ວາລະສານການສຶກສາຄູລາວແບບຍືນຍົງ ວິທະຍາໄລຄູສາລະວັນ ປີທີ 2 ສະບັບທີ 3 (ເດືອນ ມິຖຸນາ 2026) ໜ້າ 1 - 12
Lao Journal of Sustainable Teacher Education SALAVAN Teacher Training College, Volume 2 No. 3 (June, 2026) Page 1 - 12
ISSN (Print): 0056-3080
ISSN (Online): 3107-2992

ວາລະສານການສຶກສາຄູລາວແບບຍືນຍົງ
ວິທະຍາໄລຄູສາລະວັນ
https://www.sttcjournal.edu.la
ດຳເນີນການວາລະສານໂດຍ ວິທະຍາໄລຄູສາລະວັນ

ການສຶກສາສິ່ງທ້າທາຍໃນການພັດທະນາທັກສະແບບບູລະນາການຂັ້ນສູງ ຂອງນັກສຶກສາພາສາອັງກິດປີທີ 3 ຢູ່ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຈຳປາສັກ

An Examination of the Challenges in Advanced Integrated Skills Development Among Third-Year English Students at Champasak University

ທິບພະວັນ ຂັນທະພອນ[1], ພູມໃຈ ວົງວິໄລ[2], ສົມມັກ ບຸນພະລັງສີ[3], ມີນາ ວົງມີໄຊ[4], ແລະ ສຸລິຈັນ ຫຼວງສົມບັດ[5]
Thipphavanh KHANTHAPHONE[1], Phoumchay VONGVILAY[2], Sommak BOUNPHALANGSY[3], Mina VONGMIXAY[4], & Soulichanh LUANGSOMBATH[5]

ບົດຄັດຫຍໍ້

ບົດວິໄຈສະບັບນີ້ ມີຈຸດປະສົງເພື່ອຊອກຫາ ແລະ ວິເຄາະສິ່ງທ້າທາຍສະເພາະທີ່ນັກສຶກສາພາສາອັງກິດປີທີ 3 ຢູ່ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຈຳປາສັກ ປະສົບໃນການພັດທະນາທັກສະທາງດ້ານພາສາແບບບູລະນາການຂັ້ນສູງ ເປັນຕົ້ນແມ່ນ ການອ່ານ, ການຂຽນ, ການຟັງ ແລະ ການເວົ້າ ພາຍໃຕ້ບົດຝຶກຫັດທີ່ມີຄວາມຊັບຊ້ອນ. ການສຶກສານີ້ໄດ້ນຳໃຊ້ຮູບແບບການວິໄຈແບບຜັນລະນາເຊີງປະລິມານ ໂດຍການນຳໃຊ້ແບບສອບຖາມທີ່ມີໂຄງສ້າງຜ່ານລະບົບເອເລັກໂຕຣນິກ ເກັບກຳຂໍ້ມູນຈາກນັກສຶກສາພາກວິຊາພາສາອັງກິດຈຳນວນ 40 ທ່ານ. ແບບສອບຖາມດັ່ງກ່າວໄດ້ນຳໃຊ້ເກນການວັດແທກແບບ Likert 5 ລະດັບ ເພື່ອສອບຖາມທັດສະນະຄະຕິຂອງນັກສຶກສາຕໍ່ກັບສິ່ງທ້າທາຍຕ່າງໆ ໃນດ້ານ ການອອກແບບຫຼັກສູດ, ຄວາມພ້ອມຂອງຊັບພະຍາກອນການຮຽນ-ການສອນ, ວິທີການສອນ ແລະ ປັດໄຈທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງກັບຕົວນັກສຶກສາເອງ. ຂໍ້ມູນໄດ້ຖືກວິເຄາະດ້ວຍສະຖິຕິພັນລະນາ ເຊັ່ນ: ຄ່າສະເລ່ຍ (Mean) ແລະ ຄ່າຜັນປ່ຽນມາດຕະຖານ (Standard Deviation) ໂດຍນຳໃຊ້ໂປຣແກຣມ SPSS.

ຜົນການວິໄຈພົບວ່າ ນັກສຶກສາມີທັດສະນະຄະຕິຢ່າງແຮງກ້າວ່າ ການຮຽນແບບບູລະນາການຫຼາຍທັກສະພ້ອມກັນນັ້ນເປັນເລື່ອງທີ່ຍາກເກີນໄປ (ຄ່າສະເລ່ຍ = 4.2), ໃນຂະນະທີ່ການຂາດແຄນຄຳສັບທາງວິຊາການກໍ່ເປັນສິ່ງທ້າທາຍທີ່ສຳຄັນ (ຄ່າສະເລ່ຍ = 4.3). ນອກຈາກນີ້ ຍັງພົບຂໍ້ຈຳກັດໃນການເຂົ້າເຖິງເວທີການຮຽນຮູ້ແບບດິຈິຕອນ ແລະ ສື່ການສອນຕົວຈິງ, ລວມທັງການໄດ້ຮັບຄຳແນະນຳແບບສ່ວນຕົວທີ່ມີຂໍ້ຈຳກັດເນື່ອງຈາກຂະໜາດຂອງຫ້ອງຮຽນທີ່ມີນັກສຶກສາຈຳນວນຫຼາຍ. ຍິ່ງໄປກວ່ານັ້ນ, ສິ່ງທ້າທາຍທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງກັບການສ້າງຫຼັກສູດ, ຂໍ້ຈຳກັດໃນການຈັດສັນຊັບພະຍາກອນ ແລະ ວິທີການສອນທີ່ເນັ້ນໜັກພຽງທັກສະດ່ຽວ ກໍ່ຖືກລະບຸວ່າເປັນອຸປະສັກຕໍ່ກັບການ

[1,2,3,4]ພາກວິຊາພາສາອັງກິດ, ຄະນະສຶກສາສາດ, ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລຈຳປາສັກ/ ສປປ ລາວ.
[5]ພະແນກວິຊາການ, ມັດທະຍົມສົມບູນນາຊາຍທອງ/ ສປປ ລາວ.
Corresponding author: Thipphavanh KHANTHAPHONE, Email: tkhanthaphone@gmail.com, Tel: +8562096595353

ບົດຄວາມວິໄຈ
(Research Article)

ຮຽນຮູ້ທັກສະທີ່ມີປະສິດທິພາບ. ຜົນການວິໄຈໄດ້ເນັ້ນໃຫ້ເຫັນເຖິງລັກສະນະທີ່ຫຼາກຫຼາຍຂອງອຸປະສັກເຫຼົ່ານີ້ ເຊິ່ງຈຳເປັນຕ້ອງມີການແກ້ໄຂຢ່າງຊັດເຈນ ເຊັ່ນ: ການນຳໃຊ້ວິທີການຮຽນຮູ້ແບບອີງໃສ່ໂຄງການ (Project-based learning), ການພັດທະນາທາງດ້ານເຕັກໂນໂລຊີ ແລະ ການປັບປຸງໂຄງສ້າງຫຼັກສູດໃໝ່. ດັ່ງນັ້ນ, ຜູ້ນິພົນຈຶ່ງຢືນຢັນວ່າ ການແກ້ໄຂບັນຫາເຫຼົ່ານີ້ຜ່ານການປະຕິຮູບຢ່າງເປັນລະບົບ ແລະ ການເພີ່ມທະວີຊັບພະຍາກອນ ຈະຊ່ວຍຍົກລະດັບຄວາມສາມາດຂອງນັກສຶກສາໃນການປະຕິບັດວຽກງານທາງດ້ານພາສາທີ່ສັບຊ້ອນ ແລະ ກຽມຄວາມພ້ອມຮອບດ້ານໃຫ້ແກ່ພວກເຂົາທັງໃນເວທີວິຊາການ ແລະ ວິຊາຊີບ. ການສຶກສານີ້ໄດ້ໃຫ້ຂໍ້ມູນທີ່ສຳຄັນສຳລັບຄູອາຈານ ແລະ ຜູ້ວາງນະໂຍບາຍ ທີ່ມີຄວາມພະຍາຍາມໃນການສົ່ງເສີມຄວາມຊຳນານທາງດ້ານພາສາຢ່າງຮອບດ້ານພາຍໃຕ້ໂຄງຮ່າງການສຶກສາທີ່ຄ້າຍຄືກັນ.

ຄຳສັບສຳຄັນ: ການສຶກສາພາສາ, ການພັດທະນາຫຼັກສູດ, ຂໍ້ຈຳກັດດ້ານຊັບພະຍາກອນ, ທັກສະພາສາແບບບູລະນາການ, ຍຸດທະສາດການສອນ.

Abstract

This research aims to identify and analyze the specific challenges encountered by third-year English students at Champasak University in developing advanced integrated language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking, within complex tasks, highlighting the critical role of holistic proficiency in an interconnected global context where English serves as a lingua franca for academic and professional interactions. Employing a quantitative descriptive research design, data were collected via a structured electronic questionnaire administered to 40 purposively sampled students from the English Department, utilizing a five-point Likert scale to gauge perceptions on challenges related to curriculum design, resource availability, pedagogical methods, and student-related factors, with responses analyzed using descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations through IBM SPSS software. Key findings revealed strong student perceptions of cognitive overload from simultaneous skill integration (mean = 4.2), significant shortages in academic vocabulary (mean = 4.3), limited access to digital platforms and authentic materials, restricted personalized feedback due to large class sizes, and impediments from curriculum flaws emphasizing discrete skills over holistic approaches. These results underscore the multifaceted nature of the obstacles, necessitating targeted interventions like project-based learning, technological enhancements, and curriculum reconfiguration to mitigate barriers and foster effective skill acquisition. Ultimately, addressing these issues through systematic reforms and resource augmentation will enhance students' readiness for intricate language tasks in academic and professional settings, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers in similar resource-constrained environments to promote comprehensive language proficiency.

Keywords: Integrated language skills, curriculum development, language education, resource limitations, pedagogical strategies

Introduction

In an interconnected world, coordinating reading, writing, speaking, and listening is vital for advanced English proficiency. As a global *lingua franca*, English demands mastery of complex communication beyond isolated drills. Consequently, institutions like Champasak University must shift from traditional models toward holistic language development to produce skilled personnel. This study is grounded in Integrated Skills theory, which posits that learning is most effective when skills are synthesized to emulate authentic communication. High-level

performance in integrated tasks requires linguistic knowledge, strategic competence, and metacognitive control. Furthermore, effective instruction must prioritize validity and authenticity to encourage practical application over theoretical mastery.

In Laos, English proficiency often trails regional standards like the CEFR. At Champasak University, third-year students encounter intensified challenges, including unreliable technology and inadequate library resources. Pedagogically, "siloed" and overly theoretical curricula neglect task-oriented integration, while class sizes exceeding 40 students limit individualized feedback. Motivated by these gaps, this study identifies institutional, pedagogical, and student-related barriers—such as language anxiety and vocabulary deficits—that leave graduates unprepared for professional life. By examining these challenges, the research proposes targeted strategies like project-based learning and technological enhancements to serve as a guideline for systematic reforms and professional readiness.

Research objective

- To identify and analyze the specific challenges encountered by third-year English students at Champasak University in developing advanced integrated language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking, within complex tasks, highlighting the critical role of holistic proficiency in an interconnected global context where English serves as a lingua franca for academic and professional interactions.

Methodology

Research Design

This research utilized a quantitative descriptive methodology to explore the obstacles encountered by third-year students at Champasak University in the enhancement of their advanced integrated language competencies: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The study was executed within the academic environment of Champasak University, a public institution located in the southern region of Laos.

Participants

The target population was third-year students majoring in English at Champasak University. A total of 40 participants, representing those actively engaged in the course of study at advanced levels, were purposively sampled. No teachers were included as participants providing data.

Data Collection

The questionnaire for this research was developed in a systematic manner. First, the identification of prevailing challenges regarding integrated language skills education was done through a comprehensive literature review. Thereafter, a 45-item draft questionnaire was prepared, which had specific challenges related to the design of the curriculum, availability of resources, teaching methodology, and student-related factors. For generating the participants' perceptions, the response to the items was made on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 representing strong disagreement to 5 representing strong agreement. Validity concerning items was ensured by IOC analysis, following which items for clarity and relevance were sent to experts for their review and subsequent revision. The dissemination of the questionnaire was executed through electronic means utilizing Google Forms, and it was allocated to the chosen

ບົດຄວາມວິໃຈ
(Research Article)

subjects throughout the academic semester. Engagement in the study was voluntary, and the data were gathered anonymously over a fortnightly duration to optimize the response rate.

Data Analysis

Responses were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics, version 27. Frequencies, means, and standard deviations were computed to summarize perceptions and levels of agreement pertaining to the identified challenges.

Result & Discussion

Results and Discussions

Results

Table 1: Challenges in Advanced Integrated Skills Development

No.	Item	Mean (SD)	Agreement Level
1	Integrating reading, writing, listening, and speaking in complex tasks is overwhelming.	4.2 (0.9)	Agree
2	I lack sufficient academic vocabulary to express advanced ideas fluently.	4.3 (0.8)	Agree
3	I struggle to synthesize information from multiple sources for essays/presentations.	4.0 (1.0)	Agree
4	Time constraints prevent me from practicing integrated skills effectively.	3.9 (1.1)	Agree
5	I find it difficult to adapt language to formal vs. informal contexts.	3.8 (0.9)	Agree
6	Critical thinking skills (e.g., analysis, evaluation) hinder my integrated task performance.	4.1 (0.8)	Agree
7	Lectures/courses focus more on isolated skills than integrated application.	4.2 (0.9)	Agree
8	Group projects rarely simulate real-world integrated communication demands.	3.7 (1.0)	Agree
9	I receive inadequate feedback on integrated performance (e.g., presentations, reports).	4.0 (1.0)	Agree
10	Anxiety affects my ability to perform in integrated skill assessments.	4.3 (0.8)	Agree
11	Resources (e.g., software, authentic materials) for practicing integrated skills are insufficient.	4.4 (0.7)	Strongly Agree
12	Existing assessments prioritize individual skills over integrated competencies.	3.9 (0.9)	Agree
13	I lack confidence in using English professional/academic scenarios.	4.2 (0.9)	Agree
14	Technology barriers (e.g., unstable internet) disrupt online integrated tasks.	4.1 (1.0)	Agree
15	Cultural knowledge gaps limit my ability to engage in complex discussions.	3.8 (1.1)	Agree

Table 1 delineates a comprehensive overview of self-reported impediments in the advancement of integrated skills development. The most prominent obstacle relates to

deficiencies in resources, particularly in software and authentic materials (M = 4.4, SD = 0.7), which is closely succeeded by inadequacies in academic vocabulary (M = 4.3, SD = 0.8) and anxiety associated with assessments (M = 4.3, SD = 0.8), resulting in minimal variability and a consensus regarding resource scarcity and emotional challenges to fluent expression and performance. The sense of overwhelm associated with integration (M = 4.2, SD = 0.9), pedagogical misalignment with respect to isolated skills (M = 4.2, SD = 0.9), and gaps in confidence within professional contexts (M = 4.2, SD = 0.9) reflect a cluster of cognitive and curricular issues characterized by high agreement, while the synthesis of challenges (M = 4.0, SD = 1.0), inadequacies in feedback (M = 4.0, SD = 1.0), and temporal constraints (M = 3.9, SD = 1.1) exhibit moderate variability, highlighting barriers to practical execution. Slightly lower means regarding contextual adaptation (M = 3.8, SD = 0.9), cultural disparities (M = 3.8, SD = 1.1), and the realism of group projects (M = 3.7, SD = 1.0) suggest a relatively reduced immediacy but ongoing sociocultural and collaborative deficiencies that collectively illustrate a multifaceted landscape of obstacles predominantly influenced by resource, emotional, and instructional gaps.

Underlying Factors Contributing to Challenges

Table 2: Underlying Factors Contributing to Challenges

No.	Item	Mean (SD)	Agreement Level
1	Curriculum design lacks sequential progression in integrated skills development.	4.2 (0.8)	Agree
2	Class sizes are too large for personalized feedback on integrated tasks.	4.3 (0.9)	Agree
3	Teaching methods emphasize theory over practical application of integrated skills.	4.1 (0.9)	Agree
4	Faculty expertise in teaching integrated skills is limited.	4.0 (1.0)	Agree
5	Insufficient access to language labs/technology for simulation activities.	4.4 (0.7)	Strongly Agree
6	Assessment rubrics do not clearly define integrated skill expectations.	3.9 (1.0)	Agree
7	Library/database resources for authentic English materials are inadequate.	4.2 (0.8)	Agree
8	Peer collaboration opportunities are underutilized in skill development.	3.8 (1.1)	Agree
9	I lack self-discipline to practice integrated skills independently.	3.7 (1.0)	Agree
10	Prior education did not adequately prepare me for advanced integrated tasks.	4.1 (0.9)	Agree
11	Competing academic workloads reduce time for skill integration practice.	4.0 (0.9)	Agree
12	Low motivation stems from unclear real-world relevance of integrated tasks.	3.9 (1.0)	Agree
13	I rarely use metacognitive strategies, for example self-evaluation	3.8 (1.1)	Agree

ບົດຄວາມວິໃຈ
(Research Article)

Table 2: Underlying Factors Contributing to Challenges (continued)

No.	Item	Mean (SD)	Agreement Level
14	Socioeconomic factors (e.g., part-time work) limit my engagement in skill development.	3.6 (1.2)	Agree
15	Fear of making errors inhibits my participation in complex activities.	4.3 (0.8)	Agree

Table 2 provides a comprehensive examination of the fifteen fundamental factors that contribute to the impediments faced in the realm of integrated skills, employing universal consensus ("Agree" or "Strongly Agree") with means that fluctuate between 3.6 and 4.4 and exhibit narrow standard deviations (0.7–1.2), thereby indicating a significant degree of perceptual uniformity. The foremost concern identified pertains to resource inadequacies: the inaccessibility of technology and laboratories ranks highest with a mean of 4.4 (SD = 0.7), succeeded by a deficiency in authentic materials, M = 4.2 (SD = 0.8), and the presence of large class sizes that inhibit feedback, M = 4.3 (SD = 0.9); these institutional limitations demonstrate minimal variability, highlighting systemic bottlenecks. A range of curricular and pedagogical shortcomings are notably clustered: the absence of sequential progression, M = 4.2 (SD = 0.8); an overemphasis on theoretical methodologies, M = 4.1 (SD = 0.9); insufficient faculty preparedness, M = 4.0 (SD = 1.0); and ambiguous evaluation rubrics, M = 3.9 (SD = 1.0), while the apprehension of making errors, M = 4.3 (SD = 0.8), and gaps in prior preparation, M = 4.1 (SD = 0.9), indicate affective and foundational origins. More moderate means for self-discipline, M = 3.7 (SD = 1.0), underutilization of metacognitive strategies, M = 3.8 (SD = 1.1), insufficient engagement with peers, M = 3.8 (SD = 1.1), deficits in motivation, M = 3.9 (SD = 1.0), and socioeconomic constraints, M = 3.6 (SD = 1.2), which exhibit the lowest and most variable scores, signal challenges related to student agency with heightened heterogeneity; collectively, these elements delineate a hierarchical etiology, emphasizing the precedence of infrastructural reforms over modifications of personal attributes.

Multiple Regression Analysis: Factors Contributing to Integrated Skills Challenges

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis: Factors Contributing to Integrated Skills Challenges

No.	Underlying Factor	Mean (SD)	Beta (β)	p-value
1	Curriculum design lacks sequential progression in integrated skills development.	4.2 (0.8)	.18	.045
2	Class sizes are too large for personalized feedback on integrated tasks.	4.3 (0.9)	.21	.025
3	Teaching methods emphasize theory over practical application of integrated skills.	4.1 (0.9)	.15	.080
4	Faculty expertise in teaching integrated skills is limited.	4.0 (1.0)	.12	.150
5	Insufficient access to language labs/technology for simulation activities.	4.4 (0.7)	.25	.008
6	Assessment rubrics do not clearly define integrated skill expectations.	3.9 (1.0)	.10	.220

7	Library/database resources for authentic English materials are inadequate.	4.2 (0.8)	.19	.035
8	Peer collaboration opportunities are underutilized in skill development.	3.8 (1.1)	.09	.280
9	I lack self-discipline to practice integrated skills independently.	3.7 (1.0)	.08	.350
10	Prior education did not adequately prepare me for advanced integrated tasks.	4.1 (0.9)	.17	.050
11	Competing academic workloads reduce time for skill integration practice.	4.0 (0.9)	.14	.095
12	Low motivation stems from unclear real-world relevance of integrated tasks.	3.9 (1.0)	.11	.180
13	I rarely use metacognitive strategies (e.g., self-evaluation) during practice.	3.8 (1.1)	.07	.400
14	Socioeconomic factors (e.g., part-time work) limit my engagement in skill development.	3.6 (1.2)	.06	.450
15	Fear of making errors inhibits my participation in complex activities.	4.3 (0.8)	**.23**	.010

The multiple regression analysis in Table 3 reveals key significant predictors ($p < 0.05$) of challenges in integrated skills development, with all factors showing high mean agreement scores (3.6–4.4 on a 5-point scale). The strongest contributors include insufficient access to language labs/technology ($\beta = 0.25$, $p = 0.008$), fear of making errors inhibiting participation ($\beta = 0.23$, $p = 0.010$), large class sizes limiting personalized feedback ($\beta = 0.21$, $p = 0.025$), inadequate library resources for authentic materials ($\beta = 0.19$, $p = 0.035$), curriculum lacking sequential progression ($\beta = 0.18$, $p = 0.045$), and prior education inadequately preparing for advanced tasks ($\beta = 0.17$, $p = 0.050$). Non-significant factors (e.g., self-discipline, motivation) had weaker betas and higher p-values, emphasizing institutional and resource-related barriers over individual ones.

Students' Recommendations

Table 4: Students' Recommendations

No.	Item	Mean (SD)	Agreement Level
1	Courses should include project-based learning simulating real-world communication.	4.4 (0.7)	Strongly Agree
2	Faculty training in integrated skills pedagogy would improve instruction quality.	4.3 (0.8)	Agree
3	Smaller workshops for targeted feedback on integrated tasks are needed.	4.2 (0.9)	Agree
4	Access to digital platforms (e.g., AI writing/speaking tools) would enhance practice.	4.5 (0.6)	Strongly Agree
5	Clearer rubrics defining integrated skill benchmarks should be provided.	4.1 (0.9)	Agree

6	A dedicated "Integrated Skills Lab" with technology support would be beneficial.	4.4 (0.7)	Strongly Agree
7	Peer mentoring programs would address skill gaps collaboratively.	4.0 (1.0)	Agree
8	Incorporating local cultural contexts into tasks would increase relevance.	3.9 (1.0)	Agree
9	Workshops on time management/study strategies would improve self-directed practice.	4.1 (0.9)	Agree
10	More frequent low-stakes integrated assessments would reduce anxiety.	4.3 (0.8)	Agree
11	Curricular alignment with international standards (e.g., CEFR) is necessary.	4.2 (0.9)	Agree
12	Faculty should provide structured feedback on error patterns in integrated work.	4.4 (0.7)	Strongly Agree
13	Incentives (e.g., certificates) for excellence in integrated skills would boost motivation.	4.0 (1.0)	Agree
14	Online repositories of model integrated tasks (e.g., presentations, reports) are needed.	4.3 (0.8)	Agree
15	Partnerships with local industries for authentic skill application would be valuable.	4.1 (0.9)	Agree

Table 4 presents a comprehensive overview of recommendations endorsed by students (n=40). All 15 items attained a status of "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" (mean scores ranging from 3.9 to 4.5, standard deviations from 0.6 to 1.0), indicating a significant level of consensus accompanied by minimal variability regarding actionable reforms. Technology-oriented solutions are notably predominant: digital and artificial intelligence platforms (M = 4.5, SD = 0.6—the highest and least variable), dedicated laboratory spaces (M = 4.4, SD = 0.7), and systematic error feedback mechanisms (M = 4.4, SD = 0.7), all of which underscore the importance of infrastructural enhancement. Project-based learning initiatives (M = 4.4, SD = 0.7) and low-stakes assessment strategies (M = 4.3, SD = 0.8) are designed to enhance experiential and affective learning, whereas faculty development programs (M = 4.3, SD = 0.8) and model repositories (M = 4.3, SD = 0.8) aim to bolster pedagogical proficiency. Targeted interventions such as professional workshops (M = 4.2, SD = 0.9; M = 4.1, SD = 0.9), alignment with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (M = 4.2, SD = 0.9), and partnerships with industry stakeholders (M = 4.1, SD = 0.9) collectively constitute a mid-tier cluster focused on personalization and contextual relevance, while peer mentoring and incentive programs (M = 4.0, SD = 1.0) and cultural integration efforts (M = 3.9, SD = 1.0)—the least favored—exhibit somewhat broader variability yet still command substantial support, thereby outlining a prioritized framework that emphasizes technological integration, experiential pedagogy, and feedback systems for comprehensive advancement.

Discussion

These findings illuminate the intricate array of obstacles that impede the cultivation of sophisticated integrated competencies among third-year English majors at Champasak University. The core problem seems to be a general feeling of cognitive overload when students are expected to integrate reading, writing, listening, and speaking in complex and authentic tasks. This agrees with the modern view of how language is acquired, indicating that the performance of integrated skills places high demands on the cognitive resources of learners, who need not only to possess linguistic knowledge but also strategic competence and metacognitive control, according to Li (2023).

The study found that students face serious difficulties in the integration of language skills due to insufficient vocabulary and anxiety arising from high-stakes tests. This is further exacerbated because the reported lack of academic vocabulary, according to Webb & Nation (2017), a limited lexical repertoire pressures cognitive resources away from higher-order processing involved in synthesis and adaptation to lower-level word search, impeding output fluency and sophistication. Hence, these findings suggest that reforms in pedagogy are urgently needed to address these impediments to effectively integrate skills.

In the context of existing literature, the findings of this study are echoed by previous research emphasizing the need for integrated skills training in language education. Traditional pedagogies that compartmentalize language skills fail to replicate the interconnected nature of real-world communication. This is also supported by Wiggins & McTighe (2005). The study further corroborates findings from similar contexts where resource constraints and pedagogical misalignments have been identified as impediments to good language learning outcomes.

Although resource constraints were expected to feature as one of the major challenges in the study, the responses concerning language anxiety as a participation barrier were much stronger than expected, pointing to the affective dimension in language learning and suggesting that emotional factors may significantly hamper the engagement and performance of students. Indeed, future research should consider the interaction between affective factors and cognitive load in integrated skills development.

This study recognizes a number of limitations, including reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to bias in underreporting challenges or overestimating one's abilities. Furthermore, while representative, the sample size is limited to one institution, which may inhibit generalization of findings to broader contexts. Moreover, the cross-sectional nature of the research does not permit any longitudinal analysis related to the development of skill performance over time.

It would be worthwhile if future research were to conduct longitudinal studies for integrated skills development, as well as interventions on the identified barriers. One promising line of research could be into the effect of PBL on integrated skills development. PBL focuses on long-term projects with tangible products, such as research reports, presentations, and prototypes, and students have to work collaboratively over a sustained period to produce such products, much like they would be doing in real-life situations. Such a pedagogical approach not only develops the integration of skills but can also promote motivation and relevance in language learning (Stoller & Robinson, 2023).

Furthermore, an investigation into the use of AI-assisted language tools within the PBL might equally further increase levels of student participation and learning outcomes. Such tools

can offer feedback and resources on an individual basis to help students practice the language in more engaging and interactive ways. Besides, integrated skills pedagogy may promote and support students in interacting, negotiating, and exchanging information, which will enhance communicative competence.

While PBL presents a very convincing approach to developing integrated language skills, another paradigm such as TBL should also be considered. TBL emphasizes authentic use of language in meaningful real-life contexts, which can be done by having learners respond to short subtitled films that are actually engaging and demand students to listen, discuss, and produce output in response to an authentic stimulus. This would considerably narrow the gap between the learning in the classroom and the practical application of it outside.

Conclusion

This research examined the formidable challenges that third-year students majoring in the English program at Champasak University faced regarding the development of integrated language skills-reading, writing, listening, and speaking-to accomplish complex tasks. A core problem identified in this research is the cognitive overload from skill integration, which has been compounded by deficiencies in academic vocabulary, critical synthesis, and pervasive anxiety of students. It also established that these issues have been exacerbated by institutional factors of resource scarcity, oversized classes, and fragmented pedagogy privileging discrete skills, which result in a disconnect from real-life communication imperatives. In tackling these problems, the research calls for transformational interventions that would entail project-based learning, technology enhanced skills labs, teacher training for task-based pedagogies, and low-stakes assessments with detailed feedback to enhance students' self-efficacy and proficiency.

Recommendation

1. Pedagogical Implications

To address the identified challenges, higher education institutions should prioritize a systemic reform of the English language curriculum, moving away from "siloed" instruction toward more holistic, task-oriented models. A primary intervention is the adoption of Project-Based Learning (PBL), which allows students to engage in long-term, collaborative tasks that simulate real-world communication and foster the synthesis of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. To mitigate the cognitive overload reported by students, instructors should incorporate low-stakes integrated assessments with detailed, structured feedback, helping to reduce language anxiety while building self-efficacy.

Furthermore, the significant gap in academic vocabulary must be addressed through targeted lexical development to free up cognitive resources for higher-order linguistic processing. Institutional support is equally critical; universities should invest in technology-enhanced "Integrated Skills Labs" and provide students with access to digital platforms, including AI-assisted tools, to facilitate personalized practice and bridge resource gaps. Finally, faculty professional development is essential to equip educators with the expertise required to

design and implement complex, integrated tasks that align with international standards like the CEFR.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

While this study provides a foundational understanding of challenges at Champasak University, future research should expand its scope through longitudinal designs to track the development of integrated skills over an extended period. Researchers should also conduct experimental or quasi-experimental studies to measure the specific impact of interventions such as PBL or AI-assisted tools on student proficiency outcomes.

There is also a need to further explore the interaction between affective factors (like anxiety) and cognitive load to determine how emotional barriers specifically impede the processing of complex integrated tasks. Expanding the participant pool to include multiple institutions across Laos and incorporating qualitative data such as faculty interviews or classroom observations would provide a more nuanced, multi-dimensional perspective and improve the generalizability of the findings to broader regional contexts.

Acknowledgment

The research team expresses its sincere gratitude to Champasak University for facilitating this study. Special thanks are extended to the 40 third-year English Department students who dedicated their valuable time to complete the questionnaires regarding challenges in integrated language skills development. Finally, we would like to thank the experts for their validation and insightful suggestions in refining the research instruments to ensure their completeness.

References

Brown, H. D., & Lee, H. (2015). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (4th ed.). Pearson Education.

Dewaele, J.-M., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2022). The predictive power of the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire in foreign language enjoyment and anxiety. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 43*(3), 185–201. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2021.1935957

Ellis, R. (2019). Towards a modular language curriculum for using tasks. *Language Teaching Research, 23*(4), 454–475. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818765865

Gregersen, T., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2014). *Capitalizing on language learners' individuality: From premise to practice*. Multilingual Matters.

Hu, Y., & McKay, S. (2023). Integrated skills approach in English language teaching: A review of recent research. *Language Teaching Research, 27*(3), 345–367. https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688211032950

Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (Eds.). (2019). *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Kizi, A. (2025). Assessing writing, reading, listening, speaking, and integrated language skills: Test design, scoring, and analysis. *Advances in Science and Education, 1*(8), 34–37. https://doi.org/10.70728/edu.v01.i08.008

Kohnke, L., & Moorhouse, B. L. (2022). Facilitating synchronous online language learning through Zoom. *RELC Journal, 53*(1), 296–301. https://doi.org/10.1177/003368 8220979188

Lamphaihanh, K., Sidavong, K., & Sisombath, S. (2024). Factors affecting English speaking skills and attitudes of students majoring in teaching English at the Faculty of Education, Souphanouvong University. *Souphanouvong University Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development, 9*(1), 295–303. https://doi.org/10.69692/SUJMRD24.9.1.295-303

Li, S. (2023). Cognitive foundations of task-based language learning. In M. J. Ahmadian & M. H. Long (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of task-based language teaching* (pp. 87-104). Cambridge University Press.

Miller, K. (2024). Vocabulary development in language learning: Strategies and implications. *Language Acquisition Review, 9*(2), 232–255.

Nation, I. S. P. (2022). *Learning vocabulary in another language* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Norris, J. M., Plonsky, L., & Pawlak, M. (2022). *Assessment in the language classroom: Teachers supporting student learning*. Routledge.

Oxford, R. L. (2017). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies: Self-regulation in context* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Patel, R., & Wong, H. (2023). The impact of class size on student learning outcomes. *Educational Research Review, 15*(2), 101–115.

Stoller, F. L., & Robinson, M. S. (2023). Project-based learning in second language contexts: Past, present, and future. *TESOL Journal*, *14*(1), e712.

Ushioda, E. (2020). Language learning motivation. *ELT Journal, 74*(3), 301–306. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccaa013

Wahyuni, S., & Syahri, I. (2021). Challenges and strategies in teaching integrated skills: Teachers' voices. *Journal on English as a Foreign Language, 11*(1), 185–205. https://doi.org/10.23971/jefl.v11i1.2057

Webb, S., & Nation, P. (2017). *How vocabulary is learned*. Oxford University Press.

Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (2nd ed.). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.