

Developing Curriculum of Bachelor at University of Foreign Language Studies in Vietnam

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Abstract: *The curriculum is the backbone of the entire training process at university and also is a significant factor that determines the quality of university education. One of the important tasks of the university in general and universities in particular foreign languages is focused on developing the curriculums towards standardization and modernization which are suitable with practical, specific conditions of each country, ensure the update, modern as well as approach quality standards of the region and the world. The article refers to developing the curriculums in universities, assessing the curriculums and supposes the measures to develop the curriculums of BA in foreign languages in Vietnam at present.*

Keywords: curriculum, curriculum development, process, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, university of foreign languages studies

1. Introduction

In any era or in any other country, the quality of education in general and higher education quality in particular is always the top concern of the whole society because of its importance for the sustainable development of the country. More than ever, the quality of higher education is becoming a matter of survival; decide the success or failure of an entire country especially in terms of integration with the world economy. A main determinant of quality of higher education is the curriculum. However, in recent years, besides the achievements, education and training in Vietnam still exists in which "... the program content, teaching and learning methods, construction work, tests and evaluation are not renovated. The program content is heavier on theory, outdated teaching methods, incompatible with the different characteristics of different training types of educational institutions, regions and objects learners;..." [1]. Therefore, curriculum of educational facilities - training should be adjusted and improved in line with the trend of economic development - economic development of the country, the region and the world.

In the current environment integration, the role of foreign language becomes very important and necessary. A good learning foreign language means students themselves equip yourself a tremendous competitive advantage. Fluency in at least one foreign language is one of the mandatory requirements for the current Vietnamese students. Therefore, the quality of foreign language training in colleges and universities in general especially in universities of foreign language studies in particular always gets the attention of students and society.

To ensure the quality of the curriculum of BA in foreign language requires universities of foreign language studies in Vietnam need to focus on developing curriculum of bachelor in foreign language at present.

2. Curriculum Development at Universities

Wentling (1993) said: "The curriculum is an overall blueprint for a training activity (which might be a course lasting several hours, a day, a week or a few years). A overall design, shows the entire contents of the training be required, pointing out what might be expected of students after the course, it outlines the procedures needed to implement the training content, it also said the training methods and ways of assessment of learning outcomes, and all the ones that are arranged in a tight timetable" [7].

According to Nguyen Duc Chinh, "The curriculum is a master plan, the entire system of educational activities in university. It includes educational goals, objectives and outcomes, educational content (with the width and depth corresponding to the standard output), educational methods and forms of educational institutions (with the method and means, appropriate teaching tool), evaluation methods educational outcomes (in comparison, compare the outcomes of the program) [3].

Thus, curriculum at university is meant to be all modules and university activities are designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the selected subjects. Curriculum not only demonstrates professional competencies that have accumulated at the same time ensuring the quality factor of 6 human resources, namely: Education qualification; knowledge, physical; professional competence and career; knowledge society and the lifestyle; the ability to adapt and develop.

About the structure of a curriculum, Tyler (1949) suggests that curriculum must include four basic elements of it, namely: 1) training objectives; 2) curriculum; 3) methods and training process, and 4) evaluate training results [6].

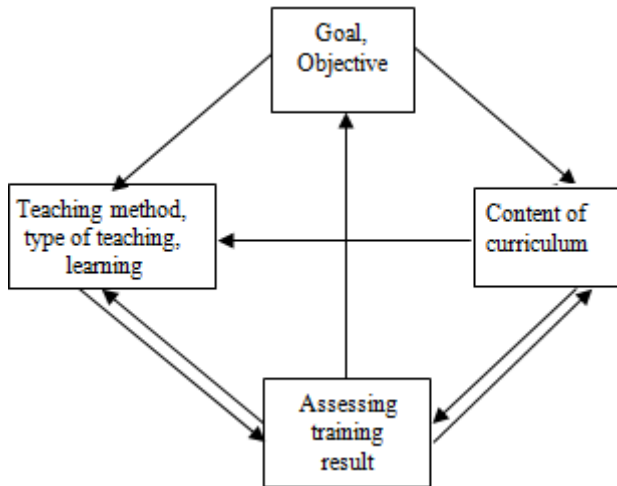


Figure 1: Elements of curriculum

In university, curriculum should be immutable and adjusted, modified to satisfy the needs of learners, society and the labor market. That means curriculum is an entity which does not have to design once time and taking forever. Curriculum at university should be developed, complemented, completed, depending on the change in the level of economic development - society, science - engineering and technology, and also compatible with request the employer market. Therefore, one of the important tasks of any university is focused on developing curriculum at the university.

Curriculum development is a continuous process in order to improve constantly curriculum compatible with the level of economic development - social, scientific and technological, social life in general. Curriculum development is seen as a process of blending into the training process, which includes 5 steps:

- 1) Analyse situation;
- 2) Identify common goals and objectives;
- 3) Design;
- 4) Enforcement;
- 5) Assessment.

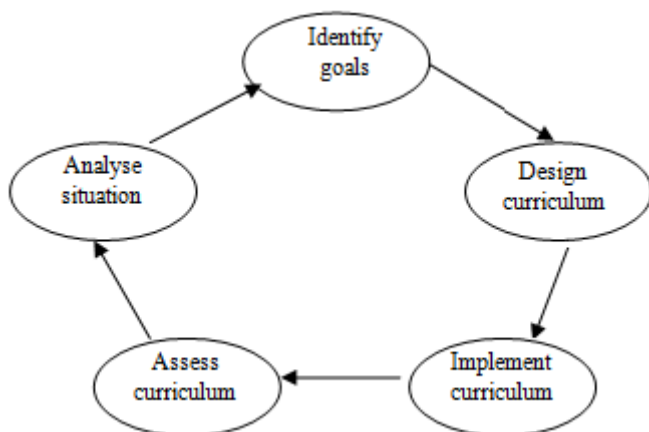


Figure 2: Curriculum development process

Curriculum development process includes the steps of continuously forming a closed loop; this step directly affects the other, inseparable from each stage separately or is not consideration to the impact of other phases organic. When starting designing a curriculum for a course, the design team

often have to assess the current curriculum (stage of curriculum evaluation), then combined with the analysis of the specific situation - the teaching and learning conditions in and off-campus, the training needs of learners and society,... (stage of situation analysis) to make the training objectives of the course. Next, on the basis of new training objectives determine the content of training, selection of teaching methods, teaching aids, test methods, appropriate examination to assess learning outcomes. The need to conduct testing curriculum on a small scale see really satisfactory or needs to be adjusted further. Whole section on being seen as curriculum design phase. The result of the design phase will be a specific curriculum, whereby said training objectives, training content, training methods, conditions and means of support for training, testing methods assess learning outcomes as well as the distribution of training time. After curriculum is designed to execute, apply curriculum in reality, followed by the evaluation stages. However, the assessment of curriculum does not wait until the last stage and which should be done in all phases. For example, even while enforcement curriculum maybe will reveal weaknesses, or through comments of students, faculty (teachers) should adjust and complete the curriculum. After the training ended (finished executing a training cycle), then the evaluation summarized this entire cycle must be performed. Instructor, design and management team always so self-assessment the curriculum at every stage in every lesson, every year, and each course then combined with analysis of the stitching, the new conditions will be perfect or adjust training objectives. Based on the new training objectives, the new situation conduct a redesign or complete the curriculum. Thus curriculum will continuously improve and develop unceasingly along with the training process.

3. The Curriculum Development of Bachelor at Universities of Foreign Language Studies in Vietnam at Present

According to the regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training, the curriculum of educational institutions - higher education must publicize information on the electronic page of the university. Curriculum is shown evident on the training objectives; training time; thorough knowledge locked volumes, including a section on Physical Education (5 credits) and the National Defense Education (4 credits); for entrance exam candidates; training process and requirements of graduation; point ladder; content programs including: knowledge of general education, professional education knowledge, the main knowledge, graduation practice and graduation thesis; training plan. However, the vast majority of curriculum of universities of foreign language studies in Vietnam has not shown the output of training process (learning outcomes expressed separately); has not shown evaluation methods (just shown evaluation ladder) to achieve outcomes claimed; just has few electives in curriculum (almost curriculum are not be shown the elective subjects to students can select in the process of learning).

The result of evaluating curriculum of BA at universities of foreign language studies in Vietnam at present expressed curriculum reflects the vision, mission and objectives of

school education; provide students with the basic skills required to meet the standards of knowledge, skills, qualifications and training; reasonable distribution ratio between theory and practice is quite reasonable. However, the flexibility of the curriculum is not high; there are not many choices for students, especially there are not many elective subjects for students to choose in line with the aspirations and abilities of self student.

The curriculum of BA at universities of foreign language studies in Vietnam at present is designed to ensure interconnection with the level of training and other curriculum; with reference to the curriculum of the prestigious universities in the country or in the world; is designed to ensure interconnection with the level of training and other curriculum; with the participation of professional scientists, trainers, managers, representatives of social organizations - professional, labor recruiters and graduates. However, almost curriculums at universities of foreign language studies in Vietnam have not been periodically supplemented, adjusted based on feedback from employers, graduates, educational institutions and other organizations; has not been evaluated periodically and implement quality improvement based on assessment results; and did not meet the standard reference framework capabilities common European language.

In general, curriculum development of BA at universities of foreign language studies in Vietnam were received interested by universities' leaders, but the universities have not developed and promulgated regulations on curriculum development; have not gotten feedback from employers, graduates, educational institutions and other organizations about the curriculum have not been implemented effectively should not have the facilities to make adjustments, improved curriculum. In addition, curriculums have not been adjusted to meet the standard reference framework capabilities common European foreign language oriented and objectives of the university.

4. Solutions Curriculum Development Of Bachelor At University Of Foreign Language Studies In Vietnam

4.1. Define objectives, requirements and outcomes of BA curriculum development in foreign languages

- Clearly define the development goals of curriculum are in compliance with the regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training; reflect the vision, mission and objectives of university education; provide students with the basic skills required to meet the standards of knowledge, skills, qualifications and training; ensure balance distribution ratio between theory and practice; there are many elective subjects; ensure interoperability with the level of training and other training programs; with reference to the training program of the prestigious universities in the country or in the world; ensure the involvement of professional scientists, trainers, managers, representatives of social organizations - professional, labor recruiters and graduates in the process of building and

evaluation of training programs.

- Determine the requirement of curriculum development are periodically implemented surveys of faculty, students, alumni and stakeholders about the quality of training programs and conducting additional, adjustable based on the feedback from faculty, students, alumni, employers of labor, graduates and educational institutions. In addition, ensure the requirements of curriculum of BA in foreign language at present meets the standard reference framework capabilities common European language.
- Identify the results of curriculum development is the curriculum built and developed follows the process of curriculum development of the university issued as well as meet the content, requirements of curriculum development at universities of foreign language studies.

4.2. Construct and develop processes of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages

- Establish the Steering Committee and the secretariat of curriculum development of the university, in which ensure components Steering Committee with representatives managing board; leaders of function departments, professional Faculty and permanent Steering Committee concurrently Head of Secretariat is representative leaders of Academic Affairs Department.
- Based on the objectives, requirements and results of curriculum development the university has determined, secretary group conduct draft process of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages, which describes in detail the contents of the steps taken with the unified form.
- Conduct collect comments and feedbacks of management staff, faculty, students and alumni, the employers about the process of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages.
- Ensure that the output of process meets the objectives, requirements of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages to meet the standards of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- Promulgate documents and procedures of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages and public notice to all faculty and students. Notify curriculum development process to the labor recruiters to let them know and thus they participate actively in the curriculum development process of university.

4.3. Plan curriculum development of BA in foreign languages

- Develop plans to develop curriculum of BA in foreign languages to meet objectives and requirements of the university with the specific tasks assigned to each department, the content needs to done, the progress made, service resources, the results of implementation.
- Conduct survey reality the curriculum of BA at universities of foreign language studies to use as a base for designing plans to develop curriculum of BA in foreign languages appropriate and feasible with the specific conditions of the universities.
- Develop long-term plans, medium term, short-term of

curriculum development of BA in foreign languages with implementation roadmap and specific results.

- Determine long-term curriculum development plan of foreign languages in the strategic development of the university.
- Issue written plan to develop BA curriculum in foreign language at universities of foreign language studies.

4.4. Reflect the objective, requirements and process of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages

- Reflect the objective, requirements of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages to all faculty of the university, students through meetings, conferences, seminars, professional activities, classroom activities, ... to they understand the objectives and requirements of curriculum development in university of foreign languages studies.
- Organize training for faculty and students about the process curriculum development of BA in foreign languages.
- Diversify the forms of propaganda, notify plans to develop curriculum in foreign languages and processes developed curriculum of BA as written document, notified in the bulletin board, on the website of the university,...
- List full curriculum well as process of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages in student handbook and teacher handbook.
- Build and develop learning forum on the website of university in which including content of process of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages.

4.5. Organize implementing process of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages

- Implement synchronized application process of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages to all faculties of university.
- Establish the Steering Committee of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages and the working group developing the curriculum.
- Ensure the completion of the construction of syllabus, textbooks and reference materials, the teaching facilities for matching curriculum have been developed, adjusted.
- Seriously implement the curriculum acceptance has been building, adjusting, in which noted improvements in the participation of representatives of employers in the composition of the approval board.
- Annually conduct seeking feedback from faculty, students and stakeholders about the current curriculum are applied as well as the effectiveness of curriculum has been adjusted compared to the curriculum before adjusting.
- Develop a plan to adjust curriculum of BA in foreign languages of the university based on the results of surveys of teachers, students and other stakeholders.
- Periodically 2 years conduct to adjust, improve curriculum and annually supplement teaching content based subjects' survey results.

4.6. Asses the improvement of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages

- Strengthen supervision of the implementation process of BA curriculum developing in foreign languages have been built.
- Assign task to the Office of Testing and Quality Assurance in collaboration with the faculties to monitor implement processes of BA curriculum development in foreign languages.
- Annually conduct seeks feedback of management staff, faculty and students on the process of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages.
- Handling of the survey results as a basis for planning adjustment process, improvements developed curriculum of BA in foreign languages.
- Make adjustments and process improvements developed curriculum of BA in foreign languages according to the plan made.
- Accept process of curriculum development of BA in foreign languages has been improved; publicized in the university and applied in developing curriculum of BA in foreign languages.

5. Conclusion

To ensure the quality of training of BA foreign language of universities at present requires the universities of foreign language studies in Vietnam need to ensure the quality of all the components of the training process, in which quality of curriculum has important implications and is necessary. Curriculum is overall plan, the entire system of training activities of the university. Thus the universities of foreign language studies in Vietnam need to apply synchronous measures affecting curriculum development process to implement the goal of "in 2020 Vietnam Youth majority graduated secondary, college and university qualified language used independently, confident in communicating, learning, working in environment integration, multi-lingual, multi-cultural;..." [2] and contribute to accelerating the process of integration and career servicing of national industrialization and modernization of the country effectively.

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