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EXERCISES SYSTEM FOR DEVELOPING THE CAPACITY TO USE VIETNAMESE WORDS FOR LAOTIAN MILITARY CADETS

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LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS
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1. Nguyen Thi Yen, "Basic mistakes made by Lao cadets when pronouncing initial consonants in Vietnamese syllables", *Journal of Education*, 4/2014.
2. Nguyen Thi Yen, "On teaching Vietnamese for Foreign Military cadets", *Journal of Education,* 5/2014.
3. Nguyen Thi Yen, "Pronunciation drilling of Vietnamese tones for Lao cadets", *Journal of Education*, 6/2014.
4. Nguyen Thi Yen, "Textbook on military Vietnamese, *Military Science Academy*, 2014.
5. Nguyen Thi Yen, "Ways of explaining word-meanings for foreign military cadets in Vietnamese lessons", *Journal of Educational Management*, 11/2015.
6. Nguyen Thi Yen, "Development of Vietnamese vocabulary for foreign military cadets at schools in the Army", *Journal of Educational Management*, 1/2016.
7. Nguyen Thi Yen, "Teaching Vietnamese words for foreign military cadets in orientation of capability development", *Vietnam Education Publishing House*, 4/2016.
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9. Nguyen Thi Yen, "Building systems of fill-in exercises in teaching Vietnamese words for foreign military cadets at Military Science Academy", *A scientific study at Academy level*, 2016.
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INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the thesis

1.1. In these recent years, Vietnam has been actively implementing the basic innovation and comprehensive education-training, determining Vietnamese language training for foreigner military trainees as a critical and strategic mission, which contributes tremendously to politics as well as diplomacy.

1.2. Laos is our neighboring country whose relationship towards Vietnam is described as "especially precious in the history of international relations". Over the past many years, Laos has sent thousands of military trainees (MTs) to the Vietnam military institutions to learn Vietnamese language. According to the military particularity, Laotian MTs live and study in in-camp when abiding in Vietnam. After school time, Laotian MTs often opt out to live "in cluster" and communicate with each other using their native language instead of Vietnamese. This habit somehow results in the curtailment of Vietnamese practicing time. Consequently, Vietnamese vocabulary is just limitedly utilized inside classroom, which is considered a lack of authenticity. This situation puts a negative impact on educational quality, and most importantly of all, it is Vietnamese language learning.

1.3. After collecting data from Laotian MTs surveys, the writers found that most students were usually quite embarrassing when producing Vietnamese language, especially those military technical terms. In many cases, these MTs make mistakes in a hierarchy, especially when these students translate separated words to words rather than putting them in contexts.

From the data collected, it can be clearly seen that the majority of lecturers has not got a sense of satisfaction not only with the exercise system and references that are being used in the curriculum, but also at Vietnamese language learning development. In addition, there is still a scarcity in teaching references, with only a couple of articles mentioning individual aspects. Meanwhile, so as to strive for Vietnamese language development of Laotian MTs, it is of crucial importance that lectures need to have a consistent exercise system with hypothetical situations, a specific training content with the appropriate teaching activities and a certain destination. Therefore, in this current thesis, the authors determine to construct a consistent exercise system, which is based on theories and practices, so as to improve the capacity of producing Vietnamese language of Laotian MTs.

2. Participant and scope of the thesis

2.1. Population study of the thesis

The paper focuses on the construction of a consistent exercise system so as to strive for Vietnamese language learning development of Laotianmilitary students.

2.2. Scope of the thesis: Consistent exercise system in Vietnamese language learning development of Laotian MTs in Vietnamese military institutions.

3. Objectives of the thesis

The current thesis is conducted with the purpose of constructing a consistent Vietnamese-language-learning exercise system which matches

psychological and title traits of Laotian MTs, so as to enhance Vietnamese language learning of Laotian military students.

In order to strive for the aforementioned goal, these following missions have to be accomplished:

- Learn the theories and practices related to Vietnamese language teaching for foreigners.

-Figure outcommonly used methods in Vietnamese words use capacity of Laotian MTs in particular and the process of Vietnamese language learning in general.

- Introduce and demonstrate a consistent Vietnamese language learning system for Laotian MTs. In each type of assignment, the purpose, the meaning of assignment, the mechanisms, the content, the structure, as well as the type of process have to be mentioned.

- Investigate the significance of the consistent exercise system by conducting experiments to verify the feasibility towards Vietnamese language learning development of Laotian MTs.

4. Methods of the thesis

- Collect and analyse
- Investigate
- Experiment

5. Hypothesis of the thesis

In Vietnamese language teaching and learning process of Laotian MTs, if leacturers construct a consistent exercise system that matches psychological and title traits of Laotian students and contains anthenticity language, there will be an improvement in broadening lexical resourses of Laotian learners, thereby contributing to Vietnamese language learning development.

6. Contribution of the thesis

This research paper is expected to contribute to:

- The construction of theories and practices of Vietnamese language learning exercise system of Laotian MTs.

- The investigation into: current Vietnamese language teaching for Laotian MTs; Vietnamese language learning assignment types for foreigners; comprehension of Vietnamese lexical resourses and capability of Vietnamese words use of Laotian students.

- The construction of Vietnamese language learning exercise system of Laotian MTs with a classification based on the specific criteria and the direction to apply for each type of assignment, simultaneously.

7. Organization of the thesis

Apart from introduction and conclusion, this paper is organized into four major sections:

1. Chapter 1: Overview of thesis problem
2. Chapter 2: Theoretical and practical basis
3. Chapter 3:Construction and use of a consistent exercise system
4. Chapter 4: Pedagogical experiment

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF THESIS PROBLEM

1.1. Research on teaching Vietnamese lexical resources in general and Vietnamese language teaching for MTs in particular

1.1.1. Word is the smallest constituent of any language, and learning other languages apart from the native one also starts by studying words. Generally, there are three issues involving in teaching vocabulary which can be listed as follow: develop and broaden lexical resources; grasp the meaning of the words; and practice using those words. Conversely, several previous studies only focused on teaching words as Vietnamese native language rather than considering it as teaching of Vietnamese as a foreign language.

1.1.2. Vietnamese has been globally known over the past 100 years, yet there is still no official Vietnamese language learning curriculum for foreigners has been introduced. Meanwhile, in order to achieve language learning development, it is necessary to create an appropriate methodology for teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language.

1.1.3. After conducting a number of surveys in teaching curriculum for Vietnamese expatriate MTs in Vietnamese military schools and institutions, it can be seen that Vietnamese language learning course books was designed following communication approach and integrated learning with a wide variety of exercise system. Nevertheless, these course books are not quite compatible with Laotian military students.

1.1.4. In regard of the teaching methodology, up to now there have been a number of studies about this research problem. Overall, these studies mentioned the essential role of assignment in both teaching Vietnamese and teaching Vietnamese lexical resources. This will be the direction for the authors to conduct research and propose a consistent exercise system that contributes to Vietnamese language learning development of Laotian MTs.

1.2. Research on competence and language competency

1.2.1. Concepts of competence and language competency

-***Competence*** is the ability to *master* the *knowledge, skills* and *psychological conditions* which a learner has experienced, and simultaneously that person knows to use those experiences in a flexible way to solve any situations.

-***Language competency*** includes linguistic or grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic or socio-cultural competence and textual competence that has been accumulating along the process of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Described as a division of language competency, *lexical range* can be seen as a *reservoir* that individual saccumulate together with *lexical application* in the process of creation and reception of texts.

1.2.2. Research on teaching Vietnamese towards competence development

Vietnamese language competence is perceived as the ability to utilize knowledge, skills and attitudes of students in the learning process to resolve authentic situations. Accordingly, Vietnamese language competence includes the

ability: to sort and organize words; to use words in proper contexts and to construct sentences and paragraphs. Therefore, it is of great importance to renew teaching method which puts learners as the center of the learning process.

1.3. Research on assignment and lexical range development exercise system

1.3.1. Definition of assignment

- Assignment is an integral part of the teaching process, which have the ability to stimulate the nerves and is an important means to active learning.

- Assignment (in Vietnamese language teaching) plays an indispensable role on students' development. From theories, students have to critically find out how to master knowledge and skills, which contributes to accurate and quick reflexes.

1.3.2. Construction of lexical range development exercise system

The construction of lexical range development exercise system in teaching has long been considered by many scientists throughout the world. (Pestalogy, l. Vưgotxki, g. c. Koschuc X, V. C, Avanhexop, I.F. Khalamop)

In Vietnam, *the construction of lexical range development exercise system* is not a new subject. Several authors have been adopting research in this field, namely Nguyen Canh Toan, Thai Duy Tuyen, Le A, Le Phuong Nga, Le Huu Tinh, Nguyen Quang Ninh, Do Xuan Thao, Ho Le and Nguyen Minh Thuyet. It can easily be seen that the similarity of these studies is that these researchers put emphasis on the role of the exercise system in the teaching process. On the one hand, with a variety of assignment types, exercise system will create situations *to stimulate learners develop critical thinking* and *encourage learner autonomy*. On the other hand, exercise system also creates *learner motivation* and creativity in learning process.

1.4. Role of assignment in teaching Vietnamese lexical resources for Laotian MTs

Assignment plays a crucial part in Vietnamese language training and Vietnamese lexical teaching for Laotian MTs. Through assignment, Laotian MTs can expand language practice environment and involve in communication situations, even when they are just assumed communicative situations.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 1

Over the past few years, research on lexical competence, the role of exercise system in foreign language teaching and in teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language has obtained a significant achievement. There are a great number of researchers in Vietnam and all over the world who has been working in the field. It cannot be denied that exercise system places a paramount important role in the development of language learning and lexical resources. An appropriate exercise system will facilitate learners thruassumed communicative situations, from which attributes to lexical competence. Conversely, the researchers found that there is not much research had been done in the case of teaching Vietnamese to Laotian MTs. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is constructing a consistent exercise system to broaden Vietnamese lexical range and develop Vietnamese language learning of Laotian military students.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL BASIS

2.1. Theoretical background

2.1.1. Lexicology – semantics

a. Definition of word

Word is the smallest constituent of any language. Vietnamese word contains one or many syllables. Vietnamese words are fixed, unchanging; carry certain grammatical functions; locate in certain constructions; all with a certain meaning.

b. The meaning of word

The meaning of word is a collection of distinctive features, which can manufacture structural sub-elements. The meaning of word consists of three sub-divisions, namely denotation, connotation and expression. In order to comprehend the meaning of word, it is not about looking for a word's seperated definition but considering it in an appropriate context.

c. Vocabulary and individual lexical range

An individual lexical range is perceived as a collection of words that someone possesses at a certain time. With this lexical range, individuals can say, write and understand others in the process of communication.

Vocabulary is a certain number of words that one produces in different scenarios. The act of producing vocabulary is actually the realization of some certain words in one's personal lexical range. In other words, vocabulary is a part of an individual lexical range.

2.1.2. Features of Vietnamese words

2.1.2.1. Phonetics standpoint

In terms of phonetics, Vietnamese words do not change morphological features. When standing in the system or performing the function, phonetic form of words remains unchanged (except for alliterative expressions).

2.1.2.2. Grammar standpoint

The traits of Vietnamese grammar hardly manifest in an internal meaning of words but manifest externally, in correlation with other words in a sentence. This correlation is described in three aspects, namely the ability to combine, the function of grammar in a sentence, and the capability to dominate extra components in a phrase or a sentence.

2.1.2.3. Semantics standpoint

Vietnamese is an isolation language, which can clearly be seen in the formation of compound words. Compound words are formed by combining isolation words together. When combining, the meaning of each separate word transforms. Take coordinate connectors as an example.

In regard of subordinate connectors, the transformation can also be noticed. The main part is to denote whole meaning of that compound word, wheare as the extra section is to restrict meaning.

2.1.3. Vocabulary teaching

2.1.3.1. Importance of vocabulary teaching

Teaching vocabulary plays an indispensable role in the process of teaching foreign languages and teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language. Vocabulary is

not only a tool to facilitate learners in communicating, but also founds the development of language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The wider one's lexical range is, the more proficient that person can be.

2.1.3.2. Purpose of vocabulary teaching

Generally, the purpose of the vocabulary teaching is to pursue learners' awareness and application. In regard of realization, learners will be equipped with a basic knowledge on the relationship between vocabulary and vocabulary with other units such as phonetic and grammar. On the application standpoint, learners will learn how to choose and use words appropriately in different contexts in order to achieve the purpose of communication. As a result, teaching vocabulary is not merely to provide a lexical range, but most importantly of all, it aims to help learners utilize vocabulary in distinctive communicative situations.

2.1.3.3. Teaching vocabulary in learner-development-oriented approach

Learner-development-oriented approach is the orientation towards what learners are able to perform rather than what learners can know. Therefore, teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language for Laotian MTs put an emphasis on Vietnamese language learning development of Laotian MTs in title and daily communication.

2.1.4. Theoretical background of communication language

In communication language, there are a number of factors that impact directly or indirectly on the organization and construction of interaction patterns. All of these factors that have affected the impression in the speech are called communication factors.

Communication factors includes: communication participants, content, communication contexts and communication purposes.

2.1.5. Similarity and difference between Vietnamese and Laotian language

2.1.5.1. Phonetics standpoint

- About tones: Vietnamese and Laotian are the languages having tones with different locations and frequencies of use.

- About consonants: Laotian possesses nine more consonants than Vietnamese. Meanwhile, Vietnamese obtains three consonants that do not exist in Laotian, namely *g, ch, tr*.

- About vowels: Laotian maintains more vowels than Vietnamese (Laotian: 26, Vietnamese: 16). All the vowels in the Laotian have an opposition between a short vowel and a long vowel, in pairs.

-About syllable structure: Alongside with the similarity in two-level syllable structure and suprasegmental feature, Vietnamese and Laotian remains a difference in written side. For example, in Vietnamese, segmental feature is presented by linear communication together with suprasegmental feature (tones preceding or following main vowel sounds). Meanwhile, Laotian syllable structure is organized in both horizontal rows and vertical rows.

2.1.5.2. Grammar standpoint

Both Vietnamese and Laotian are isolation language. However, Laotian is composed by many more syllables than Vietnamese. For instance, Laotian

words usually consist of 2 to 4 syllables. Most distinctively of all, there are words that contain 8 syllables.

In terms of word formation, similarly as Vietnamese, Laotian words are divided into three types: simple, alliterative and compound word.

2.1.5.3. Semantics standpoint

Both Vietnamese and Laotian words have multiple meanings, synonyms, antonyms and homonyms. Due to this similarity, teaching Vietnamese language to Laotian students will be much more advantageous. Nevertheless, because of the disparity in the number of words between Vietnamese and Lao (Laos has 7000 words less than Vietnamese), Laotian words carry greater holistic meaning than Vietnamese words.

2.2. Practical background

2.2.1. Vietnamese teaching situation for Lao military students in Viet Nam

2.2.1.1. Vietnamese Language Competence Framework and teaching program

Vietnamese teaching program for Lao military students is applied in the military school before 2015 consisting of two levels, namely basic level and advanced level. On basic level, students are taught 900 hours which is equivalent to one academic year. Similarly, the duration is 840 hours with advanced level. However, after the Vietnamese Language Competence Framework was issued under Circular No. 17/2015 / TT-BGD DT on 01/9/2015, the Program is divided into three levels, which are Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. The program corresponds to six levels (from 1 through 6, similar to levels A1 through C2 in the Common European Framework).

2.2.1.2. Course books and learning aids

a. Coursebooks and references

At present, there are more than a dozen Vietnamese coursebooks for foreigners being used by domestic and international Vietnamese language training institutions. In general, curricula are elaborately and scientifically compiled; which focus on practicing; aiming to practice four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, it has not literally met the needs of Laotian students because the title traits (military characteristics) are barely mentioned. Vietnamese Military Cousebook, edited by Nguyen Thi Yen (Military Science Academy) in 2014, is the only book available today that adds military vocabulary, yet only bachelors and advanced learners are using that book. As a result, the basic level students are still struggling due to a dearth of technical terms.

b. Learning aids

The application of modern facilities in the teaching is extremely necessary in teaching foreign languages in general and teaching Vietnamese in particular. Therefore, in these recent years, military schools have paid more attention to the innovation of teaching methods associated with the application of science and technology. A lot of Vietnamese language training institutions have computer rooms, projectors and internet; electronic library systems and functional classrooms with modern cabins. This is one of the favorable conditions for the teaching process to become easier and contribute to a higher efficiency.

2.2.1.3. Exercise system for developing Vietnamese lexical competence in use

The writers received a lot of feedback from lecturers and students after the survey at three schools: Military Academy of Science, 871 Unit and School of Military Engineering Officer Vinhempich. One of the comments said that although the authors have paid special attention to the tasks, the exercises to develop the vocabulary of Vietnamese for students in the coursebook are sketchy and unsystematic. For most of the parts, exercises are designed to consolidate individual grammatical topics, but not to the whole and there are more structured exercises appear than case-studied. Thus, there are types of exercises that repeat several times, whereas there are those rarely or never appear. Technical terms and islands sovereignty are absolutely necessary lexical range for learners, yet they are not being mentioned.

2.2.1.4 Teaching and learning activities

a. Trainer

In general, Vietnamese language teachers work under the Ministry of Defense, who come from civilian school, so they are ofter well qualified and disciplined. However, their military knowledge is partly limited compared to those trained in military. Military institutions have a number of special rules, where teachers must follow the same rules as soldiers. All these elements affect the quality and effectiveness of teaching.

b. Trainee

Laotian military students who were sent to Vietnam to study Vietnamese were mostly-graduates of military universities in their country and were trained by the Laos People's Army. Therefore, they had good learning attitudes. Moreover, they gathered at the camp so they can wholeheartedly for studying, less influenced by external factors, have the opportunity to exchange information, get the learning experience from classmates and seniors and take advantage of school time as well as self-study hours.

In addition, due to specific characteristics of the military, Laotian students also face some difficulties in learning such as great gap of knowledge among students in class, little chance to interact with Vietnamese, hardly open-hearted with international students. This psychological barrier can partly affect learner's ability to use words.

2.2.2. Psychological characteristics and learning conditions of Laotian military students in Vietnam

Compared to other military students, Laotian military students who come to Vietnam to learn Vietnamese have many favorable conditions. In particular, the similarities lie in terms language (Vietnamese and Laotian have many similarities in terms of phonetics, vocabulary and grammar), in terms of geography, history and culture and the steady relationship between the two parties, the two states and the two nations. Therefore, Laotian students have a positive and comfortable learning environment in Vietnam.

On the other hand, Laotian students still have some limitations that affect their academic performance. Typically, Laotian students are often afraid to

communicate and express ideas, which lead to curtailing time of the learner's practicing opportunity. In addition, their English skills and the use of technology are also limited. All of those impacts their academic performance.

2.2.3. Lao military cadets' ability to use Vietnamese words

Due to a range of subjective and objective factors, Lao military cadets are often shy to use Vietnamese words, including a concern regarding misrepresentation. Therefore, cadets are also shy with respect to communicating in Vietnamese during school hours and are reluctant to use new words or synonymous structures learned in class. As a result, Lao students' proficiency in speaking Vietnamese is limited. Subsequently, it is necessary to build a system of exercises to develop their confidence and ability to use their Vietnamese language skills to help them overcoming these challenges.

2.2.4. Teaching Vietnamese for Laotian military students in Vietnam military institutions

In recent years, in order to improve the Vietnamese language skills for Laotian military students, military Vietnamese language training institutions have constantly developed their teaching methods. Based on questionnaires for teachers, the writers found that most teachers were active in the teaching process. Closely following is the evaluation criteria according to Vietnamese Language Competence Framework for foreigners; continuous research and application of advanced achievements to improve the vocabulary of Vietnamese for learners.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 2

The design of a consistent exercise system aiming to develop Vietnamese lexical competence must be based on reliably theoretical and practical approach. Particularly, theoretical backgrounds such as semantics, theory of communication and basic Laotian-Vietnamese parallel corpus are the most important factors in proposing the content. In addition, it is necessary to rely on the syllabus and follow the situation of teaching Vietnamese to Lao students at military schools. As a result, the system will have such qualities as high applicability and consolidation to expand personal lexical range, activate the vocabulary and correct mistakes in the learning process. These are reliable practical backgrounds providing us with a solid basis for further research in this thesis.

CHAPTER 3: CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF A CONSISTENT EXERCISE SYSTEM

3.1. Basic requirements of constructing an exercise system

-To assure integrity

-To remain challenging (neither too easy nor too difficult)

-To promote active learning of learners

-To establish appropriate assumed communicative situations

- To warranta variety of exercise and allure

3.2. Steps to construct a consistent exercise system

-Step 1: Define the purpose of each assignment

-Step 2: Select language materials
-Step 3: Determine the order of each assignment
-Step 4: Administer and test

3.3. Exercise system

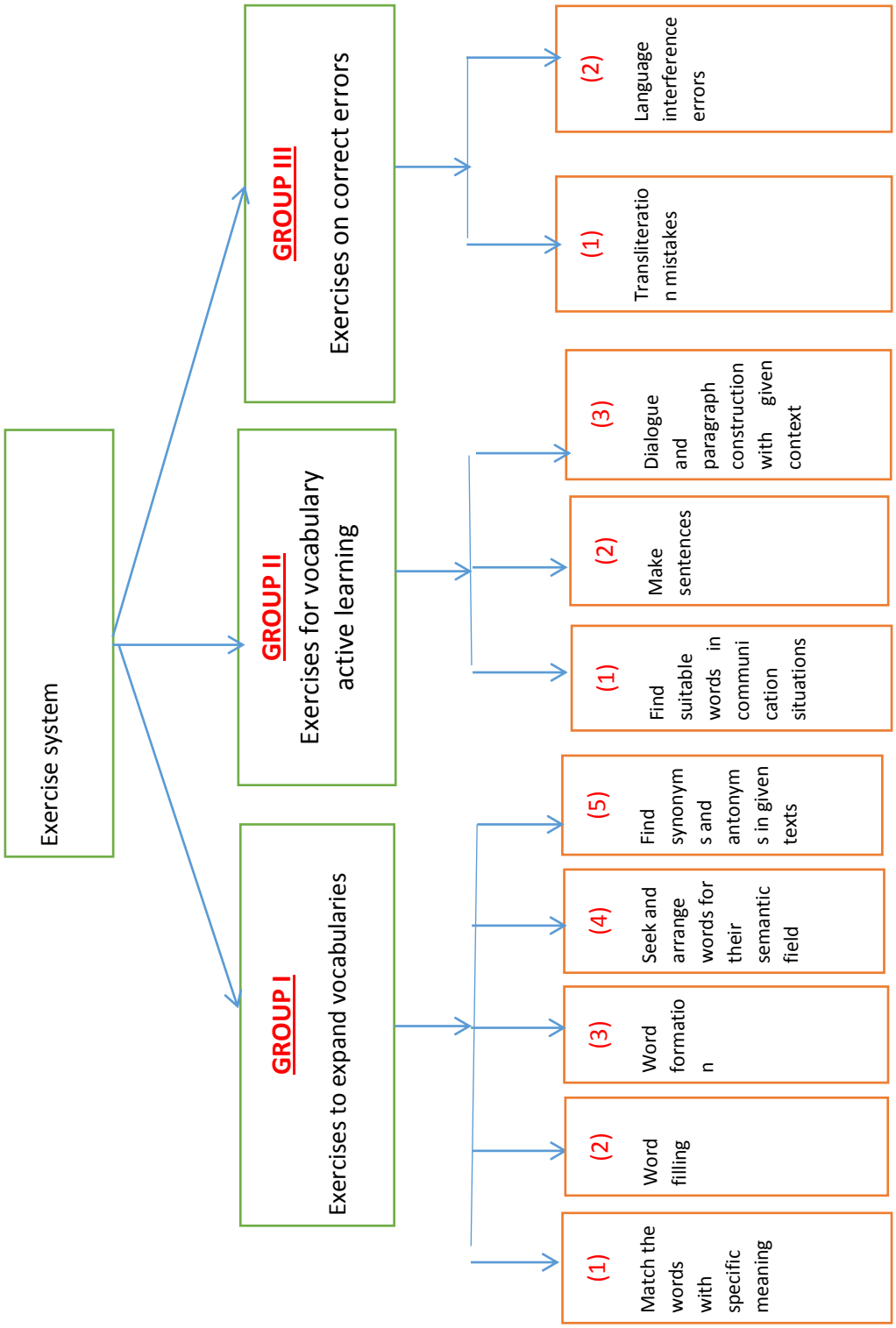

Diagram 1: Exercise system

The writers divided groups of exercises based on three main criteria, namely purpose, structure and function. In each group, the exercises were

categorized into sub-divisions, which were categories, type and form. So as to avoid repetition in demonstrating a consistent Exercise system, the authors opted out to represent the orders of groups of Exercises are as follow:

-General description of groups of exercises

-Aim and form of each type of exercises

- Model

3.3.1. Lexical range development

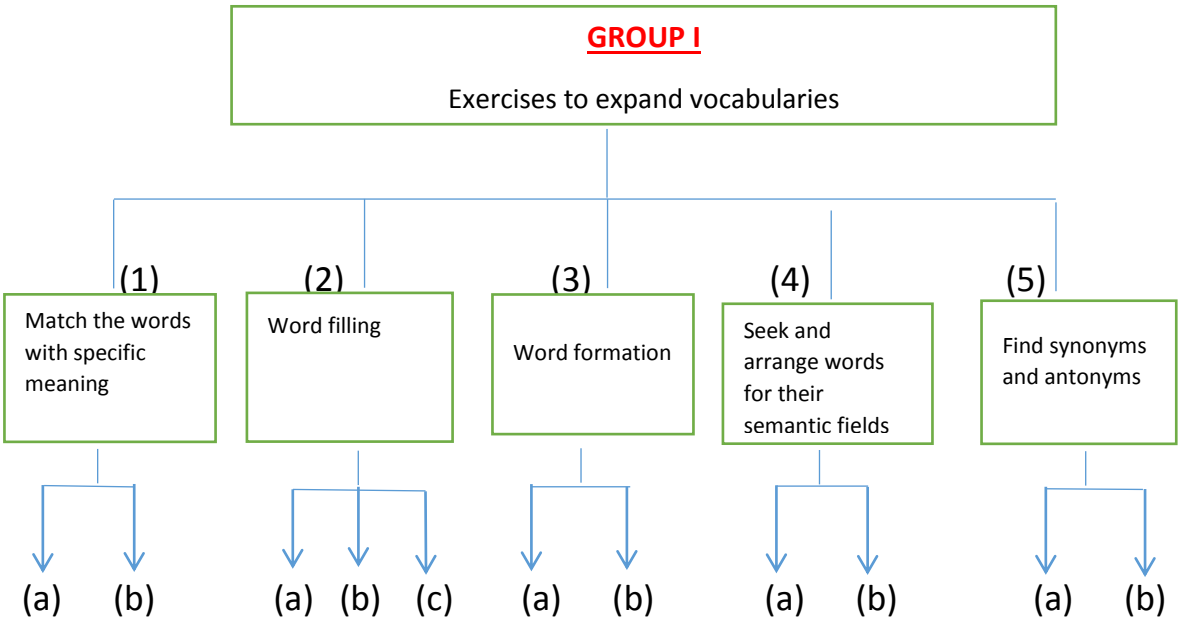

Diagram 2: Exercises to expand vocabularies

3.3.1.1. Word matching

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: include words and corresponding definitions

+ Order: Learners match the words with suitable meanings

a. Match the words with specific meanings

This is kind of exercises that have the same number of words and corresponding meanings. Learners have to find compatible pairs of words and the meaning then connect them together.

b. Match the words with suitable meanings in communication situation

This is kind of exercises that order learners to connect words and meanings in a specific communication situation. So as to complete, learners have to perceive the meanings of words in different contexts.

3.3.1.2. Word filling

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: consists of sentences, verses, dialogues, paragraphs or stories, in which exist several closes.

+ Order: Learners fill in the gaps with provided words or fill in the blanks based on different contexts.

a. Fill in the gaps suitable words based on word formation

This exercise requires learners to recall their knowledge about word formation and then fill in the gaps with suitable words.

b. Fill in the gaps suitable words based on semantics features

This type of exercise orders learners to use their visual means to grasp several meaning layers of words

c. Fill in the gaps suitable words based on communication situations

This type is designed on the basis of several sentences in a given paragraph. In this paragraph, there are primary words available, and learners have to fill in the gaps with words that obtain correlations with those primary words.

This type of exercise is categorized into three forms:

• Word-fill in semantic field

• Word-fill in syntagmatic channel

• Word-fill in associate

3.3.1.3. Word formation

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: simple words

+ Order: form alliterative or compound words from given simple ones

a. Write the compound words of these following simple words

This exercise provides learners with simple words. The task is to form appropriate and corresponding compound words (coordinate or subordinate connectors)

b. Write the alliterative words of these following simple words

Similarly with a., learners' task in this exercise is to form an alliterative word from a simple one by finding a repeated sound comparing to the original sound.

Thru this type, learners can reinforce their knowledge about word formation and expand their vocabulary, which contributes tremendously to individual lexical range.

3.3.1.4. Seek and arrange words for their semantic field

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: word, list of words, picture, list of pictures or a topic

+ Order: Group the words in appropriate groups

a. Re-arrange the words in suitable groups

This exercise provides a list of words or a list of pictures in advance. Learners are supposed to classify these words and pictures into related groups, which can also promote critical thinking.

b. Find the words in different topics

In this exercise, learners are supplied with a word, a picture or a topic, and their mission is to seek for vocabulary associating with that provided word/picture/topic.

If students perform this type well, they will possess a wide lexical range and will be able to generate properly words within a given topic.

3.3.1.5. Synonym and antonym

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: words and texts

+ Order: find synonyms and antonyms

a. Find synonyms and antonyms in given texts

This exercise gives learners synonyms and antonyms, and students have to detect those syn-anto pairs.

b. Define synonyms and antonyms range

The primary word will be provided beforehand in this exercise. Learners have to make a collection of synonyms and antonyms of that primary word. The more words one can find, the wider his/her lexical range is.

3.3.2. Vocabulary active learning

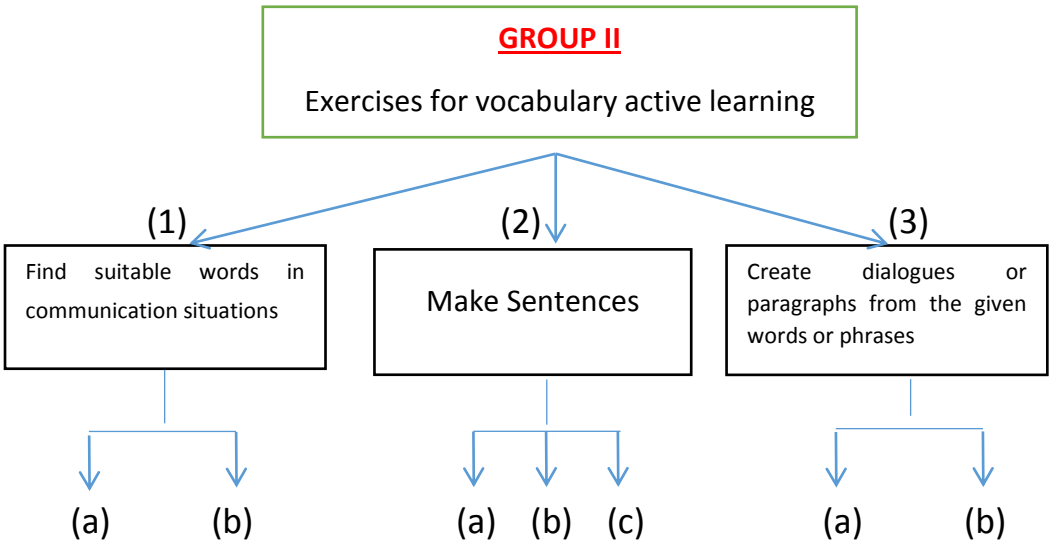

Diagram 8: Exercises for vocabulary active learning

3.3.2.1. Find suitable words in communication situations

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: assumed communicative situations in classroom language and daily communication

+ Order: perceive assumed communicative situations and find suitable words

a. Multiple choice

In this exercise, assumed communicative situations and multiple options are provided in advance. Learners are required to read comprehensively and choose the correct option.

b. Scrambled word

This exercise merely supplies learners with assumed communicative situations with no option. Students have to seek for vocabulary themselves and re-arrange the words in order to make a meaningful sentence in the appropriate communication situations.

3.3.2.2. Sentence making

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: words and pictures in related topics

+ Order: make sentences using provided words or describing meanings of pictures

a. Make sentences with given words

This is one of the regular exercises of Laotian MTs in the process of Vietnamese language learning, for this type facilitates considerably in the use of word.

b. Make sentences describing meanings of pictures

This exercise provides one (or many) pictures which relate semantically. Learners are ordered to speak or write in one (or many) sentences.

3.3.2.3. Dialogue and paragraph construction with given context

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: a topic and related key words

+ Order: make a dialogue or paragraph based on given topics and related key words

a. Make a dialogue with given context

Students follow suggestions and key words to make a dialogue, which includes situations, communication participants and content. This exercise is a bit challenging since learners are supposed to generate appropriately their lexical resources in order to fit the given context, which is quite different from guided learning.

b. Write a paragraph with given context

This exercise encourages writing, yet it is considerably distinctive neither from free writing nor guided writing. With this exercise, learners are given an opportunity to utilize vocabulary in a given context and connect genuinely ideas together. Therefore, before writing, students have to analyze carefully the corpus, so as to avoid misunderstanding.

3.3.3. Error correction

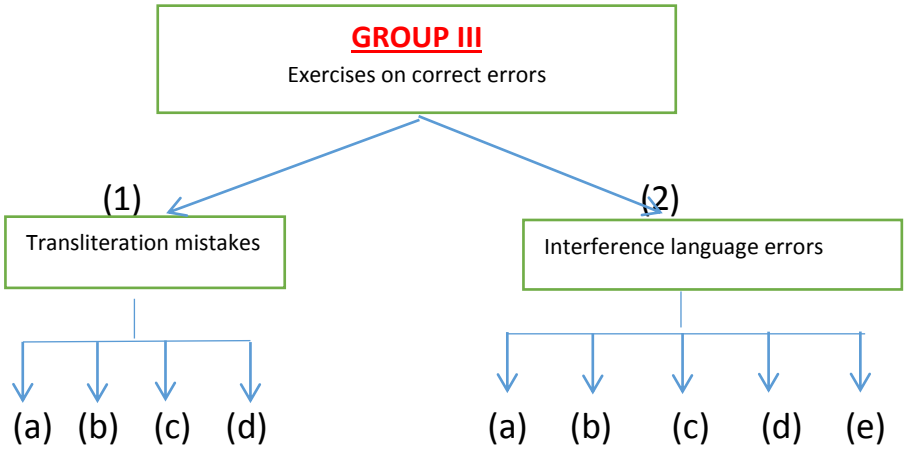

Diagram 12: Exercises on correct errors

3.3.3.1. Translation errors

Translation error is the consequence of a grammatical or spelling mistake or an incorrect word choice given the original words' meaning or the document's target audience that is inappropriate in Vietnamese culture and language.

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: exemplifications of translation error

+ Order: identify errors and correct them

a. Similarity of syllable features words confusion

This is a frequent mistake made by Laotian students, especially with grassroots education. The motive lies on the similarity of syllable features between some words but difference in meanings and formations.

So as to avoid this error, students should be aware of word meaning and formation rules of near sonic words. In case there is still any ambiguity, learners are advised to look up words in dictionary and try to remember words in full sentence rather than in separated words.

b. Giving direction mistakes

In Vietnamese, giving directions are used flexibly and genuinely. So as to choose and utilize giving direction words correctly, learners should be aware of both word meanings and their current personal positions. Giving direction mistakes includes:

- Errors due to not be aware of current personal positions
- Errors due to lack of giving direction words or movement words
- Error due to overuse of giving direction words or movement words

c. Word combination mistakes

According to data collected, the writers notice that Laotian students usually made mistakes since these learners have not mastered Vietnamese word formation. Some typical types of this error are as follows:

- Unaware of the position of few, little, many, much in a noun phrase
- Combination error of the noun "con" and pronoun "ấy"
- Overuse of "to be" in combination with adjectives
- Wrong word forms

d. Pronoun mistakes

There is a variety of pronouns in Vietnamese, and pronouns attribute tremendously to Vietnamese lexical reservoir. Still, this variety put a burden in Vietnamese language learning as a foreign language, especially with Laotian MTs. A number of pronoun mistakes are as below:

- Misuse of the pronoun "it" to describe third person pronoun
- Confusion about the consanguinity pronouns in family

3.3.3.2. Interlingual errors

Interlingual errors are those that result from language transfer and are caused by the learner's native language.

The structure consists of two parts:

+ Corpus: exemplifications of negative transfers

+ Order: detect errors and correct them

a. Misuse of hook, up and down tones

One of the differences between Vietnamese and Laotian lies in the use of language tones. Typically in Vietnamese, six language tones obtain an equal function in Vietnamese language. Meanwhile, in Laotian, there are three tones that are utilized more frequently. In addition, it is noticeable that the syllable which has the same tone as a Vietnamese hook always starts with a "s". These differences result in the misuse of hook, up and down of Laotian MTs.

b. Misuse of *g – c; ch – tr*

Although Laotian possesses more consonants than Vietnamese, there are still one consonant "g" and two consonant clusters "ch" and "tr" that Laotian does not have. This leads to the struggle Laotian MTs have to face up to. As a result, Laotian students usually simplize knowledge by turning "g" into "c" and "ch, tr" into "ch".

c. Misconception of entire-alliterative words' different meaning levels

Both Vietnamese and Laotian possess alliterative words, yet its significances are not the same. In Vietnamese, entire-alliterative words involve the repetition of the same sound at the beginning of two or more words in a phrase or sentence, so as to describe regression of meanings. Conversely, this pattern converts in Laotian, with the absolute meanings. As a result, a number of Laotian students may speak out a word or a phrase which is irrelevant to what they think.

d. Unware of Vietnamese word order (Numberal, type of words and noun) in noun phrases

This is also one of the frequent-made mistakes of Laotian MTs when learning Vietnamese. Specifically, Vietnamese word order is different from Laotian one. For example, if Vietnamese word order is A-B-C, so Laotian one is C-A-B. If Laotian MTs are unconcious of this feasibility, they would make mistakes.

e. Unaware of the use of verbs in the eating, wearing group in Vietnamese.

As the writers have mentioned earlier, Laotian possesses more words with holistic meanings, so Laotian students often confuse between too many specific words. Consequently, these learners transfer language from their own native language, which creates flawed word formation.

3.4. Orientation of exercise system usage for Laotian MTs

3.4.1. Laotian MTs' Vietnamese lexical range development orientation in language skills

Reading, listening, speaking and writing are four basic language skills that every language learner desire to master. Nevertheless, the proficiency of each skill often stands at different levels. Therefore, when constructing a

consistent exercise system, four skills have to be practiced frequently, and lecturers may adjust lesson plans in order to fit their students' abilities. The exercise system that was designed in this thesis met this criterion.

3.4.2. Exercises used in language skills development lessons and learner autonomy

This section is developed thru:

- Providing examples or situations
- Practicing
- Accomplishing homework worksheets

3.4.3. Exercises used in valuation

In process ofbteaching, examination and evaluation play a very importan role. By that, teacher can value exactly and objectively result of learness. Therefore, building checklist for Laos students through exercise system becomes useful.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 3

Teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language for Laotian MTs is mainly about practices and activities. As the authors have stated, exercises play an indispensable role in the process of master Vietnamese. Thru exercise system, four language skills develop by practicing and involving in several assumed communicative situations. Therefore, the writers put emphasis on characteristics (structure, feature and order), meticulous instructions and methods of each type of assignment. On basis of demonstrated models, further research could investigate and carry out another exercise system in order to suit learners' competencies, from which motivates learning process and enhances the quality of training in the field of teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language in general, teaching Vietnamese for Laotian military trainees in particular.

CHAPTER 4: PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIMENT

4.1. Objective of pedagogical experiment

This experiment is carried out with the motive of verifying the effectiveness and feasibility of a consistent exercise system.

4.2. Participant of pedagogical experiment

The participants are Laotian military trainees who learn Vietnamese language.

4.3. Scope of pedagogical experiment

- Northern area:

+ Military Academy of Science
+ Unit 871

- Southern area:

+ School of Military Engineering Officer Vinhempich

4.4. Periods of pedagogical experiment

- Phase 1: 1 month, from December 1 - 30
- Phase 2: 1 month, from March 1 – 31

The phases are verified by referral letter (see Appendix)

4.5. Methodology of pedagogical experiment

So as to strive for the transparency and objectivity, the writers had conducted two-round experiment.

- Round 1: Control round
- Round 2: Experimental round

Control round was conducted on an extensive scale, including lecturers' questionnaire and students' worksheets.

In regard of experimental round, the authors followed articles 11 to 14 (Vietnamese A1 coursebook) and articles 22 to 25 (Vietnamese A2 syllabus) to design lesson plans. In each session, the writers chose from 5 to 7 words to be "keywords", which are closely related to the topic, in order to listen, read and build the conversation situation. On the basis of language analyses, the researchers designed a consistent exercise system, with the aims of consolidating and expanding lexical range and correcting common errors made by Laotian MTs in the process of Vietnamese language learning. At the end of each lesson, learners filled in self-evaluation sheets and worksheets. These works were completed right in classes, and learners' worksheets would be marked based on a fixed scale.

4.6. Experiment description

Questionnaire types	Subject	Purpose
Interviewing	Lecturer	- Survey the role of lexical teaching in the process of Vietnamese language teaching practice. - Fifure out the advantages and disadvantages in Vietnamese lexical teaching for Laotian MTs. - Investigate the urgency of constructing a consistent exercise system in Vietnamese lexical teaching. - Assess the feasibility of the proposed exercise system.
Evaluation	Student	- Survey the level of Laotian MTs when learning Vietnamese lexical resources. - Review learning attitudes of students. - Check outlearning purposes of Vietnamese language studies learners. - Evaluate learners' confidence when involving in assumed communication situations.
Worksheet	Student	- Test learners' Vietnamese lexical range on regular basis. - Evaluate and compare Vietnamese lexical use of students in both control class and experimental class, from which determines whether to propose a consistent exercise system.

4.7. Measurements

4.7.1. Qualitative measurement

a. Learners' excitement extent when receiving and doing exercises

The majority of Laotian MTs was elated with the form of pedagogical experiment, especially when being involved in experimental lessons.

b. Learners' capability to solve assignment problems

When facing up to the exercises, most Laotian MTs had self-awareness and put efforts in tackling any matters.

c. Learners' ability to generalize and codify knowledge thru exercises

In order to combat any obstacles, Laotian MTs did not just utilize their knowledge of words in a single unit, but also gather knowledge of other fields such as phonetics, personal lexical range and grammar. This process contributes tremendously to students' reservoir of knowledge, from which helps learners accumulate a great amount of lexical competence.

d. Learners' competence in and after the exercise system is introduced

Thru observations, it could be noticed that Laotian MTs had mastered Vietnamese lexical competence to some extent. Specifically, HV had an idea in minds of what to do and what not to do after analyzing exercises' orders. Learners could also recognize suitable uses of words in contexts and academic words. All showed that there was a considerable development in Vietnamese language learning of Laotian military trainees.

4.7.2. Quantitative measurement

Data were collected from the results of four tests, with the sevaluation scale of 10 points. Figures tabulated are presented as below:

- Phase 1

  The statistics of test 1:

  - Total number of MTs in control round: 38
  - Total number of MTs in experimental round: 38

Rounds		Scores											Average
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Control	Amount	0	0	0	0	0	8	16	9	4	1	0	6,31
	%	0	0	0	0	0	21,0	42,0	23,9	10,5	2,6	0	
Experi-mental	Amount	0	0	0	0	0	3	7	14	10	4	0	7,13
	%	0	0	0	0	0	8,0	18,4	36,8	26,3	10,5		

The statistics of test 2:

- Total number of MTs in control round: 38
- Total number of MTs in experimental round: 38

Rounds		Scores											Average
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Control	Amount	0	0	0	0	0	10	16	7	4	1	0	6,21
	%	0	0	0	0	0	26,3	42,2	18,4	10,5	2,6	0	
Experi-mental	Amount	0	0	0	0	0	4	8	12	9	5	0	7,07
	%	0	0	0	0	0	10,5	21,2	31,3	23,9	13,1	0	

- Phase 2

  The statistics of test 1:

  - Total number of MTs in control round: 42

  - Total number of MTs in experimental round: 41

Rounds		Scores											Average
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Control	Amount	0	0	0	0	0	9	14	13	4	2	0	6,42
	%	0	0	0	0	0	21,42	33,32	30,94	9,52	4,76	0	
Experi-mental	Amount	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	8	16	8	1	7,6
	%	0	0	0	0	0	4,86	14,58	19,44	38,88	19,44	2,43	

The statistics of test 2:

- Total number of MTs in control round: 46

- Total number of MTs in experimental round: 46

Rounds		Scores											Average
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Control	Amount	0	0	0	0	0	7	15	17	5	2	0	6,56
	%	0	0	0	0	0	15,21	32,55	36,95	10,85	4,34	0	
Experi-mental	Amount	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	10	17	10	2	7,73
	%	0	0	0	0	0	4,34	10,85	21,79	36,95	21,79	4,34	

It can clearly be seen that there is a significant difference in the levels of scores between control and experimental rounds. Based on evaluation criteria, studying results of learners in military institutions are as follow:

- Phase 1

  - 1st Test outcomes:

  + Average score of control round is 6.31. In details, excellent = 5 (13.2%), good = 9 (23.9%), average above average = 16 (42.0%), average = 8 (21%), weak = 0 (0%), poor = 0 (0%).

  + Average score of the experimental round is 7,13. Specifically, excellent = 14 (36.8%), good = 14 (36.8%), average above average = 7 (18.4%), average = 3 (8.0%), weak = 0 HV (0%), poor = 0 (0%).

  The chart below represents the disparity in scores after test 1 between control and experimental rounds:

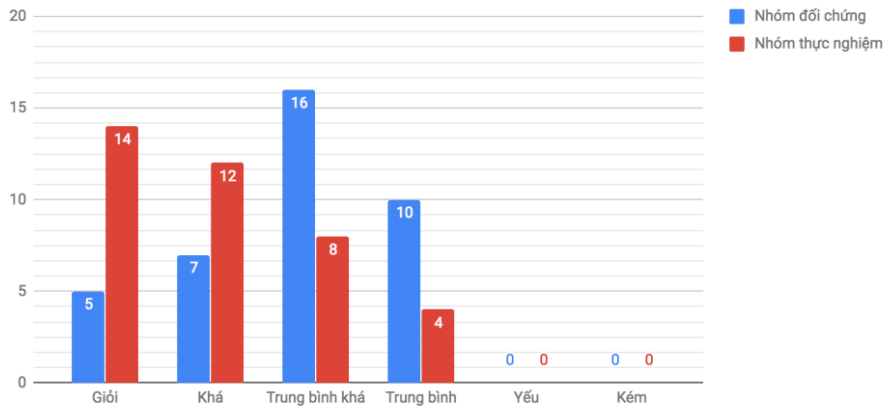

Chart 1: Test 1 - Results (Phase 1)

- 2nd Test outcomes:

+ Average score of control round is 6,21. In details, excellent = 5 (13.2%), good = 7 (18.5%), average above average = 16 (42.0%), average = 10 (26.3%), weak = 0 (0%), poor = 0 (0%).

+ Average score of the experimental round is 7,07. Specifically, excellent = 14 (37%), good = 12 (31.3%), average above average = 8 (21%), average = 4 (10,5%), weak = 0 HV (0%), poor = 0 (0%).

The chart below depicts the disparity in scores after test 2 between control and experimental rounds:

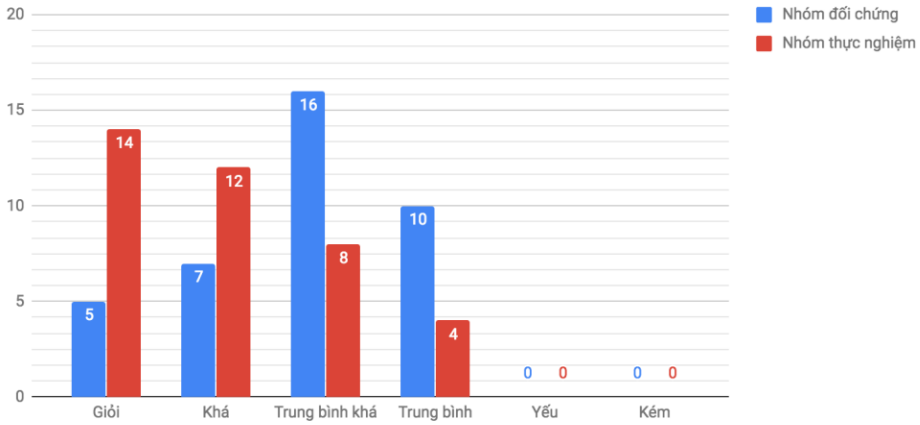

Chart 2: Test 2 - Results (Phase 1)

- Phase 2

- 1st Test outcomes:

+ Average score of control round is 6.42. In details, excellent = 6 (14.28%), good = 13 (30.94%), average above average = 14 (33.32%), average = 9 (21.42%), weak = 0 (0%), poor = 0 (0%).

+ Average score of the experimental round is 7.6. Specifically, excellent = 25 (60.75%), good = 8 (19.44%), average above average = 6 (14.58%), average = 2 (4.86%), weak = 0 HV (0%), poor = 0 (0%).

The chart below displays the disparity in scores after test 1 between control and experimental rounds:

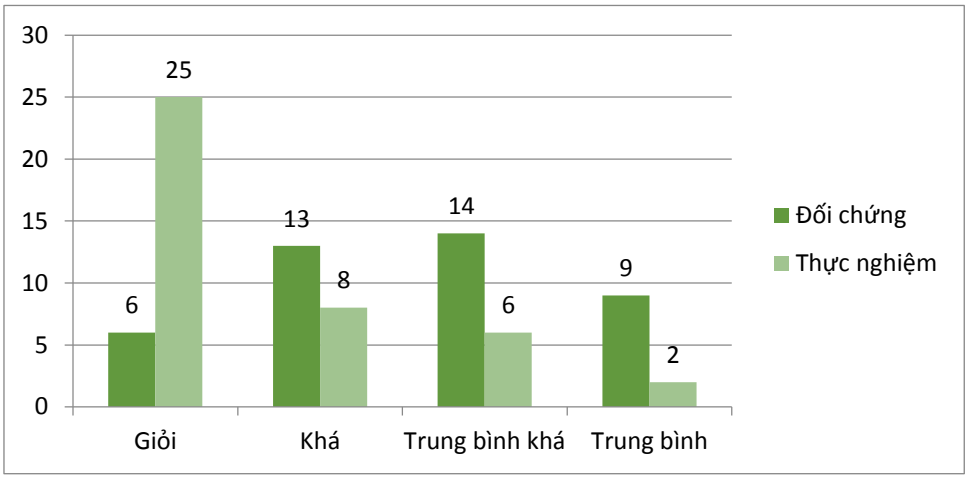

Chart 3: Test 1 - Results (Phase 2)

- 2nd Test outcomes:

+ Average score of control round is 6.56. In details, excellent = 7 (15.19%), good = 17 (36.95%), average above average = 15 (32.55%), average = 7 (15.19%), weak = 0 (0%), poor = 0 (0%).

+ Average score of the experimental round is 7.73. Specifically, excellent = 29 (62.93%), good = 10 (21.7%), average above average = 5 (10.85%), average = 2 (4.34%), weak = 0 HV (0%), poor = 0 (0%).

The chart below shows the disparity in scores after test 2 between control and experimental rounds:

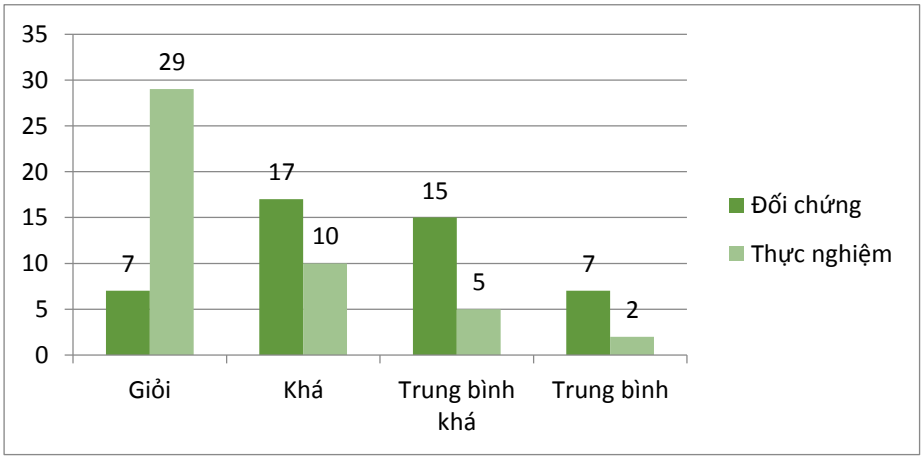

Chart 4: Test 2 – Results (Phase 2)

After two-pedagogical-experiment rounds (with four tests), it can be easily seen that there was a significant change in the figures of Laotian MTs test results, from control round to experimental round. It showed that after being instructed on how to resolve the exercises, Laotian students perceived the exercise requirements and knew how to use their reservoir of knowledge to active learning.

This result was exactly impartial, subjective and totally consistent with the objectives of this current thesis.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 4

Pedagogical experiments were conducted to verify the effectiveness of a consistent exercise system in developing Vietnamese lexical competence in use of Laotian military students. Pedagogical experiments consisted of two respective rounds, with the research participants are trainees from three different military training institutions. Results showed that students performed better on experimental rounds rather than control rounds, which initially asserted the effectiveness of a consistent exercise system in developing Vietnamese lexical competence in use of Laotian military students. In addition, students became more proactive, confident and elated than before, which showed that the proposed exercise system was compatible with content, curriculum objectives, learners' characteristics and teaching purposes.

After accomplishing this consistent assignment system, the writers kept on gathering feedback from experienced teachers who have been dealing with Vietnamese language teaching for Laotian MTs. The feedback depicted that a majority of professionals is in consensus of the proposed assignment system and the feasibility of success.

In conclusion, the outcomes demonstrated that the hypothesis of this thesis was valid.

CONCLUSION

1. Vietnam and Laos are neighboring countries that have territorial boundaries and close ties in many aspects over generations. To promote friendly relationship, the Ministry of Defense of Vietnam has repeatedly opened Vietnamese language training courses for Laotian military students. Moreover, the Ministry determines this as one of the key tasks aiming to strengthen the solidarity and companionship between the two nations. As a result, teaching Vietnamese language to Laotian students has always been the focus of military institutions in Vietnam.
2. There have been many in-depth studies on the effectiveness of teaching approaches made by Vietnamese researchers as well as other authors across the world so far. The similarity of these studies is based on holistic and objective analyses to draw conclusions about the urgency and the applicability of practical teaching approaches; as well as giving concrete evidences in comparison with traditional methods. Learners will be able to effectively apply their language skills in daily life as well as in the professional title. Therefore, teaching Vietnamese to Laotian students in learner development-oriented approach is crucial and useful.
3. In the teaching process, improving Vietnamese language learning of Laotian MTs is of paramount importance towards military schools in Vietnam. However, there are still a number of motives such as the program of teaching

Vietnamese to foreigners has not been given due attention by authorities or the coursebook is complied with four skills instead of separate skills. Thus, despite the fact that vocabulary exercises appear at a relatively high rate compared to other exercises, learners' performances were lower than expected. Exercises are not systematically arranged, and the learners mainly guess the answers since they are not having specific strategies when solving these types of exercises.

Therefore, with the desire to improve Vietnamese language skills of Laotian MTs and the quality of teaching Vietnamese at Vietnamese military schools, the writers suggest three types of exercises: lexical range expanding, vocabulary active learning, and mistakes correcting. These groups have been tested through pedagogical experiment with control and experimental groups of Laotian MTs currently abiding in Vietnamese. The result will be an accurate measurement of the reliability and feasibility of hypothesis.

4. In the teaching process, the ultimate goal is to teach "communicatively" rather than to teach "lexically". Therefore, it is extremely necessary to develop a consistent exercise system aiming at Vietnamese language learning achivements of Laotian military students.

With the idea of being more active, for both teachers and learners, in Vietnamese language teaching and learning process as well as meeting the requirements of Central Resolution 8 (XI): "Continuing to innovate modern teaching and learning methods (...) focus on teaching methods, thinking, encouraging autonomy, creating the basis for learners to update and improve their knowledge, skills and capacities", the authors propose a consistent exercise system in order to develop the Vietnamese lexical competence for Lao military trainees. The researchers do hope that this current dissertation will have positive effects with more practical lessons, so as to enhance communication skills and thereby improve Laotian military students' ability to master Vietnamese.