃຈທາງດ້ານໂຄງລ່າງ.
4. ທ້ານຄົດວ່ານະໂຍບາຍການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນພາສາອັງກິດຢູ່ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ ແບັ້ນແນວໃດ? ກະລຸນາອະທິບາຍ.
5. ສປປ ລາວເຮົາໄດ້ມີຄວາມກຽມພ້ອມທາງດ້ານພາສາອັງກິດແນວໃດເພື່ອກ້າວເຂົ້າສູ່ປະຊາຄົມເສດຖະກິດອາຊຽນໃນປີ 2015?
6. ການປະຕິບັດນະໂຍບາຍການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນພາສາອັງກິດລະຫວ່າງ ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລພາກລັດ ແລະ ເອກະຊົນ ມີຄວາມຄ້າຍຄືກັນ ແລະ ແຕກຕ່າງກັນແນວໃດ?
7. ທ້ານມີຂໍ້ສະເໜີ ແລະ ຄໍາແນະນໍາແນວໃດແດ່ ເພື່ອປັບປຸງການຮຽນ ແລະ ການສອນພາສາອັງກິດ ຢູ່ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລທັງພາກລັດ ແລະ ເອກະຊົນ ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ ໃຫ້ດີຂຶ້ນໃນອະນາຄົດ?

ໝາຍເຫດ: - ອາດຈະມີຄໍາຖາມເຈາະຈໍ້ມຕາມຄໍາຕອບ.

G: List of informants

No	Informants	Number of informants	Date of interview	Place of interview
1	A Vice Rector of the National University of Laos	01	January 31 st , 2014	At the office of Vice Rector of the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital
2	A retired staff, (a former founder and teachers of Viengxai Teachers Training Schools, and a former Head of Teacher Training College, Ministry of Education and Sports.	01	January 29 th , 2014	At his home in Dongdok Campus, Vientiane Capital
3	Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology. (Former Head of Russian Language Department)	01	January 24 th , 2014	At the office of Director General of Organization and Personnel Department, Ministry of Science and Technology, Vientiane Capital
4	Vice dean of the Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.	01	January 30 th , 2014	At the English Department, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos.

No	Informants	Number of informants	Date of interview	Place of interview
5	Policy maker1: Head of the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports.	01	March 4 th , 2014	At the Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, Vientiane Capital.
6	Policy maker: 2 Deputy Director of the National Research Institute for Education Sciences, Ministry of Education and Sports.	01	March 28 th , 2014	At the Institute of Science Research, Ministry of Education and Sports, Vientiane Capital.
7	Policy maker: 3 Head of Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports.	01	March 13, 2014	At the Department of Planning, Ministry of Education and Sports, Vientiane Capital.
8	University directors 1: Head of the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, National University of Laos.	01	March 7 th , 2014.	At the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital.
9	University directors 2: Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos	01	February 21 st , 2014	At the office of Acting Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Souphanouvong University of Laos, Luangprabang

No	Informants	Number of informants	Date of interview	Place of interview
				province.
10	University directors: 3 a rector of the Champasack University of Laos.	01	February 28 th , 2014	At the office of the rector of the Champasack University of Laos, Champasack province
11	University directors: 4 Director of Sahakitsamphan College, Higher Diploma of English.	01	January 22 nd , 2014	At the office of the director of the Sahakitsamphan College, Higher Diploma of English, Vientiane Capital.
12	Teachers of the National University of Laos the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department.	03	January 29 th , 2014	At the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Department, Vientiane Capital.
13	Teachers of the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department) interviewed on February,	05	February 21, 2014	At the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department in Luangprabang province.
14	Teachers of the Champasack	04	from 25 th to 28 th of	At the Champasack University of Laos,

No	Informants	Number of informants	Date of interview	Place of interview
	University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department.		February, 2014	Faculty of Education, English Department in Champasack province.
15	Teachers of the Private Sahakitsamphant College	02	January 22, 2014	At the private Sahakitsamphan College, Vientiane Capital.
16	Year 4 students of the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department	14	from 27 th to 31 st of January, 2014	At the National University of Laos, Faculty of Education, Foreign language Department, Vientiane Capital.
17	Year 4 students of the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department.	13	from 17 th to 21 st of February, 2014	At the Souphanouvong University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, English Department, Luangprabang province.
18	Students of the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department.	14	from 25 th to 28 th of February, 2014	At the Champasack University of Laos, Faculty of Education, English Department in Champasack province.
19	Students of the Private Sahakitsamphant College.	09	from 22 nd to 27 th of January,	At the Private Sahakitsamphant College, Vientiane

No	Informants	Number of informants	Date of interview	Place of interview
			2014,	Capital.
	Total	75		



VITA

Mr. Khonesavanh XAYAVONG

Mr. Xayavong was born on August 16, 1980 in Vientiane province, Lao PDR. He obtained a Bachelor of Arts in English (Special Program) from the National University of Laos, Faculty of Letters, Department of English, in academic year 2006-2007. After graduation, he worked at the Banking Institute. In 2003, he received scholarship from Chulalongkorn University to study for M.A. in Southeast Asian Studies at the Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

