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GUIDE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAM FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS AT THE SILPAKORN UNIVERSITY IN THAILAND

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Abstract

This research aims to develop a guide to the development of the intensive English program for Graduate students in the study context of reviewing the English intensive courses for graduate students in three institutions: Kent State University, Chulalongkorn University, and Mahidol University, and compare them to the English intensive course in Silpakorn University. The objectives were 1) To study the potential of the current intensive English program with the expected

proficiency level 2) To study the English language skills required for the development of the Intensive English Program for Graduate Students at the Silpakorn University in Thailand. The research design followed mixed methods to answer the research questions. The data was collected from both primary data by survey questionnaire with 46 students enrolled in the ENG 102 and ENG 103 courses of the academic year of 2019/2020 in the first semester from the Silpakorn University, Sanamchandra Palace Campus, and secondary data using descriptive research by focus groups discussion with 6 students from the previous group, and interviews with two teachers. The data was collected from 1) student survey 2) teacher interview and 3) focus group discussion, and analyzed by calculating the mean (\bar{x}), the standard deviation, priority needs index (PNI), frequency, and document analysis. According to the research results, the current course only meets the overall expectation at a medium level. The course is found to only focus on passing the standard criteria but does not meet several needs of learners in relevant to academic purposes, communication, and occupational purposes. More program options for specific skills are highly recommended including academic writing skills, reading skills at a practical level, writing skills for occupational purposes, reading skills for occupational purposes, speaking skills for academic purposes, and listening skills for occupational purposes.

Keywords

Curriculum Development, Intensive English Program, English for Academic Purposes, English for Communication, English for Occupational Purposes

1. Introduction

Since 1967, Thailand has joined with other 4 countries in founding the Association of South East Asian Nations or ASEAN. Other nations thusly joined in later and now reach to 10 countries. In 2003, all the nations had agreed on plans to promote the ASEAN community which contributes to ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), Socio-Cultural Pillar, and Political and Security Pillar and planned. Officially in 2015, AEC has fully implemented and agreed to use English as a common communicative language among nations. It became a huge challenge yet also an opportunity for Thailand across the globalization of the 21st-century education.

The Minister of Education of Thailand (2016) has written the announcement of the Higher Education Commission regarding the policy of raising English language standards in higher education institutions. It provoked all the universities to reform their English standards. The vision

was to develop an effective program is focusing on three language skills which are 1) English for academic purposes 2) English for communication, and 3) English for occupational purposes. The missions were to improve the current policies, standards, assessments, curriculum planning and instructional design to meet international standards.

Accordingly, Silpakorn University has established standard criteria and tests of English proficiency as the admission and graduation requirements (Silpakorn University, 2019). It was addressed that students in all disciplines at the master's and doctorate levels must pass the English language test from the standardized tests according to the CEFR or from the language testing council that has standards comparable to CEFR at level A2 and above. There is an exempt only for those who have graduated from an English-speaking course.

The Center for General Education Management and English Language Development (G&E Center) of the Silpakorn University thusly, has developed an *Intensive Courses for graduate students* (Master-Doctorate) for students who have not yet passed the criteria by offering 2 courses, namely ENG 102 and ENG 103, for those who have scored in the A2 and B1 criteria, respectively.

However, it is found that most of the students who have passed the training program still have a problem in using English in their academic and occupational purposes. Approximately 75 percent of English teachers in Thailand were found to have English proficiency at only A2 levels (The Nation Thailand, 2018)

Although in the past, the government has been formulating strategic plans and development policies to upgrade the English language skills of all groups of people continually, the implementation of the policy seemed to have not seen concrete results and was considered less successful. This is reflected from the results of the English skills ranking of the Thai population according to the survey of the English Language Skill Ranking Office of EF (Education First). The test of the population of 1,300,000 people in non-English language mothers of 88 countries, Thailand is ranked at 64, which is only higher than Kazakhstan, Burma, Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Uzbekistan, and belonging to groups with English language skills *very low* (Prachachat Business, 2018).

Comparing to the proportion of English used in ASEAN countries, it is found that Thai people who communicate in English are at a low level with an average of only 48.54, making Thailand ranked 16th out of 21 countries in the Asian level compared to the average of all countries that will be at a medium level of 53.49 (EF, 2018). Being low means being able to only use skills

for traveling, discussing in small groups of coworkers, or only simple messaging email with coworkers (Council of Europe, n.d.).

For this reason, the research was to study and develop the guide to the development of the intensive English program for Graduate students at Silpakorn University to meet with the objectives of learning English courses including student needs.

2. Research Objectives

The principal objectives of the study were as follows.

- To study the potential of the current intensive English program to meet student needs.
- To study the English language skills required for the development of the Intensive English Program for Graduate Students at the Silpakorn University in Thailand

3. Literature Review

3.1. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was created to establish international standards for explaining the level of language proficiency. It was initially used within the European Union, that is not just the level of English, but also other international languages. Since then, the CEFR language policy has been developed and gained wide acceptance around the world (Council of Europe, n.d.).

The CEFR's Language Proficiency Framework shows that: (1) learners at level B1 should have sufficient English skills for preliminary studies, offer opinions, explain the idea, but maybe somewhat stuck in either academic or daily usage which is not yet considered fully sufficient in the work. (2) As for level B2, learners must be able to understand the importance of complex content, including content that has many and various terminologies. At this level, students can work independently on academic context and use English like an expert but there will be only slight discontinuity and accuracy limitations (Council of Europe, n.d.).

3.2. Definitions of English Language Skills for Graduate Students

In accordance with the announcement of the Higher Education Commission on the Policy of Raising the English Language Standards in Higher Education Institutions, announced on April 12, 2016) (The Higher Education Commission, 2016), the necessary skills for higher education in level

3 students (Postgraduate or higher) have three key skills which are 1) English for academic purposes 2) English for communication, and 3) English for occupational purposes. The learners should develop 3 skills and are expected to use languages with digital knowledge to meet the quality of education to be lifelong learners of the future.

According to Gibbons (2009) , English for academic purposes is the ability to use the English language that meets the objectives of the study. The language is compiled according to the correct structure principles for use in publishing academic papers, books, or documents. English for communication is the ability to use English as a professional communication tool. That is useful for a career, such as using it in teaching and learning courses (Albostan, 2012; Febriana, Intan, Oktaviani, & Supriadi, 2019). English for occupational purposes is the ability to use English for communication, informal information exchange, or using language to search for information from foreign sources (Roger & Rogers, 1976; Valette, 1977).

3.3. Curriculum Development Concept

The curriculum is defined as a plan or program to impart knowledge, skills, expertise, and other competencies for intended purpose through learning experiences designed to enable learners to process knowledge or skills using a variety of appropriate activities (Taba, 1962; Oliva, 1992). The curriculum development model consists of four key elements: objectives, content, learning experience, and evaluation.

According to Tyler (1949) Graves (2000), Nunan (2001), Asawaphokin (2011), and Wanthong (2018), a training course aims to develop specific skills, knowledge, or ideas than general curriculum development. It is more specific in the composition and procedures that are more detailed. The components of the training program consist of 7 components: 1) objective setting 2) content 3) learning experience 4) learning media 5) training location 6) training period and 7) evaluation measurement.

Moreover, the researchers were able to synthesize the training course development processes to 7 steps (see Figure 1). The first step is to analyze the needs. This process focuses on the study of basic information about the English proficiency, fields of studies, occupations, and needs of the learners, including course requirements. This should be inquired directly from students and teachers to study internal and external social factors. The mastery goals should be set to meet the needs and course requirements. Then, the following steps are about to design the details of the contents,

learning activities, materials to suit the goals. Once the design parts are done, the assessment and evaluation process will be used to find the efficiency and effectiveness of the course.

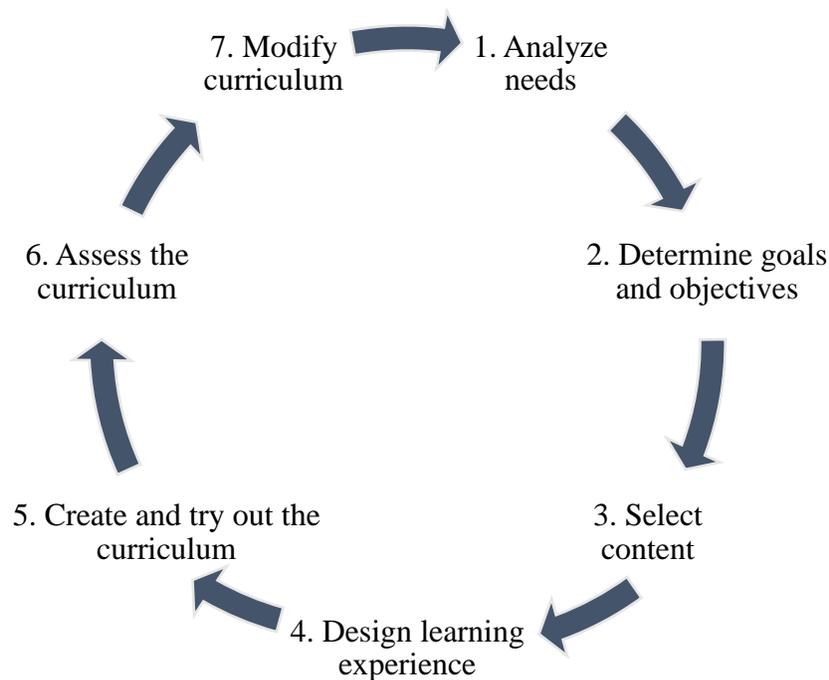


Figure 1: *Synthesis Model of the English Training Course Development Process*
(Model Resulted from the Concept Study)

3.4. English Language Curriculum Development Concept

The invention of the English language curriculums started in England, the country where English is the native language. It firstly focused on curriculum development to manage to teach and learning within various institutions both within and outside the country. It is mostly focused on the study of grammar and literature to understand thought expressions (Ball, 1985). Later, it started to look at the student-centered learning with a focus on personal development (Dixon, 1975). Most recently, after 2000, there is a focus on self-development, and comprehension skills (McGraw, 2010). English for academic purposes concepts focus on gradually mastery objectives from an understanding of general messages to criticism level and be able to explain the mood and tone of the speaker which is the ultimate goal. The teaching styles should help learners remembering key characteristics and forms of academic language.

3.5. Learning Theory Concept

- Adult learning theory focuses on learner-centered and the role of learners in self-development for sustainable learning. There are 4 important principles of adult education: 1)

Adult learners need to take part in planning and evaluating their learning. 2) Experience (including errors) is the basis of activity design 3) Adult learners are interested in learning subjects that are relevant to them at that time, both in life and work. 4) Adult learners will learn better in problem-based learning than content-based learning (Knowles, 1986).

- Learning behavior theory focusing on cognitive behavior aims to develop higher-order thinking skills for students to develop thinking skills for long-term use, not only remembering or understanding (Deller, 2019). Psychological behavior begins with receiving information, responding to value, and starting to be organized or systematically become the individual's attitude or behavior (Dave, 1967).

4. The Study Context

In this research, the researchers reviewed the English intensive courses for graduate students in three institutions which are *Kent State University, Chulalongkorn University, and Mahidol University*, and comparing them to the English intensive course in Silpakorn University.

- Kent State University, Ohio State, USA is a 50-year old university with a focus on research and was rated in the first-tier list of the best national university by the US news agency. It is also in the world's top 100 graduate study management (Kent State University, 2019). The admission criteria for students at level B2 or higher, depending on the field of study and most specializations accept at a C1 level or higher. Students who have been accepted to further study but do not meet the required score. It is necessary to attend additional English language training courses organized by the ESL center to meet certain criteria. There will be 7 weeks of each course.
- Chulalongkorn University is the oldest university in Thailand. The university has been maintaining its place in the top 50 universities in Asia for several years. At the master's level, the admission criteria for the master level is at B1 or higher in some faculties. For the doctorate level, students will have a higher criterion at B2. If students fail to meet the required score, they must submit a new test score to pass the criteria before graduation or attend intensive English training for two courses which are Academic English for Graduate Studies and Thesis Writing and must pass the subjects before graduation. If the score is less than the B1 level but at the B1 level, students will only take the Thesis Writing class. It

takes 3 hours per lesson per week, totaling 48 hours per course (Chulalongkorn University, 2014).

- Mahidol University is one of the top universities in Thailand with a high reputation for its graduate programs especially in research with many research works at the international level. According to the announcement of the faculty of graduate studies, for a master's degree, students are required to pass A2 to B2 levels for the admission and B1 to B2 for graduation (Mahidol University, 2019b). For the doctorate level, there are similar criteria. There are different levels of testing criteria according to the faculty who attended the study which may have a different faculty or field than a master's degree, but they still range from A2 to B2 and have a graduation criterion for B1 to B2 (Mahidol University, 2019a).
- Silpakorn University is a national university in Thailand. The current English language training courses at Silpakorn University are designed to be a separate course for each skill level equivalent to the English language criteria. The courses focus on integrating all skills where students from all disciplines. Students at the master and doctorate levels must pass the English language test from the standardized tests according to the CEFR or from the language testing council that has standards comparable to CEFR at level A2 for admission and B2 for graduation. There is an exempt only for those who have graduated from an English-speaking course. It takes 15 hours per lesson per week for a total of 30 hours (Silpakorn University, 2019)

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Population and Sample

The population was 131 students who are studying at the graduate level at Silpakorn University, Sanamchandra Palace Campus who enrolled in the Intensive English Training Course ENG 102 and ENG 103 in the first semester of the academic year 2019. Three sample groups were used for data collection. The data was collected from both primary data by survey questionnaire with 46 students (out of the whole population of 131 students) selected by purposive sampling, and secondary data using descriptive research (focus groups with 6 students, and interviews with two teachers, both were selected by purposive sampling).

5.2 Study Variables

The Independent variable is the Intensive English Program for Graduate Students at the Silpakorn University in Thailand. Dependent variables are 1) expected skills in an intensive English course 2) required skills for developing an intensive English course, and 3) current intensive English course satisfaction.

5.3 Research Process

This research uses a Mixed-methods research model that focuses on collecting both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time (The convergent parallel design) to study the true state without controlling variables or situations (Creswell & Plano, 2011).

- Step 1 The researchers collected documents and researches related to curriculum development, which are Silpakorn University announcement for the standard criteria and test of English proficiency (2019), concepts and theories related to curriculum development, training curriculum development, and English language skills for graduate students.
- Step 2 The researchers used the interview form to interview with 2 teachers about the current learning conditions of students in all 3 English skills, including English for academic purposes, English for communication, English for occupational purposes.
- Step 3 The researchers used the questionnaire with 43 students from 2 classrooms in the intensive English course, ENG 102 and ENG 103 by distributing the questionnaires in the classroom and collecting data immediately, following by FGD with 6 students for 20 minutes.
- Step 4 The researchers collected data from both questionnaires and note-taking by checking the completeness of the data obtained to prepare, analyze, summarize, and discuss the results in the next step.

5.4 Data Collection Tools

There were three major data collection tools used in this study:

- The teacher interview was open-end questions with a structured interview design. It was used for asking about the current statement and expectations of the program. There were five items include background, course objectives, teaching and learning procedures, limitation, and expectation. The evaluation of the content validity by 5 experts using Likert Five Rating Scales (5 = very high to 1 = very low) was found that means varied from 3.33-

4.33 and standard deviations (S.D.) varied from 0.47-0.82. It indicates that the interview contains relevant questions that could be used. The data were analyzed by content analysis.

- Focus group discussion questions were used for gathering deep information and needed skills which did not mention in the survey form. There were 4 questions include students' roles, current course information, knowledge application, and students' motivation and expectation. The evaluation of the content validity by 5 experts using Likert Five Rating Scales (5 = very high to 1 = very low) was found which means varied from 4.00-4.67 and S.D. varied from 0.00-0.82. It indicates that the questions contain relevant questions that could be used. The data were analyzed by content analysis.
- The Student survey questionnaire was used for asking current stations and student expectations toward the current intensive English program. There are three parts: 1) demographic part 2) the five rating scale questions (5 = very satisfied to 1 = very unsatisfied) about self-evaluation about their knowledge, comprehension, and application, and 3) suggestion for the course. The evaluation of the content validity by 5 experts using Likert Five Rating Scales (5 = very high to 1 = very low) was found which means varied from 3.33-4.67 and S.D. were all 0.47. It indicates that the questionnaire could be used. The mean, standard deviation, PNI, and frequency were used for analyzing collected data.

6. Data Analysis

6.1. Teacher Interview Data Collection

The data was collected from two teachers who are currently teaching the intensive English program at Silpakorn University. The interview was conducted in a one-one interview in Thai. The highlights can be summarized as follows (see table 1).

Table 1: *Data Analysis of the Teacher Interview*

Item	Data Analysis
1. Background of the course	The university has implemented the policy of the English standards by offering the course for those who failed to meet the requirements.
2. Objectives of course	The course is aimed to help the students to develop English skills for passing the requirement in a short time as it is concerned that the students might not pass the standard examination from other organizations.

3. Teaching and learning procedures	The courses are options for students who failed to meet the criteria and do not plan to take a test from other organizations. Students are mixed from various faculties but grouped by their levels of proficiency and available schedule. The course is primary designed for the major content but allows students to choose their own choices for topics of studies in some lessons.
4. Problems in designing the course	Since the curriculum is designed to meet with the CEFR criteria, the calibration is relatively high when compared to the learners' level of English. Therefore, there may be problems such as the provision of teaching materials or many students do not know what level they are.
5. Expectations of the course	Students pass the course and can use the English language at a better level.

6.2 The Focus Group Discussion Data Collection

The data was collected from 6 students who are currently studying the intensive English program at Silpakorn University. Three students are in ENG 102 section and three students are in ENG 103 section. The discussion was conducted in Thai. The highlights can be summarized as follows (see table 2).

Table 2: *Data Analysis of the Focus Group Discussion*

Item	Data Analysis
1. What role do students play in their studies?	Learners can choose the content of activities but are not involved in the instructional design and the main activity in the classroom.
2. How does the course link to learner's experiences and facilitates the use of their learning experiences?	The current course focuses on broad skills, not matching the field of study of each learner. The students only learn the principles to be applied by them themselves later. The university should offer more learning options such as an elective course for specific skills. Some students suggested the university to consider an online course so they can study more freely to meet their needs.
3. How are the contents provided in the course useful for students?	The contents focus on developing learner's skills in general, but not specific skills. They were not designed to meet with personal preference or the experience of each learner.

4. What are the motivations for learning desires?	Most of the students need to study this course as a university requirement. Thus, they mostly focus on passing the standard criteria only. There isn't a very clear personal motivation yet.
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6.3 The Graduate Student Satisfaction Data Collection

The study results from the student satisfaction questionnaire suggest that the learners received the knowledge about the content was rated at a moderate level at averaged 3.28 with a standard deviation of 1.04. The 3 skills with the lowest satisfaction levels are 1) Reading skills for occupational purposes 2) Writing skills for academic purposes and 3) Listening skills for occupational purposes respectively. Students who are less satisfied and dissatisfied are at 16.58 and 5.98, a total of 22.83 percent, or almost 1 in 4 students (See Table 3).

Table 3: *The Student Satisfaction towards receiving Knowledge about the Content Results*

Receiving Knowledge about the Content	Number of Replies for Each Scale					Satisfaction			
	5	4	3	2	1	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level	PNI
Listening skills for academic purposes	12	24	4	2	4	3.83	1.13	High	12
Listening skills for occupational purposes	6	12	16	5	7	3.11	1.22	Medium	3
Listening skills at a practical level	4	13	24	3	2	3.30	0.88	Medium	8
Speaking skills for academic purposes	6	13	19	7	1	3.35	0.96	Medium	9
Speaking skills for occupational purposes	5	12	21	5	3	3.24	1.00	Medium	6
Speaking skills at a practical level	3	15	20	6	2	3.24	0.91	Medium	6
Reading skills for academic purposes	4	16	14	9	3	3.20	1.06	Medium	4
Reading skills for occupational purposes	6	12	16	10	2	3.22	1.06	Medium	5
Reading skills at a practical level	2	11	15	14	4	2.85	1.02	Medium	1

Writing skills for academic purposes	6	9	9	21	1	2.96	1.12	Medium	2
Writing skills for occupational purposes	8	14	17	5	2	3.46	1.04	High	10
Writing skills at a practical level	10	17	11	6	2	3.59	1.09	High	11
Percentage of Replies	13.04	30.43	33.70	16.85	5.98				
Mean						3.28	1.04	Medium	

The satisfaction of content comprehension rated at an average of 3.3, which is also at a moderate level, and with a standard deviation of 1.00. It is found that the number of responses is mostly at the middle level to high at 36.23%, followed by very satisfied at 31.70. The proportion of respondents who were unsatisfied were 14.49% and 5.62% for very unsatisfied, which included more than 1 in 5 of the respondents. The average of the 3 skills with the lowest levels of satisfaction were 1) the writing skills for occupational purposes 2) writing skills for academic purposes and 3) speaking skills for occupational purposes respectively (see Table 4).

Table 4: Student Satisfaction towards the Content Comprehension Results

Content Comprehension	Number of Replies for Each Scale					Satisfaction			
	5	4	3	2	1	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level	PNI
Listening skills for academic purposes	6	11	21	3	5	3.22	1.10	Medium	4
Listening skills for occupational purposes	5	15	20	4	2	3.37	0.94	Medium	8
Listening skills at a practical level	12	20	8	2	4	3.74	1.15	High	10
Speaking skills for academic purposes	5	19	14	6	2	3.41	0.99	High	9
Speaking skills for occupational purposes	4	10	24	6	2	3.17	0.92	Medium	3
Speaking skills at a practical level	5	21	16	3	1	3.57	0.85	High	10

Reading skills for academic purposes	6	13	17	5	5	3.22	1.14	Medium	4
Reading skills for occupational purposes	6	12	16	10	2	3.22	1.06	Medium	4
Reading skills at a practical level	4	13	24	3	2	3.30	0.88	Medium	7
Writing skills for academic purposes	2	11	15	14	4	2.85	1.02	Medium	1
Writing skills for occupational purposes	6	9	9	21	1	2.96	1.12	Medium	2
Writing skills at a practical level	5	21	16	3	1	3.57	0.85	High	10
Percentage of replies	11.96	31.70	36.23	14.49	5.62				
Mean						3.3	1.00	Medium	

The satisfaction of the knowledge application was at an average of 2.93 which was at a moderate level with a standard deviation of 1.23 which is higher than 1.00. It is found that the number of responses is mostly at a moderate level at 27.9%, followed by very satisfied at 19.38% which is only 1 in 5 of learners. The proportion of respondents were not satisfied with 18.48%, and there were 17.57% of dissatisfied respondents. The 4 skills with the lowest level of satisfaction are: 1) Academic speaking skills 2) Academic listening skills 3) Listening skills for occupational purposes and 4) Reading skills for occupational purposes (see Table 5).

Table 5: Student Satisfaction towards the Knowledge Application Results

Knowledge Application	Number of Replies for Each Scale					Satisfaction			
	5	4	3	2	1	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level	PNI
Listening skills for academic purposes	4	8	14	11	9	2.72	1.21	Medium	2
Listening skills for occupational purposes	5	12	19	5	5	3.15	1.10	Medium	11
Listening skills at a practical level	6	9	11	7	13	2.74	1.39	Medium	5

Speaking skills for academic purposes	5	6	12	13	10	2.63	1.26	Medium	1
Speaking skills for occupational purposes	5	7	16	6	12	2.72	1.30	Medium	2
Speaking skills at a practical level	3	12	17	6	8	2.91	1.16	Medium	8
Reading skills for academic purposes	4	12	13	9	8	2.89	1.22	Medium	7
Reading skills for occupational purposes	8	10	8	11	9	2.93	1.39	Medium	9
Reading skills at a practical level	2	9	15	14	6	2.72	1.06	Medium	2
Writing skills for academic purposes	6	9	9	13	9	2.78	1.32	Medium	6
Writing skills for occupational purposes	8	9	17	5	7	3.13	1.26	Medium	10
Writing skills at a practical level	12	24	4	2	4	3.83	1.13	High	12
Percentage of replies	11.05	19.38	27.90	18.48	17.57				
Mean						2.93	1.23	Medium	

From the student survey results, the researchers have synthesized the skills required for the development of the Intensive English Program at the Silpakorn University from the Priority Needs Index (PNI) analysis and the highlight skills with the highest number of replies at the low-lowest scale. It can be found that the intensive English program development should focus on the following skills as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Synthesis of the Skills required for the Development of the Intensive English Program

Criteria	Receiving Knowledge about the Content	Content Comprehension	Knowledge Application	Synthesis of the Skills Required (Not in Respective Order)
Skills with the lowest satisfaction mean scores	Reading skills at a practical level	Writing skills for occupational purposes	Speaking skills for academic purposes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writing skills for academic purposes (5) 2. Writing skills for occupational purposes (2) 3. Reading skills at a practical level (3) 4. Reading skills for occupational purposes (2) 5. Speaking skills for academic purposes (2) 6. Speaking skills for occupational purposes (1) 7. Listening skills for occupational purposes (2) 8. Listening skills for academic purposes (1) 9. Listening skills for communication (1)
	Writing skills for academic purposes	Writing skills for academic purposes	Listening skills for academic purposes	
	Listening skills for occupational purposes	Listening skills for occupational purposes	Speaking skills for occupational purposes	
			Reading skills at a practical level	
Skills with the highest number of replies at the low-lowest scale	Academic writing skills	Writing skills for occupational purposes	listening skills for communication	
	Reading skills at a practical level	Academic writing skills	Academic writing skills	
	Reading skills for occupational purposes	Reading skills for occupational purposes	Speaking skills for academic purposes	

7. Findings and Discussion

7.1 The Findings of the Potential of the Current Intensive English Program with the Expected Proficiency Level

From comparing the data of the teacher interview and focus group discussion with the student, it is found that the curriculum design is designed to only meet the CEFR standard. Students who have completed this course are expected to develop their English language skills for general usage but not for a specific purpose in English in academic, professional, and English communication at an active level. Both teachers and students agreed that It helps to develop some general English language skills but not for the field of study and work. Thus, students suggested that the course should have more options, for example, having online learning or dividing into small elective courses, not just forcing everyone to study every skill. Laadem (2017) also argues that

using technology to support the learning of the English language is the promotion of both linguistic and technological competencies. E-learning is also an effective way to raise the quality of education in developing countries and ESL in higher education.

From studying the contexts of the three universities, it has been found that all three universities have separated courses for each skill or combining of similar skills. The courses mostly emphasize the skills according to the level of context of the learners and the field of studies, which will be divided into compulsory courses and selected courses to meet the needs of students. Comparing to the current course at Silpakorn University, the course focuses on integrating all skills into one program in which students from all disciplines study together and do not focus on specific skills.

This addresses the needs in the program design to develop more specific skills relevant to the learners. The first step in curriculum development should be highly focused as it helps a developer to understand the student's needs. Gestanti, Nimasari, & Mufanti, (2019) argues that conducting need analysis is the first, most significant part to be conducted in designing an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. It gives chances for both teacher and students to define the effective outcomes based on their purposes and needs. In accordance with Sakcharoen (2015) who studied the learning process to support life-long learning, adult learners will focus on learning that will benefit themselves in the long term.

This is consistent with the research data collection from the Thammasat University Language Institute about learning English by using the workload as a base to develop English language skills for academic goals (Viriya, 2018) which concludes that the effective curriculum development of English language skills should consist of 1) studying the basic needs in order to select the content 2) emphasizing instruction for communication through interaction in the target language 3) using statements that are from authentic sources in a variety of learning situations 4) providing opportunities for learners to develop both language skills, and learning process 5) adding about the learners' own experience to use as an important part of instruction, and 6) connecting language learning in the classroom to the language used outside the classroom.

7.2 The Findings of the English Language Skills required for the Development of the Intensive English Program for Graduate Students at the Silpakorn University in Thailand

Align with the previous findings, the unsatisfied data shows the need of improving the course and focusing more on specific skills especially skills relevant to learners' experiences and

current needs. The strength of the current program is the choices of topics that students can choose but are still limited.

The rated scale of knowledge gained was at a moderate level. Most of the answers are in boxes 3 and 4 points, but the number of answers in the box 5 points and 2 points is also similar. Students who are less satisfied and dissatisfied are almost a quarter of students. Similar to the satisfaction rating for comprehension of writing skills for occupational purposes, the unsatisfied rating was from 21 out of 46 respondents, or nearly half of respondents.

This shows that it is still necessary for the program developer to pay great attention to the curriculum design to meet the needs of the students. From the student survey results, the most needed skills in developing the intensive English course is the *academic writing skills* with the most frequency (5), following by *reading skills at a practical level* (3), *writing skills for occupational purposes* (2), *reading skills for occupational purposes* (2), *speaking skills for academic purposes* (2), and *listening skills for occupational purposes* (2) respectively.

This is consistent with research on adults training of the University of Washington School of Public Health (2014) which said that there are 5 important principles as followed: 1) the materials used must be useful immediately to the students 2) the materials used must be related to learners 3) the learning environment must make the students feel safe to participate. 4) the presentation of the training must be accessible and 5) the training should encourage students to share their experiences.

8. Research Implementation

The study focused on developing a guide to the development of an intensive English program. Curriculum makers and researchers may use this guide to design an effective program to meet the needs of students the most. Using the guide with different learning methods such as face-to-face, online, or blended learning should provide more options to meet the needs of graduate students as adult learners.

9. Limitations

A major limitation of this study is the difficulty to generalize the results because of the small sample size which was obtained from Silpakorn University, Thailand unless other studies share the same context.

10. Conclusion

Guides for the development of an intensive English program should be different from general courses in terms of composition and form which need to develop learners for more specific objectives. This may be a skill, knowledge, or attitude adjustment that has a specific goal, for certain groups at a time. There are 7 components and 7 steps in the development of an intensive English program as shown in Figure 1. The processes address finding basic information to understand learners and paying attention to the specific needs of the course, such as analyze learner needs for solving one's problems or studying at the graduate level, in accordance with the skills that students want to develop in each level separately.

Intensive English program reviews show that the teachers developed the curriculum guidelines based on the CEFR standards but does not emphasize skills in each area and does not directly consider the needs of the learners. The program is organized to help students pass the English standard requirements. In accordance with the opinions of the learners, there is no internal motivation as they are aimed to pass the criteria. This makes it impossible to use directly with work or in real life as they should. In contrast to students' opinions, the curriculum should encourage the development of English language skills and abilities that are more in line with the required skills mentioned above as an alternative for students to learn what will be used in their lives. According to the needs of the learners, there may be a variety of study options for students to access as well.

The inquiries from students suggest that: the most needed skills in developing the intensive English course are the academic writing skills, reading skills at a practical level, writing skills for occupational purposes, reading skills for occupational purposes, speaking skills for academic purposes, and listening skills for occupational purposes respectively. This can be used to determine the purpose of curriculum design according to the steps that the researchers have studied and synthesized previously. That is the most important first step by asking the question directly from the student and defining objectives so that they can be specified specifically for that need. Next is the content determination and setting the learning experience to be consistent with the concepts study of English language skills at the graduate level. The selection of content will enable learners to understand and apply knowledge better. The content design and teaching methods should focus on interaction with the target language.

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