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The Shift from Traditional to Developed Curriculum:
A Study of the Saudi Arabian Secondary School English Curriculum

by

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ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of an English curriculum, called *Traveller*, newly implemented in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was investigated. The research identified advancements in the new curriculum that contributed to better achievement of academic goals in English language study. In 2011 the Ministry of Education introduced new teaching approaches; of the four new methods that the Ministry of Education adopted in secondary schools, this research focused on the *Traveller* curriculum. Senior secondary female students and English language teachers were chosen as participants to evaluate this new method. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were applied. The results showed that the *Traveller* method has brought remarkable benefits to the teaching and learning process. The majority of the students thought it was a valuable learning experience, and students worked harder because they found that the course challenged them appropriately. Therefore, this research shows that the introduction of this new approach positively impacted student achievement. Furthermore, the credit system showed success, as 63% of the students agreed that it increased their desire to learn.

Keywords: English, Curriculum, Traveller, Saudi Arabia, Secondary.

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Note: this study would not have been possible without my bi-lingual skills and background. There are many references that are written in Arabic but have been translated into English by myself. Any references to Arabic materials have been translated and also appear as transliterations in the reference list.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents: to my kind, warm-hearted, inspiring mother, Mrs. Asah Alghamdi and to my great, supportive father, Mr. Abdulrahman Alghamdi, who is a role model for me. Without their care, prayers, and support, this project would not have been achievable. I would also like dedicate the work to my lovely family: to my husband Talal Alghamdi, and my beautiful daughters Elaf, Ellen, and Laten who bring joy to my life.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

As society evolves, it makes sense for countries to implement changes to their education systems. Given the potential impact of education on people's lives, in 2007 The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia began a comprehensive curriculum development project on an experimental basis, and extended the program to all schools in 2008 (Al-Gabri, 2013). The key factor of this project was to develop a curriculum that satisfies the requirements of the modern world, as well as attends to the needs and capabilities of students. Since this newly developed curriculum was applied relatively recently, very little is known about how effective this approach will be at enhancing students' learning abilities or its impact on the teaching process.

Extensive research on this topic is needed to determine the strengths and weaknesses of this comprehensive development of the curriculum project. Having a curriculum that does not align with the requirements of contemporary society could have a negative effect on society in the long run; whereas a curriculum that meets the needs of modern society contributes to a positive trickle-down effect on citizen and the economy (Bohm et al., 2015). Being a citizen of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Saudi Arabia), and considering the importance of education and its impact on all facets of society, I believe this to be an excellent field of study in which to pursue research.

The inspiration for this study comes from my own experiences studying English as a second language. This experience started when I decided to pursue graduate school abroad. Despite having studied English as a second language during my middle and high school years, getting my Master's degree from a Canadian university required improving my English skills. I had assumed that six years of learning a foreign language would be enough to provide an edge for me in pursuing such an endeavour. However, I was shocked after the first placement test that I took at the King George Institute in Toronto. The placement test result showed that I was at Level One in all English skills. I had thought of myself as being at least a level better, taking into consideration the years I had already been studying English. Underperforming my own expectations on that test was the first instance that made me question the English curriculum in Saudi Arabia.

I spent eight months studying at King George Institute in Toronto. During that

time, I realized the skill that most Saudi students struggled with was writing. Each writing class I was taking had a high proportion of Saudi students. It was remarkable that almost all new Saudi students struggled with English. I began to ask myself: was the cause a lack of talent, or was it evidence of a problem with Saudi Arabia's education system? How does this struggle with writing in English directly relate to Saudi Arabia's English curriculum? I thought during those eight months about these things. I tried to recall the curriculum during my own school years, as well as the teaching approach, and compared that with the English curriculum we were studying in Canada. I could see the improvement in myself. Being taught by a native speaker of English could be the reason for that improvement. Ke and Suzuki (2011) in their article *Teaching Global English with NNS-NNS Online Communication* said that "In the traditional [English language teaching] ELT paradigm, it is best that students learn English from native speakers, who provide the correct forms and ways of using English. Native speakers provide models for [English as a foreign language] EFL learners to imitate" (p. 170). I grew to believe that there were some inconsistencies in Saudi Arabia's curriculum, with regards to how its students are taught to read and write English.

After spending some time at King George Institute, I took the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam. Again, the graded results were lower than my expectations for my English language performance. Consequently, I applied to York University to study the English language in an academic environment, which would prepare me to pass the English exam and apply to another Canadian university to complete my Master's. I was amazed by their method of teaching. The professors highlighted how English existed in students' daily lives, and encouraged us to learn beyond the classroom from our environment. York focused on the development of English language skills through reading newspapers, magazines, watching movies, and reading novels and other books. Embedded in all of these media are opportunities to become familiar with grammatical rules, to improve reading comprehension, to observe English writing, and to make use of listening skills. My English skills improved rapidly. Studying at York helped me to obtain the required score on the IELTS exam when I was seriously thinking of taking my Master's degree in the field of education.

I have ambitions to make changes to the Saudi Arabian English language

curriculum. I completed my undergraduate degree in Art Education at King Saud University in Saudi Arabia. Having previously taught in a high school for six months, I also had practical experience with education, teaching, and school systems. I planned to study educational leadership at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) and to research the *Developed Curriculum* in Saudi Arabia. More specifically, I wanted to research the English curriculum—the field in which I had experienced problems once I pursued studying abroad. My aim is to investigate this new curriculum's effectiveness on the newer generations.

The Developed Curriculum in Saudi Arabia

School curricula affect a student's learning opportunities. The content of a school's curriculum directly affects the options available and the level of learning provided to students. When there are changes in society, it is important for schools to adapt their curricula appropriately. For example, as the use of technology in society increases, the need for school curricula to include computer skills goes up. Roschelle Pea, Hoadley, Gordin, and Means (2007) write in *Changing How and What Children Learn in School with Computer Based Technologies* that students should develop higher-order skills such as critical thinking, analysis, and scientific inquiry with the use of computers as there is increasing demands to help students to be more prepared for real life. "Schools today face ever-increasing demands in their attempts to ensure that students are well equipped to enter the workforce and navigate a complex world" (p. 76). The curriculum becomes the foundation on which schools build an educational process that can support students in their efforts to achieve success in society. Focusing on the development of a curriculum helps to create a generation that can face life's challenges and overcome all difficulties (Alghamdi, 2012).

Saudi Arabia has taken steps towards the development of a suitable curriculum. It is commonly known in Saudi Arabia, that the movement towards developing a new curriculum started early in the 21st century. There were some critical responses connected with the educational curriculum in Saudi Arabia. Most of the criticisms were aimed at the weakest points within the traditional curriculum, such as its inability to meet a student's needs and its dependence on teachers for the educational process.

For many years, the educational process in Saudi Arabia has been solely

dependent on the teacher. Teachers transferred all the knowledge and information they had to the students; then the students gleaned as much as they could from it (Al-Hiti, n.d.). Before 1925, educational activities in Saudi Arabia were limited to mosques known as “Al-Katatib” (Al-Rumi & Al-Suydani, 2013). Al-Katatib is one of the oldest educational centers of Muslims, and it was said that Al-Katatib was known by Arabs before Islam, but on a very limited scale (Al-Sarijani, 2010). The position of Al-Katatib in the first Hijri centuries was very high; it was considered like elementary school in our time (Al-Sarijani, 2010). With further developments in science, the concept of education shifted to schools, which relied mainly on teachers. Schools at that time offered their students studies in science and knowledge that was available from textbooks and teachers. The students’ duty was to remember all this knowledge, including information they could not understand (Al-Gabri, 2013).

Over time, and with the development of science, the multiplicity of disciplines, and the enormous increase in the volume of information, the educational process moved towards specialization. The schooling process became layered into different stages such as elementary, middle and high schools as well as universities (Al-Rumi & Al-Suydani, 2013). Subject specialists prepared the curriculum, now referred to as the ‘traditional curriculum’, and the evaluation of the students was based on the contents centralized around just the particular subject. The teaching methods that followed were based on direct instruction and indoctrination of the curriculum’s materials, which did not conform or adapt to new learning needs. This approach was designed to apply one style of teaching, and overlooked the importance of other teaching tools. The students’ role was often non-participatory, and students were judged based on their performance in each subject’s exam. For this traditional curriculum style, the teacher’s role was essential to the learner.

As the years passed, educators came to believe that the traditional curriculum did not achieve the desired educational goals, as the student outcomes were not satisfactory. The effect of the traditional curriculum on students has been noted as negative. The Department of Curriculum and Teaching Methods published a book describing seven negative impacts of the traditional curriculum (n. d). Accordingly, the Ministry of Education decided to elaborate on the need for an efficient curriculum—which remains one of its main goal today (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education, General Organization for Technical Education and Vocational Training, 2004). Specialists in the field of education in Saudi Arabia

expressed confidence that the Ministry would be successful in building a strategy for the development of the curriculum, which is widely considered a substantial improvement in the current educational context (Aljamieah & Alshatre, 2010).

The modern education curriculum, the *Developed Curriculum*, is built around all of the educational experiences that students are supposed to gain, both inside and outside of the classroom. The intent is to help students to achieve comprehensive and balanced growth including physical, mental, social, and psychological developments (Ministry of Education et al., 2004). The idea is to provide each student with the ability to fulfill their desired roles in society. The stakeholders in this modern approach, who are the teachers, learners, and legislators, have certain common educational objectives. These objectives focus on improving the educational content, providing educational/instructional aides, modifying teaching methods, and making assessments more efficient. As Al-Bisher and Al-Zahrani (2004) describe, “The targeted educational development by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia included structures and systems, regulations, teachers’ preparation programs, training programs for integration of technology in education, evaluation and measurement programs, and a comprehensive development of the curriculum” (p. 1). This development in the educational field began because of the decisions by the Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States, specifically after the discussions at its twenty-third session in Doha, and the twenty-fourth in Kuwait.

The development of a new curriculum comes from the argument that there is a need to keep abreast of international developments in the field of education. The most prominent developments in the field of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia can be divided into five areas: (1) the designing field; (2) the educational administration field; (3) the educational programs field; (4) the measurement and evaluation field; and (5) the curriculum development field. This thesis will focus on the fifth area, the curriculum development field.

In the curriculum development field, the Ministry of Education focused on the development of all aspects of the curriculum. Starting with the educational plans, school textbooks, teaching methods, methods and techniques of education, methods of educational evaluation, student counseling and activity, and the provision of health care services, and is concerned with the development of teachers’ training programs (Al-Bisher & Al-Zahrani, 2004).

The Comprehensive Development Project for Curricula is an essential element in this field that the Ministry is seeking to achieve its goals (Al-Bisher & Al-Zahrani, 2004). The project is defined as a national project and aims to develop all elements of the curriculum according to the latest theories and methods of education and contemporary scientific approach. The Ministry of Education, in partnership with educational institutions like national and private government academies, undertook the curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation (Al-Habashan, 2012). This project aimed to achieve important goals, such as ensuring that the curriculum contains modern approaches to curriculum building, including the ability to develop critical thinking skills, problem-solving, self-learning, collaborative learning and good communication with knowledge sources. The project also focused on the improvement of students' performance skills with learning by working through, and practicing, different activities. In addition, the project was anticipated to give the student the freedom to choose the appropriate activities for their abilities and desires, within the limits of their academic strengths. Finally, the project sought to establish a link between the curriculum and the educational process with the experiences of the students by focusing on scientific examples derived from their daily lives (Al-Habashan, 2012). This new curriculum became known as the *Developed Curriculum*.

The *Developed Curriculum* adopted three books for each course: namely, the student's book; the activity book; and the teacher's guide. This same title had been given to the set of books that were used in the traditional curriculum; however, the three books were not available for subjects such as mathematics or science (Al-Aubudi, 2010). In the developed curricula, the three books are available for all subjects.

The basic reference is the student's book, which both teacher and student depend on as the main source of information. The activity book is considered a support to the student book. Then, fundamentally, the teacher's guide is considered to function as an important reference for teachers by assisting them in choosing the proper educational methods. The new curriculum requires discussion, analysis, critical thinking skills, knowledge, and experience from students in their day-to-day lives. Moreover, it helps teachers by providing them with examples and necessary educational information to achieve the required curriculum goals.

The Ministry of Education launched several strategic projects for curriculum development in the Kingdom: The Comprehensive Curriculum Project, the Science

and Mathematics project, and the Credit System Project for secondary school students, and the Development of English Language Education Project. The Credit System Project is “a new secondary education structure consisting of a joint program taught for all students that branches into two specialized tracks; one for humanities and the other for natural sciences” (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 7). This new project aims at several goals, including, but not limited to:

- a) the system of class hours recorded by the student in each semester;
 - b) quarterly and cumulative rating system;
 - c) an integrated curriculum system that connects courses to enable the student to acquire the skills and practical aspects, preparing the students for life and the labor market;
 - d) Quality methods in teaching, learning, and new tools for evaluation
- (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 7).

The credit system aims to improve learning in a holistic manner by addressing the personality of the learner from cognitive, physical, and psychological aspects. The basic approach to the credit system is a change of foundational approaches to classroom opportunities; most noticeably, the integration of courses, and flexibility. First, the integration of courses that the system offers for study is a plan distributed in the form of required courses, and elective courses. The student has a maximum of seven courses, each course about five hours. Students also take elective courses which enrich her or his learning experience and support their energies by improving on the students’ preferences and talents. Second, the flexibility in this system allows the students to register the number of hours he or she wishes to study for each semester. In addition, the credit system gives the students the opportunity for deletion and addition from the offered courses; also offered a summer semester if they want to complete extra hours (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Aljamieah and Alshathri (2010), the Ministry of Education has succeeded with distinction in the construction of the curriculum development strategy, otherwise known as “the three projects”. These encompass the implementation of initialization programs, the preparation for the application in the educational environment, and the programs for professional development and training operations of the application of the curriculum in the educational field.

Despite the perceived importance of these efforts, there have been concerns over the lack of proper training for the teachers and the non-availability of adequate

infrastructure needed for a successful implementation of this program. The *Developed Curriculum* has been implemented in many schools since 2010 (Al-Aubudi, 2010). However, the lack of training for teachers; insufficient transition preparation for the individuals' preparation; a lack of necessary equipment in schools; and the lack of preparation for families to accommodate this change, hindered the achievement of the new curriculum's primary developmental goal (Aljamieah & Alshathri, 2010). Having a successful *Developed Curriculum* implementation will eventually result in creating a knowledgeable generation who are capable of building up its own country (Aljamieah & Alshathri, 2010).

A study of male fourth grade teachers by Al-Habashan (2012) indicated some problems with the *Developed Curriculum*. The study showed that there were some challenges for teachers who were implementing the new *Developed Curriculum* in their classes. The first problem associated with the new curriculum was that classroom teachers were not sufficiently educated about the new teaching methods. The most important issue, according to Al-Habashan was the lack of participation from teachers in the design and authorship of the *Developed Curriculum*. The teacher participants also indicated that the compensation that they were given for their work was not sufficient enough to give them the incentive to do all the extra work to learn and then teach a new curriculum. The survey results showed that teachers felt that they had not been adequately rewarded financially for the implementation of the curriculum (pp. 7-8). This thesis will show that for female teachers of secondary school classrooms, similar issues were named.

Statement of the Problem

Saudi Arabia has sought to provide an educational curriculum commensurate with the requirements and capabilities of its students' practical and social life. To achieve that, Saudi Arabia has started a comprehensive project for the development of curricula. The project focused on the development of a flexible curriculum, which features interactive qualities. Moreover, it is aimed at simplifying academic topics in order to guide learners by building a clear overview that would direct the behavior of the young generation while dealing effectively with the problems that they might face in real life. The subjects in this new approach require interactive methods, analysis, critical thinking, knowledge, and experience to improve students' skills.

The Ministry of Education focused on the development of a curriculum that

would meet the students' needs, fulfill the requirements for the national developmental plans, and fulfill the needs of the labor market (Al-Aubudi, 2010). All the elements of the curriculum were developed based on the latest theories, scientific methods, and modern psychology, which were the goals of this project (Al-Bisher & Al-Zaharani, 2004). The government sought to develop the quality of education to ensure educational outcomes contributing effectively to the country's development.

The result of this endeavour by the government was the *Developed Curriculum*. In 2010, the pilot phase of the *Developed Curriculum* project came to an end. In 2011, the dissemination stage began throughout the Kingdom of Saudi Arabian schools (Al-Abudie, 2010). However, very little was known about how effective this approach would be at enhancing students' academic achievement, especially with the *English Developed Curriculum*. The *English Developed Curriculum* is one aspect of the newly introduced *Developed Curriculum* in Saudi Arabia. The *English Developed Curriculum* has been applied to Saudi Arabian high schools and is a product of the Development of English Language Education Project. While there have been many studies of the *Developed Curriculum* and its general application to schools, there have been only a few studies about the *English Developed Curriculum*, and specifically its use by female students in secondary schools. Therefore, there is a serious need for a field study to explore the effectiveness of the *English Developed Curriculum* in female secondary schools and its impact on the teaching and learning process.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impacts on English language acquisition of the shift from the traditional curriculum to the *English Developed Curriculum* in secondary schools, and to review the preparations that teachers were expected to make in order to implement this curriculum effectively. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the impact of this shift on student achievement, to identify the obstacles that are limiting its effectiveness, and to analyze the difficulties that teachers have encountered. This study provides a recommendation on how to overcome identified barriers, and seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How does the new secondary English curriculum impact student achievement?
2. How will teachers prepare for the new curriculum?

3. In what ways does the credit system affect the students' achievement?

Summary

An overview of the shift from the traditional curriculum to the *Developed Curriculum* in Saudi Arabia was presented and explained. Having identified the need, purpose, and significance of the proposed shift from the traditional curriculum to the *English Developed Curriculum*, it is important to understand what is already known about this topic. Thus, the next chapter will review existing literature on the subject.

CHAPTER II: ROAD TO THE DEVELOPED CURRICULUM

The shift from the traditional curriculum to the *Developed Curriculum* is of interest to me and currently considered a focus for many researchers in Saudi Arabia (Al-Harbi, 2012; Alghamdi, 2012; Al-Habashan, 2012). Based on my concern and passion for studying, learning, and education, the shift from the traditional curriculum to the developed one, as well as its perceived impact on the educational process in Saudi Arabia, has become a major area of interest. The studies that have been done on this topic is very limited, because of the recent application of the curriculum in all schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In this section, previous research on the concept of curriculum development will be discussed. This will begin with an overview of the development of curricula for public education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which began in 2004. We begin by looking at the definition of ‘curriculum’ addressing the vital question: ‘what is a curriculum?’

According to Bobbitt (1918), a curriculum could be defined in two ways. First, it is “the entire range of experiences, both undirected and directed, concerned in unfolding the abilities of the individual” (p. 45). Then, second, “it is the series of consciously directed training experiences that the schools use for completing and perfecting the unfolding” (p. 13). Though perhaps the specific meaning of curriculum differs from one person to another, Bobbitt’s definition provides us with the basis of the understanding that a curriculum is the outline by which schools maintain consistency in the content taught to students. In Saudi Arabia, researchers often define curriculum as *Manhuj*, which, according to Bahamam (2008), in Arabic means something like “the way an individual pursues a particular goal” (p. 39). For a better understanding, the definition of curriculum in Saudi Arabia can be divided into three categories: the linguistic concept, the old concept, and the modern concept. As education has evolved in Saudi Arabia, the understanding of “curriculum” has expanded. The other two definitions, noted below, identify further meaning as the term “curriculum” has developed. Here we have provided two concepts to contribute towards a better understanding of what “curriculum” meant in Saudi Arabia and how it has come to be in modern day.

The Linguistic Concept

In the Arabic language, “curriculum” is derived from a perspective, which means a clear path that. That means a clear method, and the word ‘method’ in the Arabic language means it is identified as the specific way to reach a certain goal (Eatia, Hussain, & Hilmi, 2003). Thus, a curriculum is the method with which students are provided to achieve their educational goals.

The linguistic concept cannot be applied to teaching or learning English language. The linguistic concept is, however, the most common and basic form of understanding a curriculum in Arab regions. This concept means that all studies have their root in the holy book of the *Qur'an*.

The Old Concept

The old concept is associated with educational theories that were famous some centuries ago, whereby the child goes to school as a blank paper, and the school has the duty to fill it with accumulated human heritage and diverse human experiences (Al-Hiti, n.d).

The Modern Concept

This concept is a shift from the traditional approach and was designed to accommodate the realities of the 21st century. In this case, researchers defined curriculum in recognition of the academic goals of this era. According to Abdulsalam (2006), curriculum modern concept can be defined as “The system consists of inputs, processes, outputs and feedback as it seeks to prepare individuals who benefit themselves and their Arab and Islamic nations and is able to take responsibility and achieve comprehensive development in the society” (p. 274). The modern concept is the basis for the *Developed Curriculum* in that there is a shift towards including feedback from students and an on-going evaluation of needs for education in the new curriculum models.

From Traditional Curriculum to Developed Curriculum

Abdulsalam (2006) referred to the concept of developing educational curricula as being meant for one, or both, of the following processes:

1. To introduce a new curriculum or build a new curriculum that was not previously present in a particular classroom or stage.
2. To improve the current curriculum and modernize and introduce scientific

amendments to become more appropriate and meet the conditions and changes and achieve the desired goals (p. 286).

Despite the changing concept of education, schools in Saudi Arabia had problems keeping up with the rapid growth of knowledge in the world. What students studied in the past appeared to be no longer compatible with the academic and educational realities of today. Public criticism rose up against the schools that mainly rely on their teachers for academic success. Criticism was directed towards the schools primarily because the public believed that teachers provided an overwhelming amount of academic content without a specific goal. Such schools were criticized for not involving the students in the educational process. This traditional approach was considered incompatible with current educational requirements. In response, a new approach to educational curricula has appeared that is consistent with psychology, learning theory, science, and cultural integration.

This shift from traditional to *Developed Curriculum* is of particular interest at this time in Saudi Arabia because of the government's interest in reimagining the educational system in the country. The development of all elements of education are a considerable part of the Saudi Arabian Vision 2030. This visioning process is concerned with encouraging the development of various sections of the country's economy, with a particular interest in the education sector (Al-Harbi, 2016). The vision is that the focus will be on the early stages of education and on the continued education of teachers and educational leadership in addition to curriculum development (Al-Harbi, 2016).

Al-Habashan (2012) has studied the use of the curriculum by male teachers in male classrooms for fourth grade students. He noted that there are some issues, as were given in the introduction of this thesis; namely, the issue of the new teaching methods being a problem for the teachers. He also discovered other issues for the adoption of the new *Developed Curriculum* by male teachers in the elementary grade four such as problems related to the activities and teaching aids of the *Developed Curriculum*. There were struggles for some students to afford the materials required for all their classes that used the *Developed Curriculum* and general problems with regional differences in Saudi Arabia and the expectation that the *Developed Curriculum* could be applied universally across the country (p. 8). As the *Developed Curriculum* is to be applied to all the educational areas, English language studies are also affected.

The English Developed Curriculum

The *English Developed Curriculum* is considered to be a product of the Development of English Language Education Project, which was based on Section 50 of the educational policy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, introduced in 1970 (Al-harbi, 2012, p. 61). This policy mandated that the education system must:

- (1) Provide students with at least one of the major international languages (such as English or French) in addition to their native language for the fields of science, arts, and other relevant areas of study.
- (2) Transfer the norms and values of Saudi culture to other societies in order to spread Islam and serve humanity (Al-Marefh, 2012).

To implement this policy, the project began as one of the most important initiatives of the General Directorate of Curricula in the Planning and Development Agency. The application of the project started in the 2008-09 academic year, within the 61 schools that operated on the credit system. After that, the project was expanded to all schools in the Kingdom. A total of six global companies participated in the production of the series of English curriculum dedicated to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabi (Al-Harbi, 2012, p. 3). A shift toward this curriculum has taken place in several stages in Saudi Arabia, most notably the application of English developed curriculum for secondary stage (Al-Marefh, 2012).

Project Objectives

The particular objectives of the Developing English Language Education project are identified as the following:

1. Comprehensive development of English language books, courses and accompanying educational materials in public education;
2. Focus on raising the standards of teaching and learning the English language for the students to achieve the necessary development;
3. Transfer the experience of advanced companies in the curriculum industry through scientific and methodological employment in a manner that is compatible with the local environment;
4. Achieving the requirements of higher education institutions and the labour markets by raising the efficiency of secondary school graduates;
5. Developing the learning and teaching process and building the professional capacity of English language teachers (Almaerifa, 2012).

Prince Faisal bin Abdullah, the former minister of education in the Kingdom, described the current curriculum as a carefully crafted academic tool. In his view, this program was crafted according to a scientific methodology that seeks to maximize the contents of the books in line with the education policy in the Kingdom (Alfal, 2012). The articulation and creation of this curriculum brought together a team of academics, educators, and scientists from different disciplines. It is also periodically subjected to follow-up through specialized committees (Alfal, 2012).

It been shown that there is a drop in Saudi students' level of English language in public schools with the traditional curriculum. A study by Al-Zuhairi (1999) about the reasons for the weaknesses of the achievement of middle school students in learning English language was completed from the point of view of academics, teachers and supervisors in the cities of Mecca and Taif. The study found many reasons for the drop in the students' level of English language. The primary reasons for the drop related to the curriculum and the teaching methods. Regarding the curriculum, what we call now the traditional curriculum, Al-Zuhairi found that the course was limited in providing the students with information only (p. 92). Also, he found that the content was higher than the students' abilities. Regarding the teaching methods, he found a lack of active participation by students in the learning process of English language, which affected their achievement, as well as a lack of the use of modern techniques and the use of different methods.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Education adopted and applied a number of series of the *English Developed Curriculum* for secondary level education. Different publishers named and published each of the series used in secondary education: *Traveller*, *Flying High*, *Mega Goal*, and *Challenges*. This study focused on one series: *Travellers*.

Traveller Series

The production of the *Traveller* series was overseen by MM Publications Company. The producer was of the opinion that the *English Developed Curriculum* had been trusted and loved by thousands of teachers and students around the world. They argued that the methodology combined solid grammar and vocabulary practice with thorough preparation in all four essential skills of language learning (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2017). The publisher offered six grade levels. That said, the last required level in the credit school system is level five, taking the sixth level is made

optional for students. The series comes in two packages. The first one is for the students: containing the student book, and the workbook (which includes a CD). The second package was designed for the teachers: containing the teacher's manual, a copy of the student's book dedicated to the teacher with the, which has all the right answers for the exercises, and a CD to use in the class. The teacher's package also included a placement test, materials to use on a smart board, and reference CD that contained tests, and exercises for all skills such as grammar, vocabulary, reading, and speaking (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2016-17).

Traveller Series Features

1. Contemporary topics with multicultural and cross-curricular information.
2. Lively dialogues presenting real spoken English;
3. An integrated approach to the development of the four skills (writing, reading, speaking and listening);
4. Particular emphasis on vocabulary building;
5. Grammar presented and practiced in context;
6. Systematic development of reading and listening skills and sub-skills;
7. A variety of communicative tasks;
8. A step-by-step approach to writing;
9. Activities that encourage critical thinking;
10. Practical tips that helped students to become autonomous learners (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2017).

In reviewing studies done on the *Traveller* and *Aim High* series, a research was discovered. A study by Al-Harbi (2012) entitled, "Analyzing the Content of English Language Textbooks for the Secondary Grade and Evaluating them in the Light of Suggested Criteria for Linguistic Proficiency," aimed to define the proficiency standards for English language courses, and determined the availability of those standards in *Traveller* and *Aim High* series.

The study used a descriptive method in which the researcher analyzed the content of the textbooks from the chosen series in level one and two for both series to describe and collect data for the objectives of the study.

Al-Harbi found that the standards of the proficiency of English language were not available to a high degree beyond the intermediate level in all four linguistic skills for both series. Also, proficiency standards were not available in a mid-degree

beyond the advanced level for the same series. In addition, the standards were not available at all in the proficient and mastery levels for both series (p. 138-139).

Similarly, a study by Al-Harbi (2015), from a descriptive-evaluative perspective on an Saudi EFL textbook series (*Flying High*) in female secondary school was published by Macmillan publishing house. The goal of this study is to evaluate *Flying High* textbooks for Saudi Arabia developed by Macmillan Publishing.

For the purposes of the study, the researcher used a quantitative method. The participants were female high school English language teachers from Taif city in a new high school project for girls.

The study generally showed that the teachers' assessment of the textbook was generally positive; however, there were some aspects that could be viewed as shortcomings that both checklists disclosed. "The shortcomings of the textbook contents are related to the learners' culture and environment, the structures with regard to differences between L1 and L2 cultures, and problems of usage related to social background" (p.15).

Despite the development of the English curriculum, students' language skills and the level of the language in public education was below the expectations of the Ministry of Education (Alqarni, 2015). According to the British Council English Language Market Reports: Gulf States-Saudi Arabia (2016), "The effectiveness of Saudi Arabia's educational policy of introducing EFL in government schools from primary level has been limited" also "the average level of English proficiency in Saudi Arabia remains one of the lowest in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and internationally" (p. 3). The report aimed to provide further insight on the new development that was happening in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia in various fields, and its impact on Saudi citizens, for the purpose of making decisions regarding the recruitment of Saudi EFL students in the future.

The drop in the students' level in the language might be due to several reasons. To illustrate, it is very challenging to learn a language in isolation from the environment in which it originated. According to Chia-Lin Hsin (n.d), culture and language teaching are connected to each other. "The interrelationship between language and culture provides a foundation to the idea that learning as FL is learning an aspect of foreign culture" (Hsin, n.d., p. 2). In addition, Alqarni (2015) noted other reasons of the drop in the Saudi students' level in English language, such as the weakness of the application of interactive methods in teaching English in public

schools.

There are also some other issues that could affect the teaching and learning of the English language in Saudi Arabia. However, to take a closer look at the learning and teaching process of English language, the reality of teaching English in public education schools must be investigated. A recent study by Alfuraih and Mitchell (2017) provided research that gave a comprehensive overview of the development of English language education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on English language curriculum for elementary, intermediate, and secondary levels. The study focused on the teachers' perspectives of the *English Developed Curriculum* by surveying 3,700 teachers for the grade levels and both genders (male and female). One outcome of Alfuraih and Mitchell's study was that:

There is a need for structured professional development programs for teachers in a range of areas; curriculum, textbooks, pedagogies, proficiency, time management, motivating and engaging the students and (perhaps) teaching mixed level classes. The pedagogy training is coupled with the high number of teachers who reported they need English proficiency training indicates that a range of measures need to be introduced to improve teaching practices and strive towards excellence in teaching and learning (of English) throughout the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (p. 324.)

These studies continue to show the rapid progress and development that is taking place in the current period requires reconsidering the teaching methods employed. This plays an important and prominent role in language integration with the components of the curriculum for the success of the educational process in achieving its objectives. The modern teaching methods aim to be the focus of the educational process; the knowledge seeker and product are no longer passive recipients. This view was described by Mespel (2015) who noted that contrary to traditional teaching methods, which she saw as having resulted in a loss of value in educational output, the modern system provided a step forward qualitatively. Simply put, students' classroom experience has shifted towards a more integrated approach, allowing them to participate and share their own life experiences instead of passively memorizing and repeating information.

There are three essential dimensions of the teaching methods: the relationship of teaching English language with the communication approach; the relationship between teaching method and school's environment; and the relationship of teaching methods and the students' achievement. As the *Developed Curriculum* uses the

communicative approach as the focal point of broadening student learning of the English language, we will address this style of teaching here below.

The Communicative Approach and Teaching English

The communicative approach considers as an educational input that the English language teaching in Saudi Arabia needs real life situations as this approach is one of the new teaching strategies that insert to the educational process with the development of the curricula. The theory of communicative language teaching (CLT) is to engage the learners in communication to help them to improve their communicative competence. This approach was developed in the 20th century by European and North-American scholars through which the elaboration of CLT can be traced to the concurrent 20th century developments in linguistic theory and learning curriculum design, both in Europe and North America (Kasumi, 2015, p. 155). The application of this approach means teaching the language through realistic situations in which students can practice the four language skills of English—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—in order to interact and communicate with the right language context. Hamid, (1990) gave a specific definition for this approach which is “a viable approach which allows as well as encourages students’ autonomous interaction in the classroom through genuine communication” (p. 103). A study by Shawer (2010), that used an idiographic strategy (qualitative case study). The researcher used qualitative interviews, participant observation and questioners’ instruments. This study examined the influence of the teachers’ understanding of communicative language teaching on their classroom activities and students cognitive and affective change. The research discovered that teachers who understood CLT and managed to put its principles into action significantly improved student language learning (cognitive change) and motivation (affective change).

Another study has shown that the communicative approach to teaching the English language has been beneficial and effective for second language learners. A study by Le Luo (2013) entitled “Improving English as a Second Language (ESL) Pedagogy in One University in Ontario” aimed to improve teaching pedagogy in a university in Ontario. This study used mixed methods to investigate the issues by interviewing three senior English Language Program (ELP) teachers, and surveying 45 Chinese students who were planning to continue their studies at Canadian universities. In studying theoretical, pedagogical, and practical approaches, while

drawing on English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, approaches, and practices, with Chinese ESL students' achievement and learning needs, Le Luo concluded that "The three communicative pedagogical approaches, including communicative, task-based, and content-based language teaching approaches proved to be effective for English as a Foreign Language Chinese students regarding their language acquisition." (p. 90).

There are many problems associated with the application of the communicative approach and other modern strategies in teaching English in Saudi Arabia that may limit the effectiveness of English language education. According to a study by Al-Nasser (2015) entitled "Problems of English Language Acquisition in Saudi Arabia: An Exploratory-cum-remedial Study" there are many problems that the Saudi students face in learning the English language. Al-Nasser used direct interviews with seven students presently studying English, and unstructured interviews with English teachers, and headmasters to investigate the issues. A considerable part of those problems found in his study are relevant to the teachers. The findings from his study shows that the teachers do not communicate actively with the students while teaching. Al-Nasser concluded that "the teachers are not well trained, neither as language teachers nor as behavioural science teachers" (p. 1616). In addition, "Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used for teaching English, and electronic devices are not used to make learning interesting and more effective to the students" (p. 1616). As Mespel (2015) noted, most students who graduate from secondary school are unable to use the English language to communicate even though pre-university English courses are designed with the communicative language approach.

A large number of high school graduates do not master English, nor do they have the necessary skills to master the language. That may be due to several reasons, one of which is the importance of being surrounded by those who can support your studies. When learning the English language, it helps the learner to be situated in an encouraging context; one where the learner can also practice what they have learned in school. Kashfun Nahar found in his study entitled, *The Impact of Social Context in Students Second Language Learning* that social context impacted students' second language (English) learning. He found that "the students who have grown up in an encouraging environment learn better English than other students" (p. 36). Nahar also concluded that "it's clear that environment or surrounding context have an essential

role in students' English learning as second language" (p. 36). Students studying English in a context where there are few other English speakers around them might find that there is little encouragement to practice the language outside the classroom.

The Relationship between Teaching Method and School's Environment

Al-Habashan's study (2012) showed that a problem that influences the application of the *Developed Curriculum* in Saudi Arabia is associated with the teaching aids also referred to as the educational equipment. The results of his study showed that "the building and fixtures in the school do not help to carry out activities of the developed curriculum and the school also suffered from the weakness of the school's readiness to use and preserve teaching aids" (p. 5). Providing the schools with the necessary equipment to implement modern teaching methods is one of the most important factors in the success of the *Developed Curriculum*, and has been found to affect the learning and teaching process. In addition, a study by Al-Nafie (2013) focused on the difficulties of the application of classroom activities for first-year secondary teachers and students. The researcher used a quantitative method to answer the research questions. She used two different surveys for two different group of participants (teachers and students). Al-Nafie surveyed 25 English teachers who are teaching the *English Developed Curriculum* in Mecca city, and 196 first grade secondary students who are studying the new curriculum. The study found that there is difficulty associated with teaching aids. The problem comes because there is a failure to provide a budget for the appropriate educational means such as smart board or projector for the implementation of the activities in the *English Developed Curriculum* (p. 119).

Beyond materials, the implementation of new teaching methods is not always a smooth transition. Richards and Rodgers note, "Efforts to improve the effectiveness of language teaching have often focused on changes in teaching methods" (p. 3). A study by Alzahrani (2016) entitled "Saudi Students' Experiences of Learning English in English as a Foreign and Second Language Settings" aimed to investigate the reasons that impact the Saudi students' studying experiences, self-confidence, and their perspective in English language learning. The study examined that impact in two learning environments, learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as Second Language (ESL), which are linked to their language proficiency.

Alzahrani, (2016) used a qualitative approach by interviewing 10 adult students who were studying in two language schools in Halifax, Canada. The study found that to some extent, EFL contributed to their basic English language skills. In addition, there were also negative factors in this learning environment such as fear of using English language in the classroom as there were stereotypes about the English language been difficult to learn in Saudi Arabia. However, the ESL learning environment contributed more benefits to their language acquisition, as there were positive factors that the Saudi students found more significant to their achievement in the language. These benefits were congruent with the *English Developed Curriculum* goals including more student participation, greater use of the four language skills during class time, and better use of communicative approach.

The Relationship Between Teaching Methods and the Students' Achievement

When the Ministry of Education developed the schools' curriculum, their primary focus was to empower the students and improve the role they play in the teaching and learning process. That was highly emphasised in changing the traditional way of teaching: making the student participate more in the educational process. The Ministry of Education organized numerous training programs for the teachers in which some were mainly focused on teaching strategies. A study by Hussain, Inamullan, Neseer, & Hafizatullan (2009) that examined the two-different methods of English language teaching, the direct method and the traditional method on the students' achievement by using pre-test and post-test on two group of grade 9 who studied English under those different methods in Federal Government boys secondary school in Islamabad. The study found that "the direct teaching method is more effective as a teaching-learning technique for English in comparison to the traditional teaching method. Students in the direct teaching method outscored the students working in the traditional learning situation." (p. 48). Similar benefit of using different learning and teaching methods found in Alzahrani's (2016) study,

most of the participants emphasized the importance of using activities in learning English. This was the strategy they benefited most from in building their language skills in ESL classrooms. The students found it extremely effective to learn English by using educational activities (p. 51.)

Saudi Arabia has gone through significant changes in developing the schools' curriculum. The Ministry of Education has made many efforts to improve the educational process.

Summary

Although Saudi Arabia has taken bold steps towards the development of curricula for a better future, there are still weaknesses that the Ministry of Education must address. Of these needs, the most important issue is teacher training, in order to enable them to become more qualified to teach this curriculum. Another area of utmost importance is community awareness. The local community needs to understand the importance of education for creating a healthy society. The fundamental question is whether the shift in English teaching from the traditional curriculum to the *Developed Curriculum* increases the achievement for third-grade, senior, secondary female students.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This research investigated two administrative hubs within Saudi Arabia known as the Central and Western Regions. The two specific zones were chosen based on their population and their relatively welcoming attitudes towards change compared to other regions in the country. This was considered important so as to provide deeper insight into the effectiveness of the *Developed Curriculum* and to create an understanding of what obstacles might be limiting the accomplishing of the anticipated objectives of the new teaching and learning approach. Before conducting the study, the researcher sought and received approval from Thompson River University's Ethical Review Board, and then proceeded to data collection.

Research Design and Instruments

This study utilized a mixed method design approach. Creswell and Plano Clary (2011) defined this research method as a “procedure for collecting, analyzing, and ‘mixing’ both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or series of studies to understand a research problem” (p. 537). The benefit of this method is that it can improve the accuracy of the evidence gathered by drawing a clearer picture of the research problem, through which some valuable findings could be made.

Creswell (2015) identifies six types of mixed methods design: “the convergent design, the explanatory sequential design, the exploratory sequential design, the experimental design, the social justice design, and multi-stage evaluation design” (p. 543). The convergent design was selected for this study because of its ability to provide comparative analysis for separate sets of data, which in this case involves students and teachers. Data collection was carried out in the form of an online survey and phone interviews between February 23rd and April 30th, 2017. These data were analyzed separately, and then the results were interpreted and compared. The online survey results offered significant findings pertaining to the new curriculum, its effectiveness, and how it impacts students' achievement. Phone interviews also provided the researcher with rich, descriptive qualitative data—giving a personalized perspective on the shift of English education from the traditional to the *Developed Curriculum*. The phone interviews thus further supported the interpretation of the quantitative results.

The Convergent Design

It is clear that “the complexity and diversity of mixed methods approach mean that definition and typology have become critical to good practice” (Lisle, 2011, p. 92). Thus, here I will specify the intent of the design used for this research. The fundamental rationale behind the convergent design is that one data collection supports the other in situations where there are difficulties with regards to understanding the research problem. This could be attributed to the assumption commonly made by some researchers that qualitative data (open-ended data) and quantitative data (closed-ended data) provide different results in a study and can, therefore, be used as a check for one another (Creswell, 2015). The purpose of this design is to analyze both sets of data independently, from which the result would be compared, and clarifications made on whether the results converged or diverged. This design was used in analyzing data collected from both quantitative and qualitative research tools. It helped in merging data, correlating the results, and explaining the divergences that exist sometimes.

Participants

Before sending invitations to potential participants, written permission was sought and obtained from The Department of Education in each of the two regions (Central and Western). The researcher solicited the assistance of her family members in undergoing the permission process. The official documents were sent electronically through email. When an approval to proceed was granted by the educational authorities in both jurisdictions, a total of nine teachers were invited. Teachers were chosen on the basis of referrals from friends and acquaintances, some of the teachers were also referred to the researcher by their colleagues by phone and emails. As for the students’ participants, they were encouraged to participate by the help of the English teachers and school’s principals. In the end, six senior secondary English teachers completed the interview, and 108 senior secondary students responded to the survey. The All the participants (both teachers and students) are females, chosen from public schools within the Western and Central regions of Saudi Arabia. As a female herself the schools to which the researcher had access were all female schools, this was the most straight-forward approach. Three teachers were chosen from each region respectively, from among those who have taught the two

different curricula: traditional and developed. Each participant was given the flexibility of selecting a convenient time and interview tool of her choices from options such as Skype, YesCall, and LINE applications which were recorded and transcribed after for the analyses process. For reasons of anonymity and convenience, the participants were identified as P1, P2... to P6

The survey was distributed via a website link (see Appendix B). The first page of the online survey was a consent form for participants to review. They expressed their agreement by completing the survey. This means that participation was voluntary. Participants were also given the option to withdraw if they wanted to do so after the completion of the survey. The researcher's information was provided for this purpose.

The study focused on one series of *the English Developed Curriculum* called *Traveller*, hence the teachers chosen were among those teaching this series. All 108 of the senior secondary schools' students, who had finished the last required course, level 5, of English language *Traveller*, were encouraged to participate in this study, and all of them responded. For the interviews, teachers at the senior secondary high schools were asked to take part in this study.

Data Collection

Interview

The interview was focused on in-service English teachers. The researcher decided that they were in the best position as they have thought both curriculum reveal the differences between teaching by traditional method and *Developed Curriculum* and to show the importance of special educational programs for teaching English. The challenges that the teachers faced while teaching the *Developed Curriculum* were also examined, as well as how it impacts the students' achievements. Each teacher was asked questions in connection with the following topics:

- a) The differences between the traditional and *English Developed Curriculum*; regarding the content and strategies.
- b) The impact of it on students' performance, achievement, and the teaching process.
- c) The difficulties they faced teaching the *English Developed Curriculum*.

- d) The teachers' educational programs needed for more preparation to teach the *English Developed Curriculum*.

A total of six separate interviews were conducted with the teachers. The interview questions were focused on the topic of the *English Developed Curriculum*. The interviews were conducted in English, as the English teachers are considered bilingual. The interview questions were sent ahead to the participants through emails to prepare for the interview. This step was done to make the participants more confident during the interview as they could anticipate what they would be asked. The nature of questions being open-ended, and some direction provided by the interviewer, guided a generous interpretation. The aim was to determine the impact of the *English Developed Curriculum* on student achievement, expose some of the major obstacles that limit its effectiveness, as well as underline the need for preparation to better the application. The selection of a structured form of interviews was determined by the research questions which deal with relatively well-researched concepts. The interviews were analyzed according to themes after all data were collected. For more details about the interview questions, see Appendix A.

Survey

This method was used in the collection of the quantitative information from secondary school students. The survey assisted in clarifying the issues, measuring the effectiveness of the *Developed Curriculum*, determining to what extent the developed curriculum met the students' needs, and ascertaining how the students see their teachers' abilities and skills in delivering the *English Developed Curriculum* for the propose of investigate the teachers' preparation needs from the students' perspective. Each participant was given fourteen closed-ended questions. It took respondents between three to ten minutes to complete the online survey (see Appendix C). The survey was conducted in Arabic, which is the mother tongue of the students. They were asked about the new curriculum's content, how it helped their achievement, to what extent their English teacher is capable of teaching the *Developed Curriculum* effectively, and the efficiency of the credit system as it is part of the development of the curriculum in Saudi Arabia. The survey was constructed with the assistance of the researcher's thesis supervisor, and was based largely on previous survey designs prepared by TRU professors (Dr. Patrick Walton and Dr. Edward Howe).

Data Analysis

No software was used for the analysis of the qualitative data. The analysis was done based on common emerging themes and patterns (Riessman, 2008). The method used in the process was an open coding method. As Punch (2009) describes, “codes are tags, names or labels, and coding, therefore, is the process of putting tags, names or labels against pieces of data” (p. 176). The themes had been prearranged by the interview’s questions (e.g., the impact of the developed curriculum and students’ achievement, performance, and the teaching process). All interviews were transcribed in a Word document. The researcher listened to each recorded interview individually and typed the participant’s response for each question. Then, the significant factors were highlighted in the same color to prepare the data for the analyzing process. Secondly, compatible factors referred to by the interview’s participants were categorized into four themes. There were several rounds of coding on each participant’s speech. To reduce the possibility of research bias, some alternative explanations were explored for further insight into the points presented.

For the quantitative data analysis, the survey statements were divided according to themes relevant to the research questions. Then, the survey’s statements were analyzed using Excel software and the SPSS program through which the mean, standard deviations, and other statistical parameters were determined.

Summary

This chapter gave an overview of the methodology used in this study which mixed methods. The instrument applied to collect the data were phone interviews with secondary English female teachers and an online survey for senior secondary students. Next chapter will discuss the results and the analyses from the collected data.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the research are presented. First, the findings from the qualitative data are provided. They were analyzed and accordingly themes which were emerged with the data analysis, and noted in answer to the research questions. Second, the quantitative data results are presented. The statements were divided according to themes, then with the use of Excel software and the SPSS program, the quantitative data was analyzed using the mean, standard deviations, and other statistical parameters as specified. The researcher invited nine teachers to participate in the study and six of them agreed to do the interview.

The Findings

The researcher started the analysis process with the qualitative data following the six steps recommended by Creswell (2015), which involved: “preparing and organizing the data for analysis, engaging in an initial exploration of data through the process of coding it, representing the findings, making an interpretation of the meaning of the results, and finally, conducting strategies to validate the accuracy of the findings” (p. 236). After analysing the information, themes were ascribed in the following order:

1. Advancement in the English curriculum;
2. Effectiveness;
3. Difficulties and Challenges;
4. Teachers preparation needed;

Advancement in the English Curriculum

From the responses, it was found that there were improvements in various areas of the teaching and learning process, with by the *English Developed Curriculum*, when compared with the traditional one. These improvements were reported as advancements in the different structural areas listed in Table 1, arranged in order from the most mentioned ones to the least.

Table 1

Advancements in Developed English Curriculum

Advancement	Number of Participants
Fulfill all English Skills	6/6
Corresponds with Students' Needs	6/6
Interesting Contents	5/6

Fulfills all English Skills

As seen in Table 1, fulfilling all English skills in the *Developed English Curriculum* was one of the most considerable changes. All language acquisition areas are covered in the new curriculum. All the participants mentioned this point, since the traditional approach lacks content lessons that cover skills such as speaking and listening. "The old method discusses part of the English skills like reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary; it ignored speaking and listening skills" (P3). All teachers reported that each unit contained topics for all skills besides the sub-skills, which are grammar and vocabulary. Therefore, by the end of each unit, the students will be able to speak, read, listen, write, and learn new vocabulary and grammar based on the theme of the unit. Figure 1 shows that the goals of the module include practical experience in all four language learning areas.

In this module you will...

- ▶ talk about places and holidays
- ▶ learn to distinguish between permanent and temporary situations and use appropriate tenses for each
- ▶ learn how to use appropriate tenses to link the past with the present
- ▶ learn how to use nouns, quantifiers and articles correctly
- ▶ expand your vocabulary by learning lexical sets related to people and places, adjectives describing people and places, words easily confused, etc.
- ▶ learn how to write articles and e-mails
- ▶ acquire skills and strategies that will help you in exams

Figure 1: Sample learning outcome (Mitchel & Malkogianni, 2016-2017, *Traveller 5 KSA-Edition*, All over the world. Unit 1 on holiday unit 2 the place to be (p. 7)

Corresponds with Students' Needs

The second element in the *Developed English Curriculum* that all participants agreed was improved was that it corresponds with the students' needs. One of the participating teachers noted in her response that the new curriculum goals are to achieve the following: communicative skills, social skills, learning how to learn, language and cultural awareness, effective preparation for all exams, intercultural consciousness, and learning autonomy (P1). These goals are listed clearly at the introduction of the teacher's curriculum guide to inform teachers about the expectation with regards to the learning outcome.

The *Developed Curriculum* greatly helps in building a strong learner because it touches almost all aspects of the student's personality and needs. In her expression of admiration for the new teaching tool, P3 mentioned that the teaching approach outlined in this program helps in preparing students for all exams, such as IELTS and Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). However, this teacher participant suggested that the benefit for good preparation for the internationally recognized English exams will only be fully achieved if the students finish all of the *Traveller* series successfully. Interestingly, most of the participating instructors in this study agreed that the *Developed Curriculum* allows the students to express their feelings, ideas, and opinions. The *Developed Curriculum* also enhanced their ability to think critically when using the English language. Another one of the participants (P6) also voiced her support in saying that: "The *Developed Curriculum* is appropriate for students' needs as it gives the students a chance to develop their language and use it effectively." P3 and P6 emphasized that the *Developed Curriculum* touches the students' daily life, which motivates them to use English frequently. It has themes that talk about jobs, finance, sports, and holidays. It also provides them with useful idioms and phrases, which help them communicate more easily with native English language speakers.

In contrast, another teacher (P2) argued that the standards of the *Developed Curriculum* appeared to be slightly higher than the students' abilities. She noted that this may not be considered a disadvantage, since the perceived difficulty level might challenge the students to do more. If the students meet the challenge, it would thereby result in an overall improvement of their skills and learning outcomes.

Interesting Content

The third improvement that the interviews revealed is that the *Developed Curriculum* has interesting content for students and teachers. The teacher's curriculum guide contains a variety of strategies, which were not found in the traditional curriculum. As one participant expressed, "there are many strategies in the teacher's manual that teachers can apply, such as group work, role play, group activity, paired work, and discussions" (P5). Furthermore, P5 and P2 expressed similar opinions about the advancement of contents that the *Developed Curriculum* uses, and we will explore these comments further below. Also, most of the participants mentioned that there is a variety of themes and exercises which stimulate the students; conversely, P4 stressed that there are some themes in the reading parts that are not interesting, as they are based only on knowledge and information. She said: "I feel that the students are not interested in the themes... I can see it in their faces... 'So, What' reaction!"

One of the goals of the *Developed Curriculum* is to create intercultural awareness; P4 noted that the traditional curriculum was closer to the students' culture, (the Saudi Arabian culture), whereas the *Developed Curriculum* introduces international topics and themes. P1 and P4 commented on the quality of the textbooks as it improved along with the development of the curriculum. "The developed books are colorful, with high-quality papers, as well as with interesting lessons for the students which make them more engaged in the learning process" (P1). "I can see that the girls feel very interested in the lesson" (P4).

The researcher also reported from the interviews that the topics in the book are relevant to the students' real life. One of the participants (P6) described it in this way: "It is not just a textbook or curriculum; it is a real-life process."

Effectiveness

All participants expressed their appreciation for the *Developed Curriculum* as it has had a positive impact on students' performance, teaching process, and students' achievement. Table 2 shows that all teachers expressed a positive impact of those factors.

Table 2

Effectiveness of the English Developed Curriculum

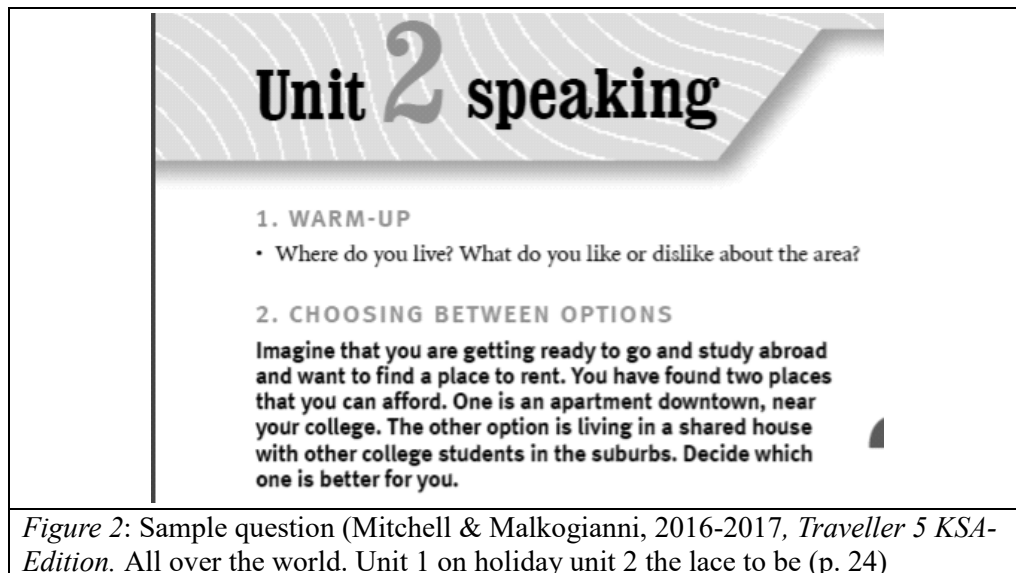
The Effectiveness	Number of Participants
Positive Impact on Students' Performance	6/6
Positive Impact on the Teaching Process	6/6
Positive Impact on the Students' Achievement	6/6

Student Performance

The first significant improvement recorded was the students' performance in the classroom. Students' performance was reported to have improved according to responses from all teachers.

In the interviews, all teacher participants clearly expressed that the students with the *Developed Curriculum* are more involved in the learning process than before. According to P2, "the new curriculum directed questions for the students and provides a lot of chances for them to be involved."

The interviews also revealed that the new curriculum gave students a chance to express their opinions, hence encouraging them to answer and participate. Even students with low English skills were encouraged because the material elicits their own opinion; therefore, no answer is considered wrong. In this way, the students speak more and practice using English in class, thus improving their skills. This assertion was also confirmed by another teacher (P6) in her statement: "the students can form and imagine new situations, and role play it in the class room." Figure 2 shows an example of the questions that are directed to the students and ask for their opinion.



The new strategies in the *Developed Curriculum* helped a lot with the students' performance as indicated by most of the interviews. In her interview, P1 explained those strategies and how she uses it in her class in few words: "each student takes part in a discussion giving an opinion, practice constantly thinking, summarizing, and evaluating the whole group or does coaching."

The concept of the students' involvement is one of the important approaches that helps in reaching the desired outcomes by the students and teachers. Empowering the students' role in the learning process is one of the goals of the Ministry of Education. The participants reported that this goal has been mostly met. Several participants agreed, notably, P4 and P3 indicated that the idea of students' motivation and encouragement being included in the new curriculum is effective. They implied that this introduction encouraged the young scholars to participate more as the content of the curriculum becomes more interesting to them. Moreover, P4 described what she noticed about the effects of this practice: "I can tell that the students become more confident using the English language... They speak a lot, present themselves, express their feelings, and participate a lot," she continued, "...They keep on telling me 'now we love the language.'"

The Teaching Process

As seen in Table 2, all participants praised the advantages that the *Developed Curriculum* has brought to the process of instruction. The participants reported that

the content of the student's textbook as well as the teachers' curriculum guide has positively impacted the teaching process. P2 went further to explain this as the variation of the topic of the lesson, and the teaching strategies helped teachers a lot in delivering the materials to the students as it gives the teachers an opportunity to change from one strategy to another.

The variety of lessons and themes mentioned has been a helpful factor in the teaching process, more than the teaching strategies. Some of the teachers expressed how new elements were added to the teaching strategies with the development of the curriculum. Four of the participants talked about the new teaching methods effectiveness and how they are practicing it in the class. Those strategies applied include group work, role play, discussion, group activities, brain storming, and pair work. Figure 3 shows an example of a pair-work activity from the students' book.

pairwork activities

5 Student B

2. HELP SOLVE A PROBLEM

Situation:
I am your friend and I have a problem. Find out what my problem is and offer me some good advice.

Who the person is:
A friend, relative, colleague

What the problem is:
The person's old car broke down, and he must get a new means of transportation. He cannot decide what to get.

The options:

1. Get a car: Cars can accommodate several passengers and are convenient for carrying things. Also, you are not affected by weather conditions. However, they are harmful to the environment and require a lot of gas.
2. Get a motorcycle: Motorcycles are cheaper than cars and are convenient in traffic. Also, you don't have parking problems. However, you can take only one passenger, and it is difficult to carry a lot of things. They are inconvenient in bad weather.

Figure 3: Sample activity (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2016-2017, Traveller 5- KSA-Edition. Module 4 round up. Units (7-8) p. 111)

In their example of a role play, as demonstrated in their class, P1 explained that: “some topics deserve to be acted out in the class, so the scenario is distributed among the students by the teacher and each student takes part and acts it out in the class.” In her view, this is a way to make the students learn, while having fun at the same time. By definition, most of the strategies that the teachers listed are grouped as

the “cooperative learning methods, and these come in the form of group work, discussion, paired work, and role play. One of the teaching strategies that the participants reported is a project that the students have to do at the end of each semester regarding what they have learned. The participants explained that they have the option to have the students do the work in groups or individually, but most of the time they prefer to do it in groups. P3 explained that in “one of the projects they have to make a brochure for any university in a part of the world they are interested in, and then they present their work to the class.”

The benefits of this style of teaching include its ability to improve students’ communication skills, which is one of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF) goals. It is also known to be a catalyst in building the teachers’ ability to deal with conflicts. In other words, it enhances their conflict resolution strategies. The new method alters the teacher's role in the teaching and learning process. In this case, with the *English Developed Curriculum* the instructors are no longer the source of the knowledge; they are not strictly responsible for providing the information to the students. The educators’ job becomes more interesting because they now have the opportunity to diversify their duties. This is supported by a report from P1, who noted that “the [*English*] *Developed Curriculum* increased the students’ and teacher’s interest and awareness.” Additionally, P6 attributed the remarkable impacts of this new method to a variety of factors, which they outlined in her statement:

All topics are related to their life, which made them participate a lot and get involved in the class, even the weak student. Also, it facilitated the teaching process; the curriculum’s divisions are easier and connected, which makes the process of teaching easier.

In her view, P3 pointed out that the organizational element and the smoothness of the *English Developed Curriculum* contributed immensely toward its positive impact on the teaching process.

The teachers’ curriculum guide comes with an in-class CD and Test CD/CD-ROM. The in-class CD has all the material of the student’s book recorded for the listening activities while the Test CD/CD ROM has a verity of elements, most noticeably, “enabling the teacher to add, omit or change the order of the items and/or exercises according to the needs of their classes.” (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2016-

17). This CD was mentioned by just two teachers P2, and P5; the remaining participants talked about using other technologies as tools in the class, such as smart boards and other types, but not necessarily using the interactive CD. In her interview, P2 expressed that it is a very interesting illustration tool that teachers should use. From her perspective: “the interactive CD makes learning and teaching process much easier.” The positive impact of the availability of the CD as a teaching tool is far-reaching, facilitating the learning process since it keeps the students engaged and enables them to maintain their interest in the *English Developed Curriculum* material.

The Students' Achievement

The interviews indicated several positive impacts from the *English Developed Curriculum* on the students' performance. It was also found that the teaching process has influenced the students' achievement. All teachers agreed that this tool affected the students' achievement positively as it was found to be useful for all the English skills and sub-skills because each unit in the book contains a lesson for each skill. The participants said that the students had to take three monthly exams and are continually assessed for speaking and listening skills throughout the course. Marks were also awarded for homework and participation. P1 commented on the significance of this practice in aiding students' learning, saying: “the variety of marks helped students to develop their skills, work harder, and practice more; the outcome is their skills improved and got good marks.”

In another interview, P6 added her voice in agreement of the positive effects of this new approach “with the developed one, the students are encouraged to learn more and more.” She continued by saying that the *Developed English Curriculum* contains a lot of activities which motivates the students to learn and achieve more. According to her: “at the end of each unit, we have what we call ‘round up’ which contains what the student should achieve at the end of that unit, so if the students did the exercises, she will get A+ and so on.” Another observation that was remarked on by the participants was that the students were now more attentive to the lessons than before, P5 reported this by saying that “the students have become more active than before; the contact lets them express their feelings.”

These findings imply that the use of modern teaching strategies in the *English*

Developed Curriculum make students more active in class as some of the teachers noted. Several teachers noticed this change; P2 observed that “the group work helped students to achieve more marks as well as to learn more.” The teachers engaged students in a variety of activities where they could see significant improvement in their students. They said that they are achieving more in their writing and speaking, as well as increasing their vocabulary substantially and improving their grammar skills. This view was echoed by P4 who told the interviewer that “the students achieve in their writing a lot, now they can write short stories, and I reward them for doing that.” This position was further supported by another participant (P3) who agreed she had seen improvements in the students’ abilities in the sense that, according to her “they can hold a long conversation on different topics through speaking practices in their book.” These examples from the interviews clearly indicate that student achievement is positively affected by the implementation of the *English Developed Curriculum* in female secundar schools. This positive impacte was noticed by the teachers’ eyes not by test result.

Difficulties and Challenges

The results showed some difficulties and challenges that the teachers are experiencing while teaching the *Developed Curriculum*. Table 3 lists those problems in rank order, from the most mentioned to the least.

Table 3

Difficulties and Challenges

Difficulties and Challenges	Number of Participants
Content Density	4/6
Shortage of Time	2/6
Repetition of Grammar Rules	2/6
Teaching Strategies	2/6
Traditional Exam Criteria	1/6

Content Density

The majority of the participants expressed that it was very challenging to cover all of the content within the prescribed time frame for the *English Developed Curriculum*. Four participants said that it has a lot of vocabulary, exercises, grammar, long-text and information. One of the participants went further in her description of

the curriculum density. Appropriately, her remarks on the content were similar to the goals that *Traveller's* publisher has aimed for: “the modular approach promotes progress in all dimensions and by the end of the course; students will have systematically covered the vocabulary and grammatical structures outlined in the contents” (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2016-2017, p.130).

The course density, while having the potential to positively challenge the students, was not always experienced as a positive. As P2 described: “One difficulty is that there are lots of vocabularies, and the texts are sometimes lengthy.” The participants maintained that sometimes it is very hard to concentrate as there is a lot of material to cover. As P6 noted: “we are not concentrating on one thing; we have a lot of things to cover.” Additionally, P3 emphasized that the abundance of vocabulary provides another area of difficulty for the students: “the vocabulary is too much for the students as it is related to finance, culture, biology, and travel.”

Shortage of Time

P1 and P4 expressed their annoyance with the lack of time as the lessons are very long, and it takes a significant amount of time to cover all aspects of the lesson. As reported in the interviews, the actual time for the lesson is 35 minutes. According to the teachers, that time is not enough to cover everything, let alone evaluating speaking and listening continuously. As P1 describes “the time is not enough; each lesson is supposed to be given one hour or fifty minutes for completion and evaluation” but with lessons lasting only 35 minutes, teachers must condense the lessons. P4 said that sometimes she has to divide the lesson into two sections so that she can fully explain it to the students.

Repetition of Grammar Rules

Two of the participants reported that the grammar rules are repeated, and nothing is advanced regarding the grammar rules. As P6 described: “many things are repeated, especially grammar; it is mostly the same grammar from the intermediate stage.” Also, P6 continued to say that even though it is repeated, they still have to teach it to the students. Another teacher, P4, concurred with this point: lamenting that the same grammar rule is presented in many ways and they are obliged to go through all of them. They expressed their frustration with the challenges associated with having to explain this to the students, which leaves them confused sometimes. As P4

reports, “sometimes I find it hard to make the students understand it, or I cannot incorporate them into the lesson.”

Teaching Strategies

Although teaching strategies were an important factor that helped with improving the teaching process, some teachers found it to be a challenging element as it has become a requirement for each lesson. For example, P1 cautioned that: “the strategies are useful for some lessons, but not all, such as reading, speaking, and vocabulary only.” P1 gave further explanation on this point, noting that students need to understand the whole lesson more than focusing on one part of the lesson.

Interviewee, P4, for her part, had a different view regarding the new strategies for teaching. P4 believed that since this generation is different, so the teacher must use different methods and strategies to motivate and engaged them in the learning and teaching process. According to P4, “teachers need to use different strategies and techniques because the students are aware of it, so they have to present for them something higher than before.”

Same Criteria for Traditional Exams

A shift is needed for the exam styles too. The *English Developed Curriculum* offers new strategies for the classroom, as noted; however, the criteria for the exams, including the format, remains in the traditional style. This need was reported by just one participant (P2) who was of the opinion that one of the challenges is that 70% of the exam format maintained the same criteria as the traditional one. As P2 puts the problem: “the way we form the exams is different from the way that the students were introduced to the lessons, so the teacher has to practice with them the traditional way of examination.” Then P2 went further to give an example of what she means by the difference. She explained that when the teachers prepare their exams, questions for vocabulary, they have to provide four options that the students can choose from, while in their book there are just two options.

Teacher Preparation Needed

The data from the interviews suggested a need for some teachers’ educational programs to enable the teachers to deliver the *English Developed Curriculum* in the best way and to achieve the projected objectives. The preparation needs are listed in Table 4 below in the order from the most mentioned to the least mentioned.

Table 4

Teacher Preparation Needed

Teacher Preparation Needed	Number of Participants
Teaching Strategies	4/6
Taking Course in Training Center	3/6
Utilize Technologies	2/6
Interact with Foreign English Teachers	2/6

Teaching Strategies

The greatest need to effectively implement the newly introduced education program is for teaching strategies, since teaching strategies are closely connected with the educational process when it comes to the development of the curriculum (see Table 4). The participants agreed that teachers need to know how to make the lessons attractive to students and how to ensure clarity of the content. One participant, P1, shared this view with a few simple words: “the use of teaching strategies is helpful for that.” Also, P1 thought that teachers need training programs to develop their methodology of teaching, which is partly linked with teaching strategies. This seems to be a popular belief among the instructors, with P2 reportedly thinking that while group work should be one of the strategies the teachers can use, they need programs to help them better control the class. According to P2: “programs of useful strategies are needed, which makes the teaching process easier and more fun for the students.”

P6 shared the same opinion with her colleagues. She started her speech with “we need a lot,” in terms of having significant preparation for teaching the *English Developed Curriculum*; then she continued, “we need to know more” about the application of the teaching strategies in the classroom as it helps the students to be more involved in the learning process. As the strategies were included with the curriculum with the intent of improving all English skills, P3 thinks that a teacher needs to learn the strategies to help students improve their speaking and writing skills, as not all teachers can do that, especially with speaking skills. Listening to the teachers, it was clear that they all had different strengths that they bring to their classrooms; but all of them agreed that there is need for more educational courses for the teachers in the teaching strategies as not all teachers know how to use the

strategies effeciently in their class.

Taking a Course at the Training Centre

The first factor, teaching strategies, relates to the second factor note by teachers: offering courses at a training centre. The second most prominent factor reported in the interviews is taking a course at the training centre. On this point, P4 explained that: “the Ministry of Education offered some teachers’ educational programs, and the teacher’s supervisor was helping the teachers to improve their teaching abilities.” Additionally, P4 explained that the teacher’s supervisor chose specific courses for each teacher to improve their skills and learn more strategies for use in their classrooms. P5 shared the same information, and added that the educational programs are optional for all teachers who have an interest in learning new methods or want to improve their language or teaching skills. P1 also said that taking the course at the training center is very helpful in providing support for the teachers.

Utilize Technologies

The application of technologies in the classroom has become one of the most prominent teaching and learning strategies. On this topic, P2 and P1 expressed their feelings about how the use of technologies, such as the interactive CD, could be beneficial to students’ learning outcomes. Additionally, P1 talked about the importance of using social media as a tool to communicate with the students and their parents. Specifically, P1 pointed to a program she uses to communicate with other teachers around the world, called ‘Edmodo Program’. As a result of her own positive personal experiences, P1 thinks teachers should learn how to integrate these technological tools into their classrooms to help them in teaching as well as helping the students learn better.

Interact with Foreign English Teachers

According to P1, teachers need to interact with foreign English teachers from America or Europe to share and exchange their experiences. Also, P6 said very much the same opinion, but added that interacting with other teachers who have studied abroad would be helpful also as they have acquired some experience with teaching strategies, and they have learned the application of new techniques, as well as having

learned from teachers in developed countries, about how to use modern methods of teaching.

Further Interesting Findings

From the interviews, there was also further data to support some of the inefficiencies the teachers observed with the *English Developed Curriculum*. First, there is a large segment of English language teachers who have weak English language skills themselves. Having weak English skills themselves means that teachers required extra time to learn the more challenging *English Developed Curriculum* before they could begin to teach it to students. Second, some teachers use the Arabic language during the class lessons for grammar explanation and other skills. As the teachers had to revert to the use of Arabic to explain the English lesson on occasion, there seems to be a level of complexity in the *English Developed Curriculum* beyond what the students were able to learn from the material.

Survey Results

This section provides an overview of the survey results as well as the analysis of the collected data concerning the responses to the survey's statements.

General Overview of Survey Results

Fourteen survey statements presented to each participant were evaluated on a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The sample was taken from four schools; two schools from each region where the study was conducted. All the selected schools are from among those operating on the credit system.

Tables 5 and 6 show the demographic information of the participants: participants' age, and school's names, which were identified as S1, S2, S3, and S4 respectively for reason of anonymity and convenience, and the number of participants of each region where the study was conducted. In total, 108 students were surveyed.

Table 5

Student Age as a Percent of the Total Sample

Age	Percent (%)
16	0.9
17	23.2
18	62.0
19	9.3
20	3.7
23	0.9

Table 6

The Number of Participants from Each School and Region

Region	School	(n=)
Western Region	S1	34
Western Region	S2	27
Central Region	S3	19
Central Region	S4	28

Since the study participants were chosen from among secondary students, the majority of the students are 17 to 18 years old. The sample from the Western Region was larger than the Central Region because the students from Western Region interact with the subject of the study more than students from the other regions. There are some noticeable differences between the geographical and cultural aspects of the two regions. The Western Region is a coastal area while the Central Region is a desert-dry area. The Western Region is more multicultural than the Central Region. This is due to the population of non-Saudis in the Western Region as it has two holy cities (Medina and Mecca). These cities attract millions of Muslims from around the world, especially the city of Mecca, where the pilgrimage is held every year (Al-Ghabban, 2010). This could be a reason behind the higher rate of multiculturalism in the Western Region. It is common for 50% of the whole population in Jeddah city, 3.5 million people, to be of non-Saudi origin; Jeddah is the biggest city in the region and the second-biggest city in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Al-madani, 2013). Figure 4 shows a map of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, illustrating the two different regions on which this study focussed.



Figure 4: Map of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (blog.frontierstrategygroup.com)

The survey statements are divided into three themes in relation to the research questions. The themes: student achievement, the abilities of teachers, and the content of the textbook.

Students' Achievement

This theme comprises five survey statements, presented in Table 7, in order from one to five.

1. This course was a valuable learning experience for me.
2. This course challenged me to do the best work.
3. The flexibility in the credit system has increased my desire for learning.
4. The textbook helped me to complete the mid-term exam and carry on my education.
5. I find that dividing the curriculum into six courses is a very effective step.

Table 7

Students' Achievement

Core Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Valuable Learning Experience	3.7	1.1
This Course Challenged Me	3.5	1.1
Credit System	3.7	1.2
Passing the Exam	3.6	1.1
Dividing the Curriculum	3.4	1.1

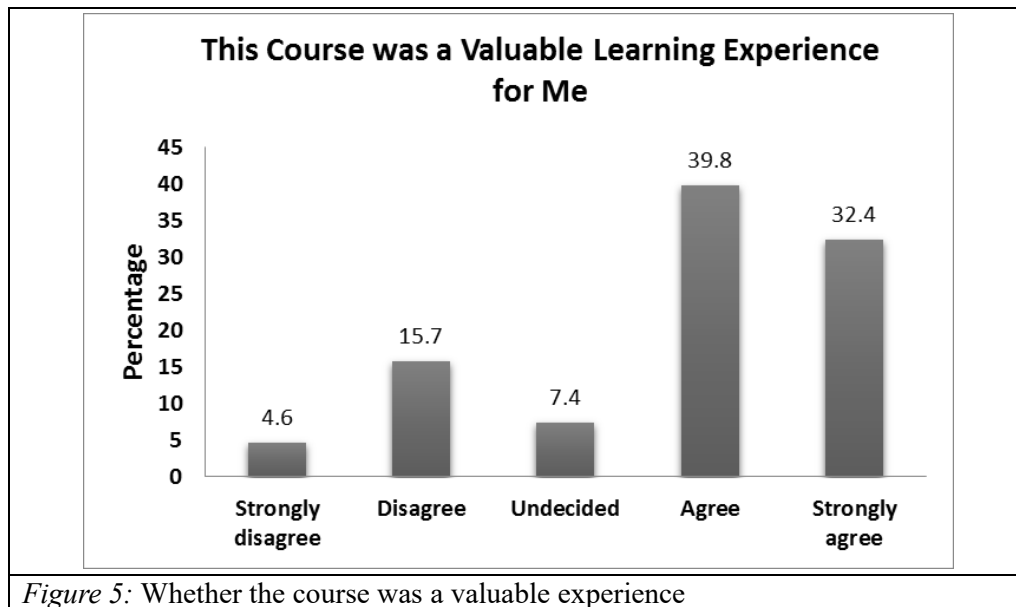
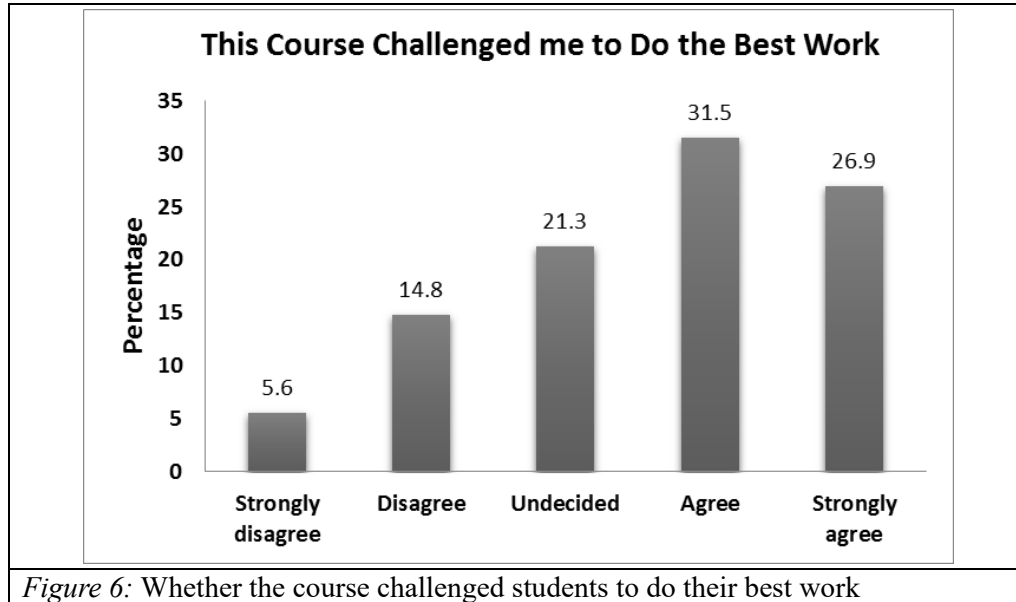
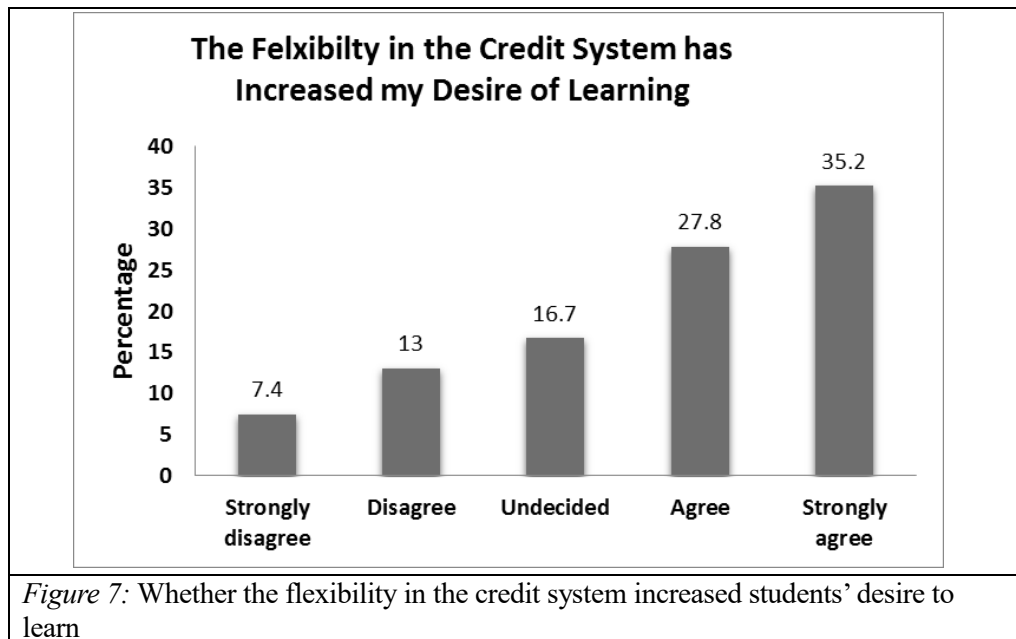


Figure 5: Whether the course was a valuable experience

An average score of 3.7 with a standard deviation of 1.1 was recorded among students who indicated that the course was a valuable learning experience. These values mean that most of the students have a relatively a consistent opinion about the benefits of *Traveller5* English course (Table 7). The data showed that nearly 40% of the students agreed that the course was a valuable learning experience for them; while another 32% strongly agreed with it being beneficial which clearly shows the benefit gained by the students from studying this course. The rest of the participants were grouped between strongly disagree to undecided; 5% responded strongly disagree, 16% disagree, 7% undecided.



Regarding the question on whether the course challenged the students to do their best work, there was an average score of 3.5 with a standard deviation of 1.1. Over 30% of the students agreed that they did the best work they can do as the course was challenging for them, another group of more than 26% strongly agreed to this point. There were slightly over 20% who were not sure if the course was challenging or not as well as nearly 15% who disagreed with the statements and about 5% who strongly disagreed.



The credit system allows students to register under the number of hours they want to study each semester, which comprised five required courses and two optional courses, so the students can study seven courses each semester instead of 14 courses in the traditional system. The data revealed that more than half of the students think that the credit system has increased their desire to learn. More than one-third of the students strongly agreed with the statement, and there was over one-quarter who agreed to advancement in their willingness to learn which contribute positively to their achievements. This response recorded a mean score of 3.7, with a standard deviation of 1.2 (Table 7).

The new English curriculum was divided into six courses *Traveller 1 to 6*. The last required course is *Traveller 5*, which was the focus of this study. The curriculum takes the students from level one in the English language to level six, which is the advanced level for *Traveller* English courses. The statement asked the students about their opinion regarding the steps that were taken by the Ministry of Education. The average score was 3.4, with a standard deviation of 1.1, for this division of the curriculum (Table 7). More than half of the students (57%) agreed with the statement, “I find that dividing the curriculum into six courses is a very effective step,” which means that, from the students’ perspective, dividing into six courses is effective. Another 24% were undecided with this step.

The Abilities of Teachers

This theme includes four survey statements in relation to the teachers’ profession from the perspective of the senior secondary students. It is presented in Table 8 in order.

1. I can fully understand the subject explained throughout the lesson.
2. I think that the teacher can deliver the course’s content excellently.
3. The teacher helped me to understand the course.
4. The teaching methods increased my ability to understand the course’s
 - a. material.

Table 8

Teachers' Abilities

Core Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Understand the Lesson	3.6	0.9
Deliver the Course Content	3.9	1.0
The Teacher Helped Me	3.8	1.0
The Teaching Methods	3.5	1.1

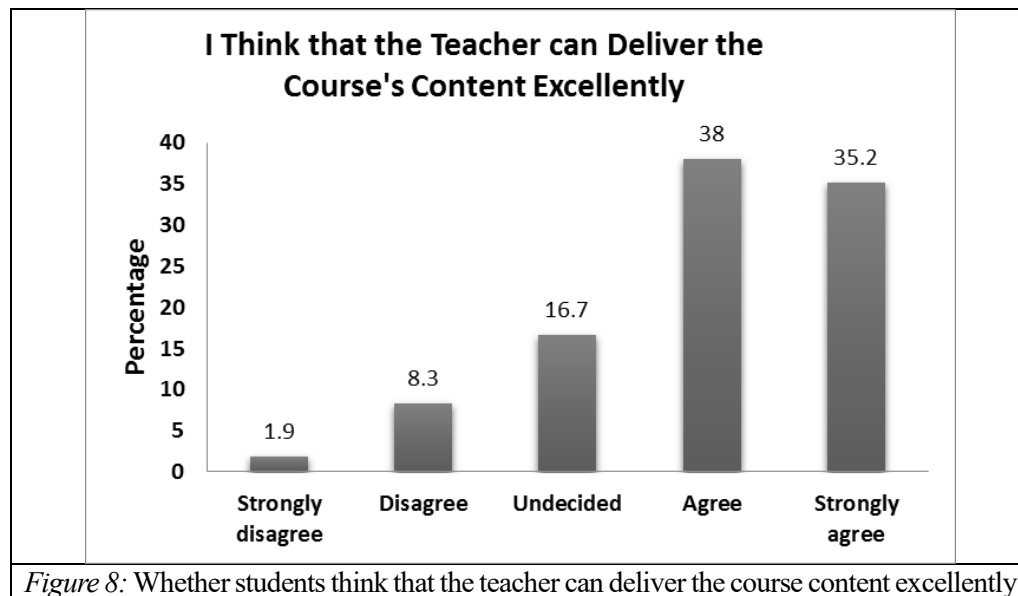
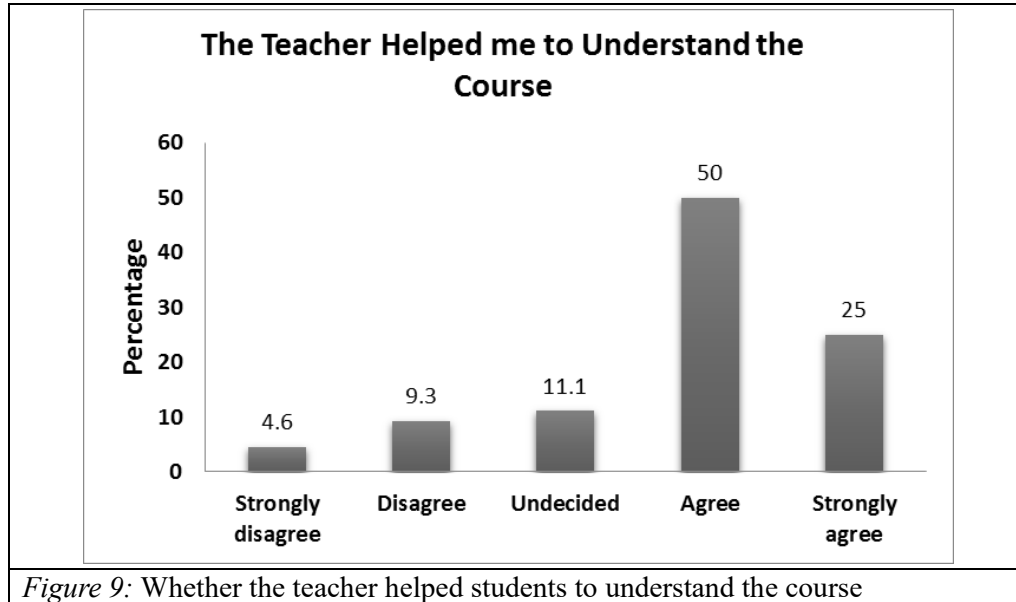
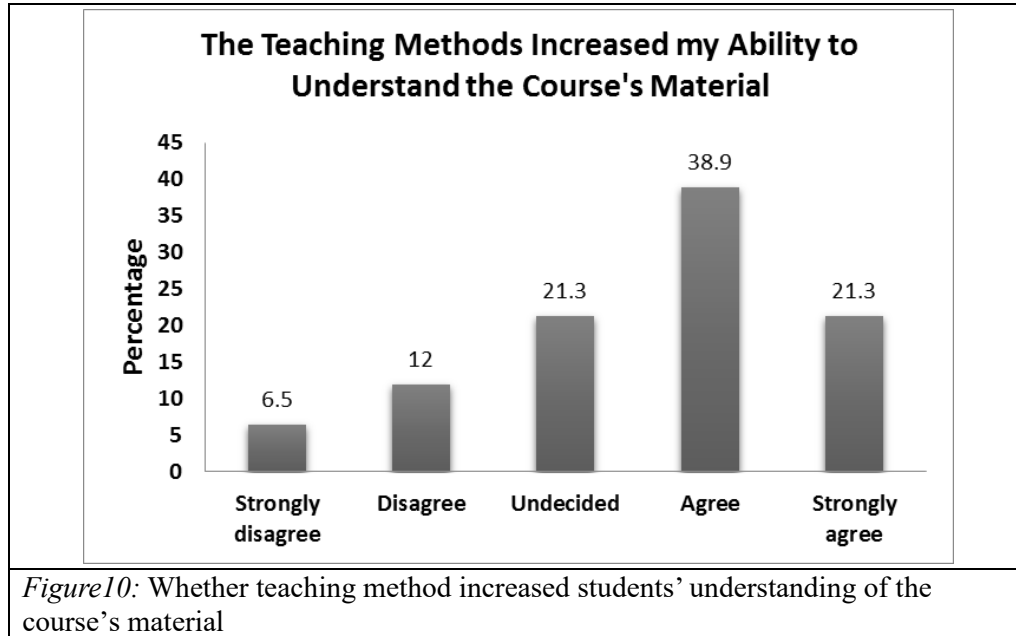


Figure 8: Whether students think that the teacher can deliver the course content excellently

The students were asked about their opinion regarding their teachers' abilities to teach the *English Developed Curriculum (Traveller 5)*. An average score of 3.9 was recorded from the participants' responses, with a standard deviation of 1.0—demonstrating consistency in the students' view of their teachers' performance (Table 8). In addition, 38% of students thought that their teachers could deliver the course's content very well, and approximately 35% indicated that they were satisfied with their teachers' teaching skills. Some of the students seem unsure about their teachers' performance as about 17% were undecided about this statement.



Since one of the features of an efficient teacher is providing the support for their students, the students were asked if their teachers provided them with the support needed and these results are provided in Figure 9, shown above. Also, 50% responded that their teachers helped them to understand the course. This was an indication of the extent to which the teachers understand the course's contents. On this same issue, 25% of the students strongly agreed with the average of 3.8 and standard deviation of 1.0 (Table 8).



This data, given in Figure 10, also shows that more than half of the students think that the teaching methods helped them to understand the course's materials; about 39 % agreed to the statement, while another 21% were split between strongly agree and undecided. This could be interpreted to mean that some teachers were able to use different methods very well, while others were not as good at them. There were students who disagreed with this statement with 12% saying they disagreed and approximately 7% saying they strongly disagreed. The result from the students' surveys for this statement were significant enough, with an average of 3.5 supporting the effectiveness of the teaching method and taking into account a standard deviation of 1.1 (see Table 8).

The Textbook Content

On this theme, five survey statements are included in relation to the new curriculum's textbook content which is linked to the students' achievement. This is presented in Table 8 in short forms in the order from 1 to 5.

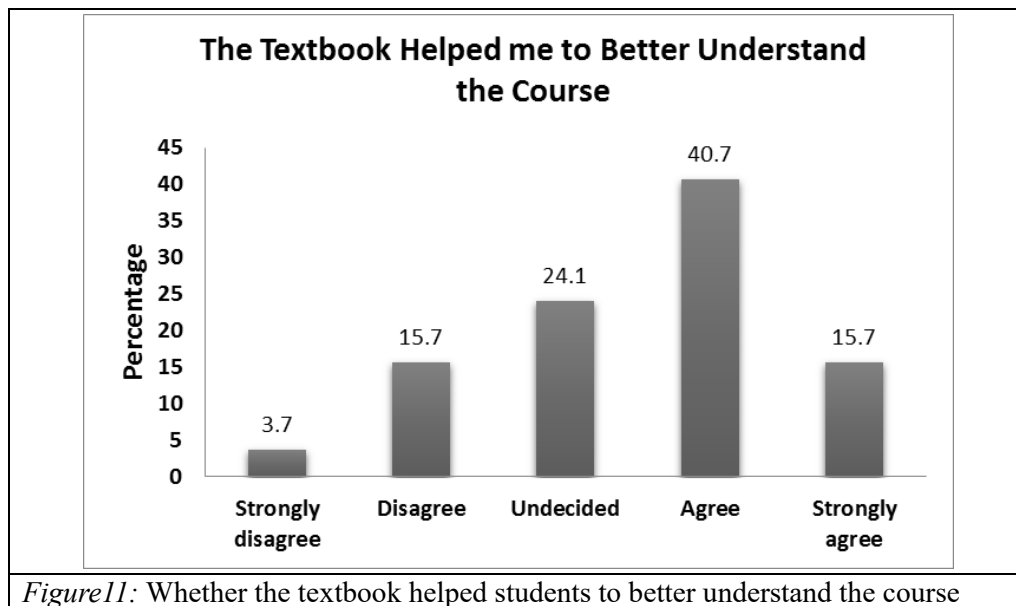
1. The textbook helped me to better understand the course.
2. I find the textbook content very interesting.
3. The textbook content greatly developed my skills.
4. The textbook's content corresponds with my abilities.

5. I can understand the contents of the textbook on my own without the need for a detailed explanation from the teacher.

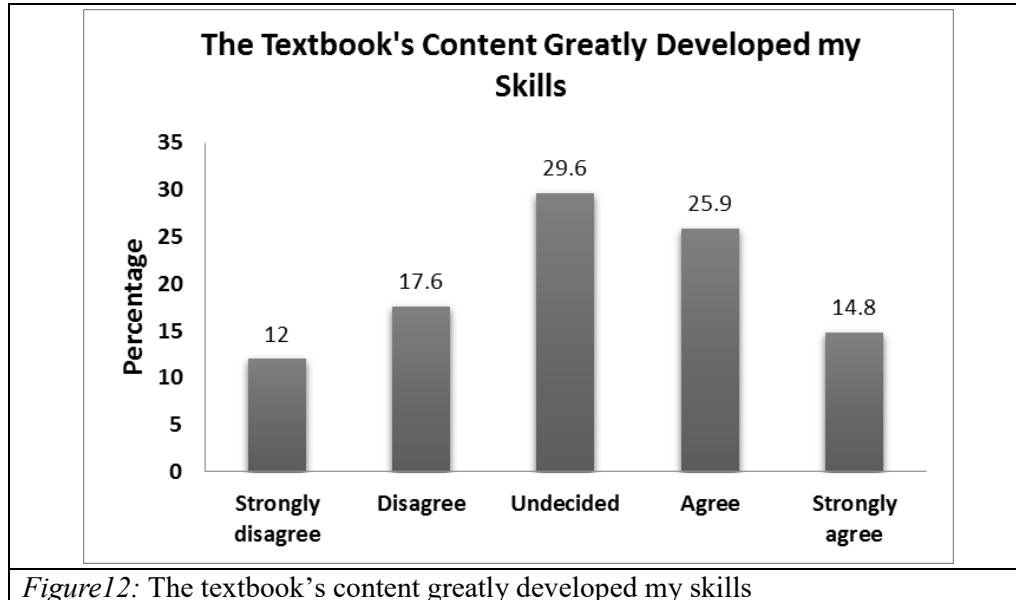
Table 9

Students Responses Concerning the Textbook Content

Core Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Helped Me to Understand the Course	3.4	1.0
The Content Was Very Interesting	2.9	1.1
Greatly Developed My Skills	3.1	1.2
Corresponds with my Abilities	3.1	1.0
Learning Autonomy	2.6	1.2



The data shows that more than half of the students think that the textbook was a good learning tool for them. Figure 11 shows that students (56%) agreed with the statement. However, there are also some students who were unsure about the support that their textbook provided to them (24%). Nonetheless, a significant/noteworthy the results pertaining to the effectiveness of the textbook are significant and worth mentioning as the mean is 3.4, and the standard deviation is 1.0 (Table 9).



A mean score of 3.1, with standard deviation of 1.2, was reported for the data on whether the textbook content greatly developed students' skills. Even though there seem to be more students who agreed to the textbook's content being a useful tool in developing their skills, with about 26% agreeing and nearly 15% strongly agreeing, there were more respondents who were undecided with almost 30% of the students not knowing which side to be. In general, this chart shows almost a neutral review for the textbook in developing students' skills.

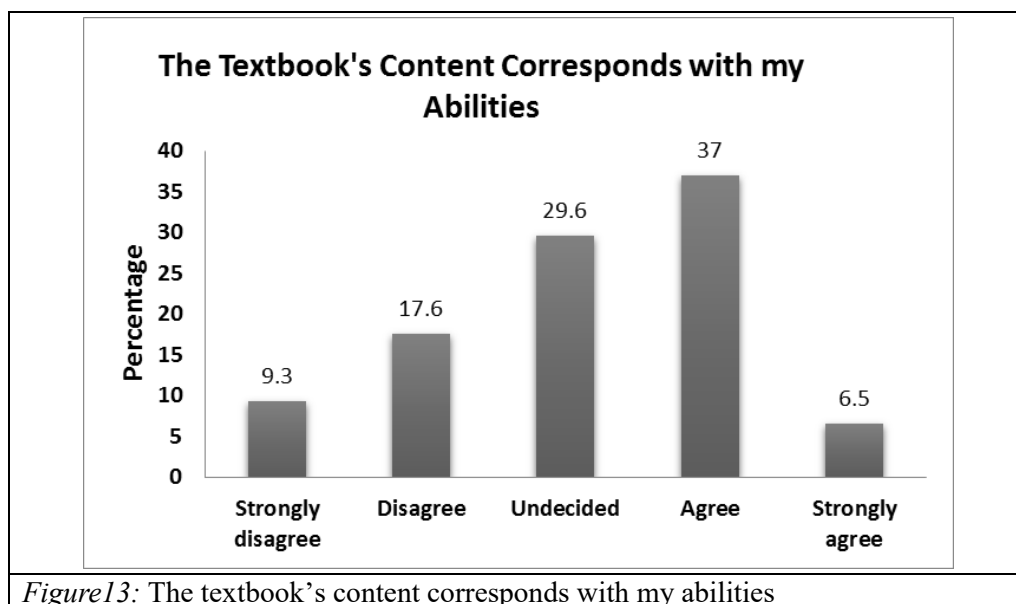


Figure 12 shows that more students (37%) agreed or (6.5%) strongly agreed

that the textbook's content corresponded with their abilities than those that disagreed (17.6%) or strongly disagreed (9.3%), the remaining 30% of the students were undecided. However, there could be a strong argument made that these results show an overall approval for the book's content in terms of its corresponding with students' ability since a total of almost 44.0% were on the positive side of the argument, with a mean score of 3.1 and a standard deviation of 1.0 (Table 9).

Summary

The results show that teachers and students are engaging with the material and making use of the *Developed Curriculum* resources. The interviews with the teachers pointed to several common needs as well as areas of positive development. The students' responses to the survey show trends that indicate the benefits and needs for more work on the *English Developed Curriculum*. The credit system, addressed both in the survey and interviews, is the area least addressed and perhaps could have been treated as more of a "control" with the sample schools rather than an area of inquiry. We will consider these results further in the discussion below.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

This study was constructed to answer three main questions regarding the *English Developed Curriculum* in Saudi Arabia. I collected quantitative and qualitative data to provide answers to each question. The relevant data was first provided and subsequently discussed for each of the research questions listed below:

1. How does the new secondary English curriculum impact students' achievement?
2. How will teachers prepare for the new curriculum?
3. In what ways does the credit system affect the students' achievement?

How does the New English Curriculum Impact Students' Achievement?

The participants (teachers and students) were asked about the impact of the new curriculum on the achievement of students. The six teachers interviewed, identified as P1 to P6, were asked some direct questions about their students' achievement and their performance in class, using a qualitative research tool. The students were asked about the improvement in their skills, the benefit that the course provided for them, the content of their textbook, and whether the course challenged them to work hard; all in regard to the way that these aspects of the new *English Developed Curriculum* impacted their studies using a quantitative research tool.

The qualitative data showed several factors in the new English curriculum in relation to the students' achievement. First, its advancement with regards to the contents. All teachers expressed that the new textbook covers all the relevant skills, which was not the case in the traditional one. The teachers were of the view that the new curriculum has lessons for all the English skills in addition to the sub-skills, which helps in improving the achievement in the four language acquisition areas such as speaking, reading, listening, writing, and building more knowledge in new vocabulary and grammar. From the students' perspective, more than 40% agreed that the textbook's content significantly developed their skills which is a considerable percent. However, there were about 30% who were undecided, which is a substantial number of respondents who were indifferent to the changes in their development based on the textbook. Given the interview comments from teachers, the 30% could be about the content density and the repetition of grammar rules. Specifically, P2 expressed that one of the difficulties she faced in teaching the new curriculum is that there is a lot of vocabulary, and the length of the text sometimes. Some teachers

expressed that it is very challenging for teachers and students to concentrate as there is a lot of material to cover. As P6 explained, in the learning and teaching process they have to cover a lot of materials introduced in their textbooks. The study found, from the perspective of two of the participating teachers, that there is a noticeable repetition especially in grammar rules. Although it repeated from previous levels of the course series, teachers still have to teach it to the students. Furthermore, P4 agreed with this point, saying that the same grammar rule is presented in many ways and she has to go through all of them. These two weaknesses in the *Developed Curriculum* textbook impacted the students' skills improvement, which resulted in around 30% undecided, and 30% who disagreed with the statement as well. The problems related to *Traveller* series was partly mentioned in another study by Al-Harbi (2012), who concluded that standards of the proficiency of English language in *Traveller* level 1 and 2 were not available to a high degree beyond the intermediate level in all four linguistic skills.

The second factor that the qualitative data indicated is that the new curriculum corresponds with students' needs for success in the classroom. All of the participants agreed that the new curriculum was suitable for the students' needs and impacted their achievements directly. This is supported by statements from participants like P1, who noted that the new curriculum has several goals which it is seeking to achieve. The most noticeable are the following: communicative method, social, cultural, learning how to learn, language and cultural awareness, effective preparation for all exams, intercultural consciousness, and learning autonomy. Meeting the students' needs for study is essential for enhancing their achievements and these goals are fulfilling all the students' needs; whereas the traditional curriculum did not.

This opinion was supported by findings made by an educational philosopher who reported that "educational objectives are typically derived from the curriculum theory, which assumes that it is possible to predict with a fair degree of accuracy what the outcomes of instruction will be" (Eisner, 1967, p. 553). According to all the English teachers, the *English Developed Curriculum* allows students to express their feelings, ideas, opinions, and to think in the English language, which filled all students' psychological, mental, and practical needs. This is in line with what has been found in Dewey's theory of education. For example, Dewey (1897) reported that; "the only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's power by

the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself” (p. 1). As all those goals are emphasized in the new curriculum textbook, the students were asked if the content is corresponding with their abilities and almost 44% agreed with this statement, which gives a positive expression about the suitability of the textbook’s content in the new curriculum. As Al-Aubudi (2010) describes, The Ministry of Education focused on the development of the curriculum to meet the students’ needs, the requirement of national development plans, and the needs of the labor market project.

In addition, the qualitative data revealed the effectiveness that the *Developed Curriculum* brought to the educational process. All teachers agreed that students are more encouraged to participate in the learning process, since the curriculum contents includes them in the learning environment. The teachers expressed their satisfaction with the curriculum contents as being a helpful factor in the students’ engagements in the learning and teaching process. As stated by P2, “The new curriculum directed questions for them and provides a lot of chances for them to be involved.” This study found that classroom participation by students increased as different strategies were used such as group work, pair work, creative solutions to new situations, and role-playing were introduced, as was reported by P6 in her interview.

A group of researchers Al-Abed et al (2016) concluded in their study “The Effect of Role-Playing on Students’ Achievement and Motivation in the Governmental school of Bethlehon District in Palestine,” which focused on grade eight students, that “role play has a great effect on students achievement and motivation” (p. 17). As Beaman (1980) argued, “cooperative learning methods use a cooperative task structure in which students work in 2 to 6 heterogeneous member groups” (p. 10). Furthermore, Astin (2014) notes, “The theory of involvement emphasizes active participation of the students in the learning process” (p. 522). The learner centered approach has proved to be effective on the students’ achievement. The Lancaster study (2017), compared learning outcomes and found that the learner centered classroom environments promote a greater academic achievement and better independence and leadership skills than teacher-centered classroom environments.

The students’ participation in the learning process has a significant impact on the learning outcome, research has found: “that participation in school and class activities increased students’ performance and their achievement and that their performance has an influence on their feeling of identifying themselves with the

school” (Gunuc, 2014, p. 218). In addition, this is in agreement with what was already known about good learning strategies. For example, it has been found that “knowing is not the memory of facts or results, it is the ability to understand and participate in the process that makes the establishment of knowledge in a given field possible” (Herd, 1993, p. 15).

Some teachers pointed out an important element that a sophisticated curriculum should have, such as topics included in the new curriculum being related to the students’ real life. This has increased the students’ participation and impacted their achievement positively. The approach of using real life situations and creating real communication has proven to be effective on the students’ achievement as found in Saad Shawer (2010) and Le Luo (2013). In the quantitative data, the students were asked if they think the course was a valuable learning experience for them, and the result was significant with 72% agreement with the statement. This could be interpreted to mean that the students learned and achieved more, and had a great experience, as they were more involved in the educational process. That was also confirmed by P4 as she said, “I can tell that the students become more confident using English language... They speak a lot, present themselves, express their feelings, and participate a lot; she continued ...They keep on telling me “now we love the language.”

In addition, the teachers were asked about the impact of the new curriculum on the students’ achievement. All of them agreed that the impact was positive with P1 saying, “the variety of marks helped students to develop their skills, work harder, and practice more; the outcome is their skills improved and got good marks.” Interviewee P6 reiterated this point, saying, “With the developed one, the students are encouraged to learn more and more.” They continued to enumerate that it has a lot of activities, which motivate the students to learn and achieve more. Moreover, the teachers think that some of the teaching and learning strategies, such as group work, helped at improving the students’ achievement. This was clearly stated by P2 who was of the opinion that, “the group work helped students to achieve more marks as well as to learn more.”

Furthermore, the interviews revealed that the students, as groups or individually, had to make a project at the end of each semester regarding what they learned. The teachers explained that the students were given the option to do this in groups or individually, but most of the time they prefer to do it as groups. As

expressed by P3 “one of the projects was that they have to make a brochure for any university in the world that they are interested in, and then they present their work to the class.” This approach was in agreement with the facts that encourage students’ critical thinking abilities reported by Amanda Krogsta Jansson (2011) whose investigation was entitled, “For what purpose do language teachers use group work in their lessons.” She found, through interviewing English teachers from one school in a suburb of Stockholm, that “group work is a good way to help the students practice expressing their thoughts in English, understanding what others think, and views on the subject” (p. 18). The students should be exposed to all these strategies like discussion, group, and pair work, to improve their skills and achievement. Since all the new strategies and activities are introduced in the students’ textbook, the students were asked if the textbook helped them to understand better the course and more than half (56%) of the participants answered in the affirmative. Furthermore, the students were asked if the course challenged them to do the best work they can do, and more than half of the students agreed with this statement. This means that students learned and achieved more as the course challenged them to do their best. A study by Ganyaupfu (2013) concluded that:

In light of the fact that learning is a process that involves investigating, formulating, reasoning and using appropriate strategies to solve problems, teachers should realize that it becomes more effective if the students are asked to perform rather than just remember information (p. 33.)

Overall, the findings in this study showed a positive impact of the new curriculum on students’ achievement.

How Will Teachers Prepare for the New Curriculum?

The teachers were asked about the difficulties they are facing while teaching the *English Developed Curriculum*, as well as the training programs needed to deliver the new curriculum in the best way. At the same time, the students were asked about the teachers’ abilities and performance as they are affected by the teaching process. As shown in the teachers’ interviews, there is lack of time as the lessons are too long and sometimes they cannot cover everything in the allotted 35 minutes as P1 expressed. From her point of view, that “time is not enough; each lesson is supposed to be given one hour or 50 minutes for completion and evaluation”. Similarly, P4 explained how she is managing covering the whole lesson if she could not deliver it in one class, she is dividing the lesson into two sections so that they can fully explain it

to the students. Teaching strategies were equally acknowledged as another challenging element in the new curriculum that received the most responses from the teachers as the qualitative data reported. Similar issues were found in Alfuraih and Mitchell (2017) study. The study showed that English teachers in Saudi Arabia from both genders in elementary, intermediate, and secondary levels need structured professional development programs. These programs need to include several areas such as pedagogy, and time management with the application of *English Developed Curriculum*. In my study, some teachers found the teaching strategies were a challenging element because they were required to apply new strategies for each lesson. In her interview, P1 highlighted this issue with her assertion that “the strategies are useful for some lessons, but not all, such as reading, speaking, and vocabulary only.” Moreover, P4 was of the opinion that this generation of students has a greater awareness of new teaching techniques. She thinks that this generation is different, so to attract and engage the students to the teaching and learning process, the teacher must use different methods and strategies such as new technology like smart board and other techniques. According to her, “Teachers need to use different strategies and techniques because the students are aware of them, so they have to present for them something higher than before.” This claim is supported by research conducted by McNamara (2004), who concluded that “teachers’ beliefs, actions, and motivation influence the effort they put into improving their classroom circumstances - in this case, effectively integrating technology into their classroom activities - and bettering the lives of their students.” (p. 126).

About these challenges, four participants think that teachers need educational programs in teaching strategies to improve their methodology. Specifically, P1 emphasized the need for the English teachers to know how to attract students to the lesson and to use different strategies to clarify the difficult text, she stated that “the use of teaching strategies is helpful for that.” One of the strategies that proved to be effective according the interviewed teachers was group work. For example, P2 thinks teachers need to have some skills to guide their class through educational programs to help them better control the class while introducing this strategy and others. She also stated, “programs with useful strategies are needed which makes the teaching process easier and more fun for the students.” The group work for English learners as a learning strategy was invastigated in study of a group of researchers (Nair, et al, 2012) which was conducted on a semi-urban school on the East Coast state of Terenggnu,

Malaysia. The study found that the students think group work is enjoyable, interesting, and encouraging of interaction during classtime. According to Nair et al (2012), the students who were surveyed in this study found this strategy to be an effective means of learning English.

For the application of the teaching strategies and the needs of educational programs, P6 shared the same opinion with the previous participants. She stated that “we need a lot,” for the prapreation of teaching the new currciulum and teaching stratiges; then continued, “we need to know more about the application of the teaching strategies in the classroom as it helps the students to be more involved in the learning process”. Just as the teachers thought that teaching strategies are important, so also the students share the same opinion on the effectiveness of teaching methods as it increased their ability to understand the course’s material with about 60% agreement with the statement.

Some teachers mentioned that the teachers can take educational programs offered by the Ministry of Education. However, as the qualitative data showed, the training programs are not required, and the teacher’s supervisor recommends to each teacher the training program that they need. The teachers who took some of those educational courses were very satisfied with their effectiveness. They think it helps them in improving their teaching skills and strategies as well as their language. Not all teachers talked about this process, which gave the sense that it is not efficiently applied to all teachers. Teachers skills and methods of teaching could greatly impact on the students’ achievement. Joyce and Showers (2002) pointed out that students’ achievement through staff development, among other things, had a range of conceivable positive outcomes when people received training to become more efficient. According to these authors, the teachers who received this training became knowledgeable and aware of educational theories and practices. In their opinion, the teachers who received some professional development training exhibited positive perspectives towards their role; toward different groups of children and some aspects of the curriculum. These teachers were able to show that the training was instrumental to the development of skills in the areas of designing and delivering questions. These were found to impact the students’ achievement positively. A study by Griffith (2011), which examined the relationship between teacher training program and school achievement, reported that teacher training programs do indeed have some impact on student achievement, at least measured on the school-level (p. 28).

Furthermore, two participants reported that teachers need to interact with other teachers to exchange ideas and experiences. As P1 noted, “teachers need to interact with foreign English teachers from [the United States of] America (USA) or Europe to share and exchange their experiences in teaching English language. In addition, P6 appeared to share a similar point of view, noting the benefit of interacting with other teachers who have studied abroad as they have been exposed to the application of new techniques, and have learned from teachers in the Western countries such as USA, Canada, and Europe about the use of modern methods and strategies of teaching.

From the researcher’s perspective, some of the teachers need to take courses to improve their English skills, as there was a noticeable weakness in their language skills. Since the interviews were conducted in the English language, the researcher noticed that some participant lacks sufficient vocabulary, and found it hard to clarify their ideas using the English language. Moreover, it was noticed that they usually had some grammatical mistakes while speaking.

In spite of all those challenges, and preparation needed by the teachers, the students are satisfied with the teacher’s abilities and skills in the way that they are teaching the new curriculum. The students were asked if they think that the teachers can deliver the course’s content excellently. The result shows that approximately 73% agreed with the statement, while nearly 17% were undecided and 10% disagreed. Students were also asked if the teachers helped them to understand the course, with 75% agreed with that statement. Accordingly, from the students’ perspective; the teachers are doing very well.

In What Way Does the Credit System Affect Students’ Achievements?

The credit system was launched by the Ministry of Education for secondary school level. The credit system project is “a new secondary education structure consisting of a joint program taught for all students which branch into two specialized tracks; one for humanities and the other for natural sciences” (Ministry of Education, 2011). The goals of this system are to improve the learner’s experience in a holistic manner by appealing to their personality to achieve positive results in the cognitive, physical, psychological aspects. Under a number of foundations, this system was hoping to be achieved. The most noticeable foundations are the integration of courses, and the flexibility. The system provides a study plan that contains required courses and elective courses which are under the integration of the

courses' foundation. To enrich the student learning experience, the system has a maximum of seven courses. Each course is about five hours and there are options for some elective courses. The flexibility in this system is significant in that it allows the students to register the number of hours that the students wish to study for each semester. Furthermore, the students have the opportunity for addition and deletion from the offered courses. They also can take a summer semester if they want to complete an extra number of hours. (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 8). Regarding this improvement and flexibility in this new system for secondary level, the students in this study were asked if the flexibility in this system has increased their desire for learning and a considerable percentage agreed with the statement, with 63% answering affirmatively.

In relation to this question, four teachers were asked if this system has improved the students' achievement. Three of them confirmed that it is beneficial, as the students are offered fewer courses and achieve better; however, P2 thinks it depends on the student: if the student is a hard worker, this system will benefit them; if they are not, they might be negatively impacted.

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The research aimed to provide an answer to three questions regarding the *Developed Curriculum*. Overall, the *English Developed Curriculum* showed positive impact on the students' achievements, the learning and teaching process. The new curriculum covered all English skills, which lead to better achievements in English language acquisitions. In addition, the students found this course was valuable learning experience for them. However, this development of the curriculum needs more preparation for the English teachers. They need to take educational courses to develop their methodology of teaching, and to improve their teaching skills to best deliver this new curriculum. As the credit system is a new system for senior secondary schools, this system was investigated, and the result showed that flexibility in this system increased the students' desire of learning.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

The results from this study showed that the *English Developed Curriculum (Traveller)* has led to improvements in the process of teaching and learning English. The primary improvements to the curriculum are in the areas of content, student engagement and achievement, in addition of improving the teaching methods. Regarding the curriculum content, the teachers expressed optimism for improvement and effectiveness. Using the *Traveller* curriculum, students are more involved in the learning process, which positively influenced their performance. The teachers reported that the content is very interesting for the students and teachers as well as being related to the students' real lives. The curriculum has a variety of activities and teaching methods such as pair work, discussion questions, and group work that affects the educational process positively. The use of the new strategies introduced in the *English Developed Curriculum* helped to increase the level of achievement for the students. However, the repetition in the content, such as the grammar rules, and the intensity of the curriculum, impacted the teaching process making it more challenging. The students' experiences studying this new curriculum were reported as positive, with the majority reporting that it was a valuable learning experience for them. Furthermore, the fact that students worked harder, as the course challenged them to do their best, shows that the *English Developed Curriculum* has had a positive impact on students' achievement. Additionally, the credit system shows considerable success, with 63% of the students agreeing that it increased their desire for learning.

The notable improvement as a result of this new curriculum required significant preparation for the teachers, as the qualitative data suggested. The teachers expressed the need for training programs and the importance of taking courses that the Ministry of Education provided for the teachers. From their perspective, they believed that they needed to overcome the challenges that they faced when teaching the *English Developed Curriculum* such as using new teaching strategies, time management techniques, and technology.

For schools to be able to implement the *English Developed Curriculum* effectively, the Ministry of Education will need to better prepare the teachers. Current teachers could be educated about the *English Developed Curriculum* with extra workshops and professional development. In the teachers' educational programs, universities could be encouraged to consider providing teaching from the *Developed*

Curriculum as a means of encouraging its use in the classroom. As this research shows, the *Developed Curriculum* has been useful for educating female senior secondary students. This study gives the Ministry of Education excellent feedback about how the *English Developed Curriculum* has impacted the educational process in Saudi Arabia. It will encourage them to carry on the development of the educational field and it will help in avoiding issues like repetition and density of contents, which might reduce the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Recommendations

While this study reported its findings with respect to the *English Developed Curriculum* in Saudi Arabia, there are some issues that should be redesigned in the *Developed Curriculum*, as well as some preparations needed to meet the curriculum's goals and reach the highest level of efficiency that the Ministry of Education aimed for. The following recommendations are made with the aim of improving the intended outcomes with regards to the curriculum:

1. Consider reducing the intensity of the curriculum's content as it affects the teaching and learning process negatively;
2. Avoid repetition of the curriculum's content from level to level (like grammar rules), and focusing on practicing the grammar roles in real life situations, rather than just teaching the grammar as rules, as it appeared to be challenging for teachers and students;
3. Encourage teacher's educational programs and provide programs in the teachers' location (at their schools where they are teaching) to facilitate taking the educational courses for them;
4. Focus on the teaching strategies' in the teacher educational courses, as it scored the highest;
5. Invite guest teachers from other native English speakers' countries, and other Middle Eastern countries such as United Arab Emirates and Kuwait to interact with the English teachers in Saudi Arabia;

Limitations

This study was conducted on the *English Developed Curriculum* (the MMB Publisher version called, *Traveller*) being used by senior secondary students, and their teachers. The results of the study are limited to the four secondary schools chosen

from two regions ‘the Central and Western Regions’ in Saudi Arabia, which posed a geographical limitation. The school system in Saudi Arabia is highly gendered and separates males from female students and staff. Therefore, as a female researcher, for practical reasons, the study focused on just one gender (females). The students in this study were asked the survey questions in the Arabic language, as it is their native language, to facilitate their understanding of the survey statements. Consequently, questions were not translated directly or literally in order to aid in a better comprehension to the English reader. In addition, the interviews were conducted by phone, so that limited the time of the interview with each teacher. The approximate time for each of the interviews were about 20 minutes. There was further discussion about the study’s topic before and after the interviews were recorded, but the formal answers to the interview questions was limited to the time mentioned.

Future Research

Further research in connection with the appropriate teachers’ educational programs to achieve the *English Developed Curriculum* goals could be conducted. The information gathered from senior secondary students and their teachers corresponds with one examined subject – the English curriculum. The results and conclusions will help to avoid some of the issues found in this study connected with studying and teaching the *English Developed Curriculum* for the mentioned grade. The information will also help the Ministry of Education in creating teachers’ educational programs as well as assisting in the activation of the current programs for teachers in building deeper insight into the effectiveness of the *Developed Curriculum*. In addition, this study has focused on only one of the series of the *English Developed Curriculum* called *Traveller*, so it is hoped the study will encourage another researcher to investigate other series and find out about their effectiveness. Since this research found that the new teaching strategies are helpful for the learning and teaching process, further research in the effectiveness of specific strategies (like group work) could be investigated in order to understand its impact on the educational process and students’ achievement.

Futhermore, the educational system in Saudi Arabia has gender segregation from elementary to university level, and the traditional curriculum differs in content between males and females. The cover of the textbooks are usually designed to show whether it is for male or female students as well as some difference in contents. For

example, the English curriculum for male secondary students was different from that of the females. However, this is no longer the case with the *English Developed Currciulum* where both genders now are studying the same curriculum in similar courses. Further studies could be conducted to examine the difference between the impact of the *English Developed Currciulum* on male and female students and their teachers. As this study found postive impacts from the *Developed Curriculum* on the students' achivement and teaching process from the female perspective, future studies could highlight the experience of male schools in teaching and learning this new curriculum. Since this study found that the majority of the female students think the course was a valuable learning experience for them, and it challanged them to do the best work they could do, including having an impact on their achivement positively, male students might have different experiences and voices that need to be heard as the curriculum development aimed to upgrade the output level of the educational process in Saudi Arabia in order to match the global educational output level. There were also some challanging factors in the teaching process that the study showed from the teachers' point of view like shortening of time, teaching strategies, content density and the repetition of grammar rules. Male teachers might face different challenges that are worth exploring.

In addition, the lessons learned from this study can be applied in Gulf States such as Kuwait, Oman and the Kingdom of Bahrain who are going through similar developments in their educational systems. Saudi Arabia collaborated with international and national companies to develop this English lanaguage curriculum for schooling. Their experience with this collaboration, and the impact of the curriculum produced on the learning and teaching process, is providing beneficial knowledge from which to learn.

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THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

APPENDIX A

Interview

Thesis Project- Saudi Arabian Developed English Curriculum

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In an effort from Thompson Rivers University, this research investigates the comprehensive project for the Developed Curriculum in Saudi Arabia, testing the English curriculum for the third secondary in high school. How has that change affected students' learning and future university's majors? We hope the research helps in improving the effectiveness of the developed curriculum and are pleased you have consented to participate in this study. Your experiences are important to help us better understand students' learning and abilities. Please respond to this survey by answering each of these questions. It should be only about 30 minutes to complete it. Your responses and identity will be kept confidential. If you complete this interview, it will be assumed that your consent has been provided. You may choose to refuse to participate or may withdraw at any time without any consequences. Also, you can refuse to answer any question. Any inquiries concerning the procedures of this study may be directed to the principal directly via email or at the number above. Thank you for participating.

Name: (Please Print) _____

Participant's signature _____

Date _____

Investigator or Delegate's

signature _____ **Date** _____

I agree **to audio recording** the interview. The audio recording will be destroyed after 3 years by erasing all audio files.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

The Interview Questions.

1. What are the differences between the traditional and the developed English curriculum?
2. Regarding the content of the textbook, which one is more appropriate and efficient for the students' needs?
3. Does the change from the traditional textbook to the set of the developed textbook affect the teaching process positively?
4. What difficulties do you have teaching the developed English curriculum?
5. Did you face similar difficulties while teaching the traditional curriculum?
6. How does the development of the curriculum affect the student's performance in the classroom?
7. How does the development of the curriculum affect the student's achievement?
8. Does the flexibility in the credit system has increased the student's desire of learning?
9. What training programs do teachers need to be more capable of teaching the developed curriculum effectively?

APPENDIX B**Survey****Thesis Project- Saudi Arabian Developed English Curriculum****Edward R. Howe, PhD****Assistant Professor, Education and Social Work, Thompson Rivers University****ehowe@tru.ca****250-371-5526****Samirah Alghamdi****Master Student, Majoring Education Leadership, Thompson Rivers University****Ss.alghamdi1988@outlook.com 778- 886- 4810**

In an effort from Thompson Rivers University, this research investigates the comprehensive project for the developed curriculum in Saudi Arabia, testing the English curriculum for the third secondary in high school. How has that change affected students' learning. We hope the research helps in improving the effectiveness of the developed curriculum and are pleased you have consented to participate in this study. Your experiences are important to help us better understand students' learning and abilities. Please respond to this survey by answering each of these questions. It should be only about 20 minutes to complete it. Your responses and identity will be kept confidential. If you complete this survey, it will be assumed that your consent has been provided. You may choose to refuse to participate or may withdraw at any time without any consequences. Also, you can refuse to answer any question. Any inquiries concerning the procedures of this study may be directed to the principal directly via email or at the number above. Thank you for participating.

Name: (Please Print)

Participant's signature _____**Date** _____**Investigator or Delegate's signature** _____**Date** _____**Part A: Demographics**

1. What high school(s) did you attend? _____
2. What is your age? _____
3. Are you currently a student? a) Yes b) No

4. What is your gender? a) Male b) Female

Part B: Please choose the response that best describes your view.

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I can fully understand the subject explained throughout the lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The textbook helped me to better understand the course.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I find the textbook's content very interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The textbook's content greatly developed my skills.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I can understand the contents of the textbook on my own without the need for a detailed explanation from the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The textbook's content corresponds with my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I find that dividing the curriculum into six courses is very effective step.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The textbook helped me to complete the mid-term exam and carry on my education.	1	2	3	4	5
9. This course was a valuable learning experience for me.	1	2	3	4	5
10. This course challenged me to do the best work.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I think that the teacher can deliver the course's content excellently.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The teacher helped me to understand the course.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The teaching methods increased my ability to understand the course's material.	1	2	3	4	5

14. The flexibility in
courses selection has
increased my desire for
learning.

1

2

3

4

5



APPENDIX C

مشروع بحث- منهج اللغة الإنجليزية المطور في المملكة العربية السعودية

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بناء على محاولة من جامعة تومسون ريفرز، هذا البحث يتحرر المشروع الشامل لتطوير المناهج الذي تم تطبيق في السنوات القليلة الماضية في المملكة العربية السعودية. هذه الدراسة الاستقصائية سوف تختبر منهج اللغة الإنجليزية المطورة للصف الثالث ثانوي. من خلالها سوف تتم دراسة اثر هذا التغيير على الطلاب. كلنا امل ان هذا البحث سوف يساعد في تحسين فعالية المناهج الدراسية. كما انه يسرنا جدا موافقات على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة. خبراتكم وتجربتكم مهمة لمساعدتنا في فهم تعلم الطلاب وقدراتهم بشكل افضل. يرجى الرد على هذه الدراسة من خلال الإجابة على كل هذه الأسئلة. سوف تستغرق الإجابة على هذه الأسئلة ما يقارب العشرين دقيقة. مع العلم ان الهوية والرد سيتم الاحتفاظ بها في سرية تامة. اذا أكملت هذه الدراسة، سيتم افتراض انك قدمت موافقات للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة. اذا اخترت رفض المشاركة يمكنك ذلك كما انه يمكنك الانسحاب في أي وقت. يمكن توجيه أي استفسار بشأن اجراءات الدراسة الى الباحث مباشرة عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني أو على الرقم أعلاه. شكرا لك على المشاركة.

الاسم:

توقيع المشارك

التاريخ

توقيع الباحث او المندوب

التاريخ

الجزء الاول: التركيبة السكانية.

(1) ما هو اسم مدرستك الثانوية؟

(2) ما هو عمرك؟

(3) هل أنت حاليا طالب؟ (أ) نعم (ب) لا

(4) هل انت ؟ (أ) ذكر. (ب) انثى

الجزء الثاني: الرجاء اختيار الاستجابة التي تصف وجهة نظرك.

السؤال	أوافق بشدة	أوافق	متردد	لاأوافق	لاأوافق بشدة
أستطيع أن أفهم الموضوع الشروح خلال الحصة الدراسية بشكل كامل	1	2	3	4	5
ساعدني الكتاب الدراسي في استيعاب المادة الدراسية بشكل افضل	1	2	3	4	5
أجد أن محتوى الكتاب المدرسي ممتع و مثير جدا للاهتمام	1	2	3	4	5
محتوى الكتاب المدرسي طور مهاراتي الى	1	2	3	4	5

حد كبير

1	2	3	4	5	استطيع فهم محتوى الكتاب المدرسي دون الحاجة إلى شرح مفصل من المعلم
1	2	3	4	5	محتوى الكتاب المدرسي يتوافق مع قدرات الطالب
1	2	3	4	5	أجد ان تقسيم المنهج المدرسي إلى ست مقررات للمادة الواحدة خطوة فعالة جدا
1	2	3	4	5	المادة الدراسية ساعدتني في تخطي الاختبار الفصلي وإكمال تعليمي
1	2	3	4	5	دراسة هذه المادة تعتبر تجربة قيمة بالنسبة لي
1	2	3	4	5	هذه المادة تحدثني كي اقدم افضل ما بوسعي
1	2	3	4	5	اعتقدان المعلم يمكنه تقديم محتوى المادة بشكل ممتاز
1	2	3	4	5	ساعدني المعلم في فهم المادة الدراسية
1	2	3	4	5	طرق التدريس زادت قدرتي على فهم محتوى المادة
1	2	3	4	5	المرونة في نظام المقررات زادت في رغبتني في التعلم