BILINGUAL TEACHING IN VIETNAM UNIVERSITIES: CURRENT SITUATION, DIFFICULTIES, AND PROPOSE SOLUTIONS
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ABSTRACT
In order to ensure a solid career in the integration trend, besides specialized knowledge and working skills, foreign language is an indispensable factor for young people to seize opportunities and reach success. This also explains that international universities with bilingual training programs and direct international teaching staff are always the top priority choice. However, in Vietnam today, bilingual training in universities is very little. This study focuses on analyzing the current status of bilingual training, difficulties encountered, and proposing solutions to develop bilingual training programs in Vietnam in the future.

Keywords: Bilingual teaching, universities, current situation, difficulties, propose solutions, Vietnam

INTRODUCTION
It is very common that newly graduated students cannot meet the English language requirements of employers or at work. This fact shows that English training methods and programs in universities, especially public schools, have not met the desired quality of employers. In the context of globalization, English becomes a prerequisite school choice criterion for young people, besides factors such as quality, faculty, facilities, etc., and of course, sending the future at an international school training a prestigious bilingual program has been chosen by many parents and candidates.

According to the recent statistics of a job website conducted (2019) with recent graduates, only 5% of respondents show confidence in their English proficiency while 27% claim to be incomplete in this skill. This is an important reason that makes Vietnamese workers lose their competitive advantage in the international labor market. Teaching English as well as developing formal training programs in English is an indispensable trend in the current international integration process. However, preparing English for students is facing challenges from the beginning, especially with schools taught entirely in English.

According to Associate Professor Do Thi Hai Ha (National Economics University) (2019), many universities, in the course of training, have to supplement funding for the organization of classes to improve English proficiency for first-year students. However, for training institutions, the difficulty is not only in the enrollment stage - due to the limited English language of the candidates, but also the lack of staff involved in teaching English programs, especially in specialized subjects with high specificity.

In addition, the implementation of training programs in English still faces another problem, which is the materials: Using original textbooks at high prices will increase the cost of learning while using printed books will copyright infringement. With schools that do not specialize in foreign languages, English training tends to focus too much on specialized English, not taking care of training English skills comprehensively. Therefore, students can grasp knowledge in English but are very poor in
listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in this language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1954 – 1975 was the period when Vietnam was divided into two parts – North and South. In this period, each part of the country was politically allied with a world superpower: North Vietnam was allied with the former Soviet Union and South Vietnam, with the USA. The status of English, thus, was different in each part of the country. In South Vietnam, English was the dominant foreign language; it was studied for direct interactions with the USA. In North Vietnam, in contrast, although four foreign languages (Russian, Chinese, French, and English) were recognized nationally, Russian topped the list in the formal educational system; and like English in the South, Russian in the North was studied for direct interactions with the former Soviet Union. As Russian dominated the foreign language scene in North Vietnam, English was relegated to an inferior status. In upper secondary schools, it was taught only in some classes in towns and in big cities as a pilot subject (Quang, 1993). At the tertiary level, there were two foreign language institutions that offered English as a discipline, namely, The Hanoi Foreign Languages Teachers’ Training College (currently The University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University Hanoi) and The College of Foreign Languages (currently The University of Hanoi). Apart from those institutions, some universities offered English as a subject. However, due to the limited use of English in North Vietnam in this period, the goals of learning the language seemed to be confined only to understanding the USA and to fighting against the US invasion on the diplomatic front (Van, 2008).

This boom in English started in December 1986, when at the 6th National Congress, the Communist Party of Vietnam initiated an overall economic reform called "Doi Moi" (innovation), opening the doors of Vietnam to the world. With the open-door policy, English becomes the first (and almost only) foreign language taught in Vietnam. This is one of six national exams that students must pass if they want to obtain the Secondary School Education Certificate and is a compulsory subject for both undergraduate and graduate students at the same level University (Ministry of Education and Training, 1992).

In Vietnam’s new market economy with the strong development of international businesses and industries, the increasing number of foreign tourists, the ability to communicate in English has become your passport. Get a better job not only in the hospitality and tourism industries but in many other areas too (Halliday, 2006; Phuong, 2017). English is taught in schools, universities, and evening language centers across the country. Now there are more English teachers and students than any other subject. In addition, the “Innovation” has put increasing pressure on more and more English language schools in each phase of the expanding educational system (Van, 2008). At the same time, the fast globalization - the most powerful external factor for English language teaching and learning in Vietnam - has made it difficult to maintain existing and recognized standards low in teaching and using. Increasingly, decision-making bodies realize that without major changes and significant input in curricula and courses, methodologies, and materials, the teaching of English in Vietnam will soon no longer meet the requirements set out. This has led to the current situation of English language teaching in Vietnam, which I will mention in the next sections.

The period of 1975 – 1986 was characterized by the dominance of Russian and the decline of English and French, particularly of Chinese in foreign language education in Vietnam. In this period, Chinese was cast away from the formal educational system, and the targets set for Russian, English, and French were rough as follows: 70% of the school pupils would study Russian; 20%, English and 10%, French (Van, 2008; Phuong, 2017). At the tertiary level, Russian continued to predominate in the North.

This can be seen in the fact that the number of students majoring in Russian in this period always far
exceeded the combined enrolments of all other foreign languages. In the South, Russian study started to grow very fast: Russian departments with the whole academic staffs coming from the North were established in many universities and the number of students enrolling in Russian both as a discipline and as a subject started to increase.

The spread of Russian was further strengthened by Russian aids in education: hundreds of Vietnamese teachers and students were sent annually to the former Soviet Union for both undergraduate and graduate studies. When Russian dominated the scene, English suffered a setback; it was taught in a limited number of classes in upper secondary schools, particularly in towns and big cities. At the tertiary level, the number of students enrolling in English both as a discipline and as a subject also decreased. It was noted, however, that in this period a small number of Vietnamese teachers and interpreters of English were chosen and sent to Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and India for graduate studies in English language teaching. The training programs of Britain, Australia, and New Zealand were terminated in 1979 when Vietnam involved in Cambodia. In 1985, Australia resumed its English training for Vietnam under a UNDP Programmed until 1992 and from 1992 it was done under a bilateral aid program between Australia and Vietnam, first known as AIDAB (Australian International Development Assistance Bureau) and then as AusAID (Australian Agency for International Development), 40 Vietnamese teachers and interpreters of English were sent to Australia annually to undertake graduate studies in English language teaching (Thinh, 2006; Phuong, 2017). This program was terminated in the early 2000s. The content of English teaching in Vietnam in this period followed both the “adopt” and the “adapt” approach to material development. The prevailing method of teaching English was the structural method with a focus on grammar, reading, and translation skills. Students were first introduced to a sentence pattern; then they were taught to use substitution and transformation techniques to drill in this sentence pattern; then they were asked to make up new sentences based on this sentence pattern; and finally, as a form of consolidation, they were asked to translate their made-up sentences into Vietnamese and vice versa. Some attention was paid to the teaching of oral skills, particularly to improving language accuracy, but because the new sentences were created without context, the fluency aspect of language teaching was sacrificed.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Current status of bilingual teaching (the language of instruction is English)

The survey results of 294 students by the author Ngo Thi Ngoc Hanh, Ho Chi Minh City University of Food Industry (2019), showed many alarming problems. First, the entrance exam for students of the Foreign Language Faculty of both universities and colleges (colleges) has 2 types: review results from the national high school graduation exam scores and review transcripts (average score 3 high school year). Most of the children from the provinces stretching from the North to the South said that learning English is mainly for the graduation exam. Considering the 3-year high school average, the department recruits many students with weak English language skills, because high scores in other minor subjects will have a high GPA but low in English; the entry-level is not equal due to many factors (such as students in small provinces, or because the last chance forces them to choose a major but not the right forte), thereby causing many difficulties for both learning and teaching at the Faculty of Foreign Languages.

Second, with the question “Have you trained in Speaking skills before entering university?”. The survey results showed that only 4.26% had practiced Speaking skill, 78.72% practiced very little and 17.02% has never been. The weak Speaking skill also leads to passivity and low self-esteem during class time. Therefore, teaching skills in class is very difficult for teachers due to the difference in
learning qualifications and attitudes, affecting the learning results and skill development capacity of the subject. This situation is due to the goal of learning English at high school only to serve the national high school graduation exam in the form of a test.

Ms. Lu Thi Hai Yen (2019), in Daklak College of Education, said: Over the past years, a number of lecturers have actively used electronic lesson plans. However, the number of classes per session is very large, while the number of classrooms with audio-visual devices (televisions, projectors) is lacking, so the application of information technology in teaching meets certain difficulties and is not maintained regularly.

In addition, the design of e-lessons is still poor, stereotyped, and less creative, has not focused on using effective teaching software, has not brought into full play the capacity and efficiency of teaching facilities. Not updated information in the country and the world that changes every hour, every day. Moreover, the deployment of using electronic lesson plans has only focused on a part of teachers.

Many experts (2019) frankly admit: Currently, teaching and learning foreign languages is still mainly traditional, that is, focusing on reading and writing skills and the main purpose is to serve exams, not yet really apply to work practice. Although there is a project on teaching and learning foreign languages in the national education system for the period 2008-2020 with the aim of comprehensively renovating foreign language teaching and learning in schools, but so far the results of the project not high, not reaching the set goals.

The main reason is that the number of foreign language teachers is not up to the standard. In some remote and remote areas, there is a serious shortage of foreign language teachers. The teaching of foreign languages has not met the requirements of professional communication. Vietnamese is still commonly used in the process of teaching foreign languages to students.

The application of advanced teaching models such as the reverse classroom model is still limited, has not been widely deployed, and received little attention, leading to the failure of English language teaching to stimulate the proactivity of learners. The design of the teaching content and the implementation of the training program of the schools also rarely references experts, employers, and the needs of the employees, so the learning content is not useful for learners. English practice environment in schools is currently taking place in the classroom framework, together with time constraints, leading to low learning efficiency.

**Challenges posed**

Currently, the "entry-level" English foundation of students is quite low, and uneven is a major obstacle when entering university lecture halls. According to data from the Ministry of Education and Training, the English national high school graduation exam scores in 2018 have more than 78% of students achieving below-average scores. In addition, students' ability to self-study foreign languages is quite low, lacks the initiative in learning, and most are still used to learning at high school. Lack of confidence and reluctance to communicate in learning English is also one of the main reasons leading to ineffective learning. Students do not have a suitable environment to practice, practice, and develop English skills continuously and effectively, etc. Therefore, to reach the standard "output" level on schedule for college students is very difficult.

Besides the above advantages, there are still many challenges posed to the innovation of teaching methods at universities today. Specifically, the brand name and position of universities, due to a large number of students, have a lot to do with the quality and effectiveness of teaching activities. In addition, the teaching equipment is ineffective, has not yet invested in meeting the needs of teaching and learning. The quality of equipment in the translation labs and classrooms is not good, due to the fact that the product life of this equipment is often very short now, so it quickly fails. That is not to
mention the inappropriate facilities. The classroom facilities of many schools are not guaranteed, so they often have passive classrooms, when students have to study in too large rooms with many tables and chairs, etc., not suitable for skills lessons that need practice high school. In some schools, no Internet or Wi-Fi connection is designed or designed for learning purposes. Some lecture halls may exist, but the transmission line is too slow to be used.

In the teaching method, many universities are taking an inappropriate approach. For example, Vietnamese students are often encouraged to understand lessons through the use of grammar rules and by looking up dictionaries and machines, making their speaking and writing skills more difficult. In addition, learners are still forced to learn new words mechanically, understand the meanings of 1 or 2 monotonous examples, separate from specific situations, not related to actual actions. Many exams mostly lack context. This makes it difficult for learners to understand and memorize lessons. According to foreign language experts, it is the outdated teaching method that has caused consequences, for example, Teaching in Vietnam is making learners too shy to ask what they do not understand, even when they are genuinely curious to know, they dare not ask again.

In addition to the causes from the school and learners, one of the other important influencing factors is the teacher root. There are teachers who, although experienced, are afraid to change, even young teachers tend to be afraid to change, to learn, and apply modern teaching methods in-class sessions. The reason that the income at the higher education institutions is too low makes the teachers no longer motivated and interested to change the content of the lecture or because they meet the needs of life, the teachers have to increase their tutoring external facilities and teaching quality lax.

SOME ISSUES NEED TO BE DISCUSSED
In the context of the drastic policy of autonomy in the education sector, renewing the teaching method of foreign languages at universities in Vietnam is an inevitable requirement. The article analyzes the opportunities and challenges in renewing the method of teaching foreign languages in universities in Vietnam, thereby giving some suggestions and recommendations for renewing the method of teaching foreign languages to be more efficient.

Currently, in order to meet the trend of integration and development of the country with the goal of building a team of high-quality human resources, most Vietnamese universities have introduced foreign languages, especially English into the curriculum. In the context of the drastic policy of autonomy in the education sector, renewing the teaching method of foreign languages at universities in Vietnam is an inevitable requirement. However, as analyzed above, the difficulties posed require finding many solutions, this study proposes solutions for researchers to continue to discuss, specifically:

Opportunities to innovate foreign language teaching methods
Firstly, the opportunities to access and exchange are increasingly open: It can be said that, with the trend of opening up international economic integration of the country, foreign language teaching has more favorable conditions due to opportunities exchange more and more easily and continuously. The teaching and training of basic skills are no longer confined to pedagogical models or in dry textbooks but expanded through practical experience and vivid reality from changes and changes of the domestic and international socio-economic situation. The mechanism of autonomy in finance, people, etc., also helps to renovate training activities in general and the innovation of foreign language teaching methods in particular in universities, especially foreign language universities increasingly favorable.

Secondly, it is increasingly easy to approach modern and advanced teaching methods in the world: In the current globalization and expansion of cooperation, universities actively expand cooperation with domestic and international partners, thereby opening opportunities and conditions to exchange,
exchange experiences, and access effective teaching methods from outside. The fact also shows that not only domestic universities are making efforts to cooperate with foreign partners, but now foreign partners are also looking for ways to expand and cooperate with Vietnamese universities to open broad position, influence, and scale of training.

Thirdly, science and technology are increasingly developing, actively supporting teaching methods: With the growing information technology trend, especially the trend of digital technology and the Industrial Revolution 4.0 with great achievements, affecting all aspects of socio-economic life, training activities in general and foreign language teaching in particular in universities will have to change. This is an inevitable trend and is beneficial for universities and if they take advantage of this advantage.

Fourthly, universities are increasingly interested in investing in facilities to better serve the teaching: Currently, in the general competitive trend, universities are trying to invest in resources force to build and complete facilities to best serve teaching and learning, promote the quality of training, affirm the brand, thereby attracting students in an autonomous and competitive context more drastic today.

**Some recommendations and suggestions**

Renovating teaching is a regular task of teachers to help students increase interest in learning, increase autonomy - autonomy in learning and research. However, in order for the innovation to be more effective, there must be asynchronous change, from renewing the teaching of teachers, renewing the management of functional departments, to renovating facilities quality and not except for the renewal thinking, learning sense of the students themselves.

For universities:
First, continue to invest financial resources to build infrastructure, teaching and learning conditions, and teaching support for lecturers. In particular, the classrooms need to have the internet to serve the exchange, discussion, or practice skills with high quality and efficiency, easily assisting teachers in finding examples practical on the internet.

Second, to renew the curriculum towards practical content. Currently, although the curriculum of universities has been interested in renovating and updated, but still heavily theoretical, academic, or the content is too heavy, too specialized in the field. Meanwhile, when graduating students do not seem to apply this knowledge to work practice. Therefore, the duration and frequency of knowledge in the curriculum need to be studied and adjusted to be more suitable with changes in the socio-economic context.

Thirdly, organize exchanges and exchange of experiences about modern teaching methods with domestic and foreign universities. In particular, in the context of financial autonomy of a number of universities today, it is necessary to pay attention to the mode of dialogue, exchange, and exchange of experience in online teaching to both save costs and bring efficiency high.

For teachers:
The first is to build learning motivation for students. Accordingly, at the beginning of class, teachers must have a strategy to introduce the importance of learning English. We not only give a general idea, but we analyze very specifically about the benefits of students learning English. If teachers can analyze deeply and give practical examples, then students will be ready to learn English passionately, because they really know that English is needed for intellectuals. A few examples: Want to integrate and exploit the advanced knowledge source in the world, if you have good expertise and good English, you will be a good candidate for admission to the job position. In addition, learning English helps students develop many skills: better communication skills, faster thinking, quicker responses, judgment skills, generalization, etc., and especially English students have the opportunity to integrate with the world of working methods ... in order to convince students to be interested in the subject, teachers must have easy-to-understand and competent communication skills high reliability.
Secondly, building foreign language learning methods for students. In building foreign language learning methods for students, teachers need to teach learners, the first thing should teach learners how to learn, how to access resources on the internet, on social networks. In which, focusing on building for themselves ways of self-learning through social networks because the current rate of using smart devices and the internet of Vietnamese youth is high.

In addition, although each student has his own learning method, teachers should suggest vocabulary learning methods, grammar, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills; train students skills to guess words in context; Develop ways to practice more in pairs, in groups. The teacher asks students to exchange their thoughts on a question or topic in pairs or small groups, and then ask the group representative to share their thoughts with the larger group. After listening to different answers/thoughts, students vote for the best answer. In addition, teachers can also organize new activities and games, help students be active in learning, and become the center of the classroom. From there, the teacher will be the one to observe, coordinate, and manage the activities, and the classroom atmosphere will always be lively, excited, and comfortable.

Thirdly, renewing the lecture content associated with liver problems. For example, in training sessions for 4 basic skills, teachers can choose a topic about the impact of the US-China trade war on the global financial-monetary market. With this topic, lecturers can get a lot of articles, analysis videos of experts in international newspapers. By using these materials, both create excitement about the content because this is a hot issue while helping students to acquire skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, acquiring knowledge of economics and finance, and especially Access to a lot of newly updated derivative words that are not in the dictionary.

Fourthly, to focus on using information technology, social networks, achievements of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 in teaching. The use of modern technologies and technical support methods by direct interaction will not only help students learn quickly but also teachers will not put much pressure on the lesson plan. For example, when discussing an issue of labor and employment in the world, through live streaming with an expert, any citizen (can be online friends of teachers or students) to direct discussion on that issue, both more vivid and realistic.

CONCLUSION
To overcome current constraints, universities must make the best use of the fourth industrial revolution. Innovate by applying the potential of developments in information technology, digital, print-assist, automation and networking in foreign language teaching, and Learning is one of the top priorities. Applying technology in foreign language teaching must mention the trend of combined teaching - integration. This is a method that combines traditional learning in classrooms and online lessons to help students increase their chances of exposure to foreign languages and the environment to make the best use of their self-study time.

According to many experts, there are many solutions to innovate foreign language teaching and learning methods in the current trend, but generally focus on three methods. First of all, for the role of the school, it is necessary to approach, absorb and motivate lecturers to apply the achievements of the fourth industrial revolution to their teaching. The school should have policies and solutions to encourage teachers, teachers, students and students to change teaching and learning methods, apply modern media and technology in lectures and learning styles to achieve the highest efficiency.

For teachers, the biggest change is the role of the teacher. Infusing knowledge in the traditional way is transformed into a role of instructor, support, and inspiration for learners. Students and students need to change their perception of the importance of foreign languages in the current globalization context. Use effectively information technology means in learning. Access reputable open sources to learn, practice more skills for innovation, independent thinking, etc.
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