

ASEAN Integration and the Role of English Language Teaching



Special Edition

Edited by Richmond Stroupe & Kelly Kimura

ASEAN Integration and the Role of English Language Teaching

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Richmond Stroupe & Kelly Kimura

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Contributors

Diana Dudzik (dianadudzik@aol.com) has served as a consultant to Vietnam's National Foreign Language 2020 Project (NFL2020 Project) since 2009. Diana was a key author of Vietnam's English Teacher Competencies Framework (Ministry of Education and Training, 2012). Her primary involvements with the national project have been to assist in the development of regional foreign language centers; disseminate the use of the English Teacher Competencies Framework; and stimulate national English teacher development, assessment capacity, and action research capacity. Diana received her PhD from the University of Minnesota and has written curriculum, worked as a teacher educator, and taught ESL at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels in the U.S.. She has also lived in Vietnam for more than seven years, teaching English to Ministry of Education staff, facilitating teacher development, evaluating teacher education curriculum, developing courses, building staff and research capacity, and serving as a Senior Fellow at the NFL2020 Project.

Susan Gwee (gwee@mac.com) is a researcher at the English Language Institute of Singapore, with a PhD in Education from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. She was previously researcher at the Centre for Research for Pedagogy and Practice and the Learning Sciences Laboratory, National Institute of Education, Singapore. She has taught English, French, and research skills to secondary school and junior college students in Singapore. Her research interests include disciplinary literacy, classroom observation, classroom assessment, and the use of technology for learning. Her work has appeared in *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning*, *International Journal of Gaming and Computer Mediated Simulations*, and *Proceedings of the 10th IEEE International Conference on Advanced Learning Technologies*, among other publications.

Stephen J. Hall (stephenh@sunway.edu.my) is Director, Centre for English Language Studies, Sunway University, Malaysia. He was an INSETT nationwide Project Manager in Malaysia working with the Ministry of Education and Centre for British Teachers (CfBT). Previously, he was a corporate trainer; clients included Changi Airport, SIA counter staff, VISA Asia Pacific, and HBO Asia. He managed Language and Communication, Temasek Polytechnic, Singapore. He has trained teachers regionally for RELC, has consulted for English for Banking in an Indonesia-wide project, and was involved in the early 90s ASEAN New Zealand government English for Business and Technology project. He has authored several books, including two English for Tourism books; his edited collection of interactive lesson plans was distributed to every Malaysian primary school and teachers' training institution. His doctorate was on teacher education analyses early phases interaction during rural Malaysian in-service courses. His recent academic writing focuses on reflective practice and teacher education.

Nur Hayati (nur.hayati.fs@um.ac.id) is a faculty member of the English Department of State University of Malang, Indonesia. She did her Master's at Monash University, Australia, majoring in TESOL International. She has been active in pre-service and in-service teacher training programs in Indonesia. Her subject interests include teacher education programs, critical pedagogy, the teaching of reading and listening, and computer-assisted language learning.

Caroline Ho (caroline_ho@moe.gov.sg) is English Language Specialist, English Language Institute of Singapore (ELIS), with a PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Birmingham (UK). She is leading a team at ELIS on school-based research in disciplinary literacy. She was involved in primary, secondary and pre-university teacher education and research with the National Institute of Education, served as Specialist Inspector, English Language with the Ministry of Education, and taught for several years at a junior college. Her research interests include disciplinary literacy, design research in new media, writing, and argumentation pedagogy. Her work has appeared in *Computers and Education*, *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, and *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, among other publications.

Kelly Kimura (kelly@soka.ac.jp) is the Editor-in-Chief of *Language Education in Asia*, an internationally peer-reviewed online publication supported by IDP Education (Cambodia). She is a lecturer at Soka University in two programs in the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development supported by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. She has been teaching English in Japan since 1990, with twenty years at the tertiary level. Her professional interests include materials development, academic journal editing and management, and supporting under-represented local authors.

Lan Nguyen Thi Phuong (phuonglansp2@gmail.com) is a TESOL Master teacher of English at Hanoi Pedagogical University No. 2 in Vietnam. She participated in the E-Teacher Scholarship Program introduced by U.S. Embassy for worldwide English teachers, and was trained by professors from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) and the University of Oregon. Finishing the course, her developing methodology project was published in the Spring 2010 Projects Gallery of the E-Teacher Scholarship Program (<http://umbc.uoregon.edu/eteacher/>). She received an award to attend an E-Teacher Professional Workshop in UMBC in 2011; there she developed Workshops for Universities' EFL Teachers in Vietnam: Improving Student Participation in Speaking Sessions. These workshops were conducted at the 8th CamTESOL Conference in Cambodia (2012) and the 33rd Thailand TESOL International Conference in Thailand (2013). She has just been published in the *33rd Thailand TESOL International Conference Proceedings 2013*. Her professional interests are teaching methodologies, testing, and curriculum design.

Quynh Thi Ngoc Nguyen (ngquynh@gmail.com) is the Director of Center for Language Assessment and Teacher Development, and the Vice-Dean of the Faculty of English Language Teacher Education at the University of Languages and International Studies (ULIS), Vietnam National University Hanoi. She is a key person to manage the Regional Foreign Language Center at ULIS and to coordinate the missions assigned by the National Foreign Language Project 2020 to the university. She did her PhD in Applied Linguistics at the University of Melbourne, Australia. She is a senior lecturer of English language, linguistics, and applied linguistics at ULIS and has worked as a curriculum designer, program developer and evaluator, teacher trainer, language test developer and editor, and consultant at various educational projects. Her research interests include the acquisition of English and Vietnamese as a second language, bilingual education, cognitive linguistics, language testing, and discourse analysis.

Noor Azam Haji-Othman (azam.othman@ubd.edu.bn) is Director of the Centre for Advanced Studies, UBD, and an Associate Professor in Linguistics, specialising in sociolinguistics, language and education policies, and indigenous languages of Brunei. He also teaches on the Communication and Media studies programme at UBD. Noor Azam has been actively involved in ASEAN University Network (AUN) and ASEAN inter-governmental activities in his previous capacity as Director of the Language Centre and Dean of Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, UBD. Noor Azam is also Language Consultant in the ASEAN Language Machine Translation Project coordinated by the National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre (NECTECH), Bangkok.

Thuy Phung Nhu (phungnhuthuy@yahoo.com) is an official of the Department of Teachers and Educational Professional Managers at the Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam. He has joined in building programs of English professional training for primary school teachers. In particular, he has taken part in the National Foreign Language Project 2020 which is the biggest project to develop English teaching and learning in Vietnam to have the best preparation for the ASEAN 2015 integration. He has been doing research on innovative teaching methods and also has been organizing training courses for trainers and teachers to evaluate and enhance management capacity for the management staff at all levels of education.

Salbrina Sharbawi (salbrina.sharbawi@ubd.edu.bn) (BA, Linguistics, University College London; MA, Applied Linguistics, University of York; PhD, Applied Linguistics, Nanyang Technological University) is a senior lecturer in English Language and Linguistics in Universiti Brunei Darussalam, where she has taught modules in linguistics since 2001. Her intellectual interests lie in the realm of sociophonetics, an area of overlap between sociolinguistics and phonetics, and World Englishes. Her recent book, which she co-wrote with a colleague, explores the features of the variety of English spoken in Brunei. As the Project Executive for the Brunei-U.S. English Language Enrichment Project for ASEAN, Salbrina's involvement with English teaching for ASEAN began in June 2011 when she was appointed the team leader for the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Project for CLMV.

Mony Som (mony_som@yahoo.com) has been involved in ELT for many years, as a materials designer, teacher, inspector, and curriculum developer. He now works as a teacher trainer at the National Institute of Education, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. He earned his MEd in TESL from Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia. He has been extensively involved in upgrading the teaching competencies of young Cambodian teachers of English. He is particularly interested in classroom discourses and curriculum design.

Richmond Stroupe (richmond@soka.ac.jp) has worked with university and professional language learners since 1989 and is currently Program Chair for the Masters in International Language Education: TESOL at Soka University in Tokyo, Japan. He is Vice President of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT), and former Chair of the TESOL International Standing Committee on Standards. He is regularly involved in curriculum and professional development projects throughout Asia, and presents, conducts workshops and publishes on a variety of research interests, including integrated learning and critical thinking skills, syllabus and curriculum design, and development of standards and quality assurance.

Andrew Tweed (adtweed@gmail.com) is the United States Senior English Language Fellow at the National Institute of Education, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where he trains teachers and trainers, and assists with curriculum development. Prior to working in Cambodia, he served as Teacher Training Manager at International House, Vietnam. Andrew has also taught English at the University of Washington, in Seattle, and for various companies and schools in Japan. He has presented at regional and international conferences and universities in the United States, Japan, China, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and Cambodia. His interests include teacher education, curriculum development, and ELT in Asia.

Utami Widiati (utami.widiati.fs@um.ac.id) is a faculty member of the English Department of State University of Malang, Indonesia. She earned her Master degree from the Institute of Education, University of London, UK, majoring in Language in Primary Education, and her Doctorate degree from Monash University, Australia. She has been involved in various pre-service as well as in-service teacher training programs in Indonesia. Her subject interests among others are curriculum development, second language acquisition, material development, and teaching English as a foreign language.

Acknowledgments

As the 21st Century progresses, the Asian region continues to be described as diverse, growth-oriented, and dynamic. An important player in this process is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Formed in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, and later joined during subsequent years by Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Burma, and Cambodia, the Association, under the creed of “One Vision, One Identity, One Community,” has emphasised and maintained political stability, regional collaboration, and sustainable economic growth.

There are many government institutions, nongovernmental agencies, and donor organisations that have contributed to the development in the region over the years. Most notably in reference to this text, *ASEAN Integration and the Role of English Language Teaching*, is IDP Education, an international organisation which has been supporting quality English language learning programs, English language learners, and local scholars in the Southeast Asian region for many decades. It is with great appreciation that the editors of this book acknowledge this organisation’s contributions to the region, and in particular to the successful completion of this book.

Recognising the importance and need to further develop the English language teaching profession and learning environment in the ASEAN region, with particular reference to Cambodia, IDP Education (Cambodia) supported the first CamTESOL Conference in 2005. Initiated and underwritten by IDP Education, the annual CamTESOL conference series is now in its 11th year. Since its inception, it has grown year on year and has become an internationally respected conference with more than 1,600 delegates coming from 30 countries each year, while maintaining its goal of providing a forum for discussion for underrepresented authors in the ASEAN region. A significant contribution to this effort was establishing the internationally peer-reviewed online journal *Language Education in Asia (LEiA)* in 2010. The online publication and the current book continue to support the independent and collaborative research undertaken by academics, policymakers, and teachers in the region, and international partners. IDP Education and the CamTESOL Conference organisers both laid the foundation and created the opportunity for the current book to be realised.

The publication of this book is timely, as 2015 marks the further integration of the ASEAN Member States into the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Each chapter in the current book documents the various projects and efforts being made throughout the region to prepare for the AEC. IDP Education (Cambodia) would like to thank all the authors who have submitted chapters here to share their lessons learned with a broader academic community.

IDP Education (Cambodia) would also like to extend its sincere thanks to the editors for this special academic volume, Dr Richmond Stroupe and Ms Kelly Kimura, who have worked to ensure an examination of the lessons learned from the challenges and successes of language education programs in the ASEAN region can be shared with a broader audience. It is their hope that the knowledge gained will be of benefit to policymakers, educational leaders, administrators, teacher trainers, teachers, and ultimately and most importantly, learners.

Last but not least, my thanks to the IDP Education (Cambodia) staff for their support and assistance in the production of this publication.

Sreng Mao
CamTESOL Convenor
Country Director, IDP Education (Cambodia)

Phnom Penh, 2015

Foreword

Education has played a central role in the ASEAN Community since its establishment in 1967. Since the end of the conflict in Cambodia in 1998, and after joining ASEAN on 30 April 1999, education has remained pivotal to developing the human resources and potential of this nation, just as it has for the wider ASEAN Community. In 2009, ASEAN leaders also declared that “education has a significant role to play in contributing to the three pillars of ASEAN,” these three pillars being political and security, economic, and socio-cultural.

In preparing for the ASEAN Community in 2015, education remains the key factor in narrowing the development gap within and between ASEAN member states. This *Language Education in Asia* Special Edition publication, *ASEAN Integration and the Role of English Language Teaching*, dedicated to language programs in the region, is therefore timely with the promulgation of the ASEAN Community in 2015.

The diversity of the contributions to this publication reflects and celebrates the diversity of ASEAN itself. The greater the diversity of channels for expression of thought and in particular of scholarly research, the more successful will be regional integration. Educators are at the forefront of preparing citizens to be independent learners, professionals, and skilled workers who in turn create stable, thriving societies.

I would like to congratulate those authors and editors involved in making this publication possible and for IDP Education in publishing it. I hope it will stimulate debate and disseminate ideas on the role of English and language in general within the context of ASEAN Integration.

His Excellency Dr. Hang Chuon Naron
Minister of Education, Youth and Sport
Royal Government of Cambodia

Opportunities and Challenges Across ASEAN: Looking Ahead to the ASEAN Economic Community

Richmond Stroupe
Soka University, Japan

Kelly Kimura
Soka University, Japan

The economic integration of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has implications that reach beyond the economic level to the education-related policies, programs, and practices that will promote the initial success and further growth of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Although the contexts of the ASEAN Member States are varied, programs in the region which aim to develop the English language capacity of government officials, teacher trainers, teachers, students, and business professionals share a number of challenges. This chapter examines the challenges faced by the Member States, and provides a brief introduction to the country-specific chapters.

In recent decades, the dynamic changes occurring in the Asian region have been well documented, including rapid economic growth, political changes, and educational challenges. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established with the goals of furthering economic development, providing a forum for collaboration and cooperation, maintaining stability, and providing assistance in the region. More recently, a target date of December 31, 2015 has been set for the economic integration of the association, including changes in barriers to trade and services, and the facilitation of investment. A major challenge that countries in the association are striving to meet is the development of capacity in order to implement this further integration, particularly as related to the increased emphasis on English use in governmental, educational and business activities. This is a rare opportunity to examine the cross-cultural and geopolitical cooperation at various administrative levels among a number of nations as the ASEAN Member States move towards a common goal of increased integration. The convergence of multiple disciplines and

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stakeholders, including ASEAN Member State governments, non-governmental organisations, and nations providing international support, has allowed authors to highlight best practices in and challenges and innovative approaches to educational and language learning programs and international collaboration. This chapter considers the contexts of the ASEAN Member States and examines some shared challenges that these countries face as programs aim to increase human resource capacity, particularly related to education and English language proficiency as the Member States prepare for the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

The development process for a country is complex and challenging. Numerous stakeholders can be involved with at times divergent priorities, and numerous challenges must be addressed through innovative programs and initiatives. When this process is generalized to the integration of a region, the challenges can be multiplied, yet the benefits and rewards have the potential to be widespread and far-reaching. Many countries in the Southeast Asian region have cooperated in many efforts on security, trade, and development initiatives since the establishment of the ASEAN in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. The expansion of the association through the addition of Brunei in 1984, Vietnam in 1995, Laos and Myanmar in 1997, and Cambodia in 1999 broadened the scope of the association and increased the diversity of the countries and populations included, leading to new opportunities and challenges.

Since the founding of ASEAN, its Member States have focused on developing more effective systems of political and economic cooperation and increasing intercultural understanding and exchange (ASEAN Secretariat, 2008b; Shimizu, 2010). More recently, this interrelationship has become closer as the association moves towards the development of the AEC that will allow more free trade, cultural exchange, and human resource mobility in some key, specialized fields between its Member States (ASEAN Secretariat, 2008a; ASEAN Secretariat, 2008b; Karim, 2013; Kurlantzick, 2012; Luz, 2014; Shimizu, 2010). The fields that will be first affected by the AEC agreements are construction, business, and medical services (Choomthong, 2003; Luz, 2014; Tubsree & Bunsong, 2013). The resultant increased flows of goods and services, investment, skilled labor, and capital are also expected to in turn result in increased competitiveness.

Education is seen as a key factor in preparing the citizens of the Member States for the increased integration and resulting competitiveness (Dulyadaweisid, 2013; Yaakub, 2012). Through improved educational systems, the ASEAN Member States hope to achieve the goals set out by the AEC related to the increased stability of political and economic systems and social and cultural exchange. In

addition, it is hoped that close cooperation through the AEC will result in a decrease in the economic and development gaps between some of the Member States (Dulyadaweesid, 2013). Disparities persist in the range of national income levels and access to technology, urban and rural inequalities, and gender gaps in some countries and regions within countries. Poverty in rural areas, where the majority of ASEAN members live, has been difficult to address and has a significant impact on the educational and economic opportunities available to the populations in these areas (International Labour Organization & Asian Development Bank [ILO & ADB], 2014; Kurlantzick, 2012; Luz, 2014; Marginson, 2010). As a result, improved professional development programs for teachers, improvements in educational systems and curricula, focus on core competencies for vocational trainers, increases in systems to allow for increased mobility for tertiary level students and faculty, and an emphasis on quality and performance standards have been planned or implemented by governments in the region (ASEAN Secretariat, 2012; ILO & ADB, 2014; Luz, 2014; Rynhart & Chang, 2014; Yaakub, 2012).

Some benefits from these moves in the education sector have already been realized. More adults are completing more years of schooling and youth literacy rates are increasing in the region. School dropout rates are falling while enrollment rates are on the rise, and gender parity at the primary and secondary levels is improving (ASEAN Secretariat, 2013a, 2013b). Yet significant discrepancies remain. The availability of trained teachers remains limited in the less developed nations, and teacher salaries are lagging behind increases in other fields in some countries. The need for pre-service and in-service professional development programs remains high (Nguyen, 2012; Tubsree & Bunsong, 2013; Yaakub, 2012). Differences in access to education, quality of education, and differences between public and private educational institutions are pervasive both regionally between countries with significantly different income levels and between regions and classes within countries in the association. Large portions of the citizenry in many Member States are displeased with the quality of the educational systems in their countries (Rynhart & Chang, 2014).

Closely related to the importance of education, the reduction of education-related inequalities, and the necessity to prepare graduates and workers to compete effectively at a regional level is the importance of English language proficiency. English is seen as an essential tool for integration, along with other ASEAN languages. Along with an emphasis on the teaching and learning of the local languages of each member state, English has been chosen as the language of administration for ASEAN (ASEAN Secretariat, 2008b) and is

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additionally often the language that users across ASEAN have in common. Yet challenges remain concerning the provision of effective language learning opportunities in resource-scarce contexts and the role and impact of English as an international language in general, and specifically as a tool in the development process. The development of a regional community necessitates the need for more frequent and effective communication between governments, businesses, and local populations. Improving the English language proficiency of government officials, business professionals, teacher trainers, teachers, and local students, has taken on a new importance (Barbin & Nicholls, 2012; Dulyadaweesid, 2013; Fitzpatrick & O'Dowd, 2012; Nunan, 2003). As a result, English language proficiency and the ability to utilise English to develop and make use of technical, business, and negotiation skills are areas in which capacity is being enhanced for the successful implementation of the AEC.

Government representatives at all levels need to be able to communicate clearly and effectively in discussions and negotiations with their peers in English. This requirement is particularly challenging for some ASEAN Member States where talented English-speaking government officials are in short supply due to limited capacity, or a limited history of international experience or communication with officials who use English as a medium of communication in international contexts. In addition, the attractiveness and economic benefits of positions in the private sector place further pressure on the already limited human resources in some government offices (ASEAN Secretariat, 2008b, 2013a, 2013b; Kaplan, 1998; Kurlantzick, 2012; Nguyen, 2012).

In the private sector, there is little doubt that sufficient English proficiency remains an essential skill for successful employment and to realize economic opportunities in the region (Barbin & Nicholls, 2012; Choomthong, 2014; Fitzpatrick & O'Dowd, 2012; Karnnawakul, 2004; Luz, 2014). This places some ASEAN Member States in a more advantageous position than others (Luz, 2014), namely those countries that have a historical or educational tradition of teaching English. This fact has not been lost on representatives from the ASEAN Member States that have not shared these traditions. These countries have recognized the necessity of improving the English language learning components of their educational programs to remain competitive (Barbin & Nicholls, 2012; Luz, 2014). Nunan (2003) pointed out that students also recognize this reality and often view English proficiency as a means to gain economic and social advancement: English represents wealth, power, and opportunity. Yet English language teaching traditions in many countries have been driven by high stakes examination schemes, and in the past, focused little on the

communicative abilities that are more emphasized in today's global workplace. Educational systems, including teachers and students, are striving to adapt to this paradigm shift that sees English as not solely an examination tool but rather a basic professional skill for successful communication (Choomthong, 2014; Fitzpatrick & O'Dowd, 2012; Karnnawakul, 2004; Kimsuvan, 2004; Yaakub, 2012). However, the development of the education sector is challenging, often accompanied by criticism for "importing" western pedagogical approaches that are not appropriate for the Asian context or for focusing on a top-down approach that does not appreciate local differences or needs (Hong, 2011; Nguyen, Terlouw & Pilot, 2006; Pham & Renshaw, 2015).

The chapters in this book underscore the shift that English language education in the region is undergoing as the need for English for communicative purposes to be competitive in an integrated labor force rises. In the first chapter, Andrew Tweed and Mony Som describe the challenges in English language education and education in general in state schools in Cambodia. They examine the perceptions that the National Institute of Education's English language teacher trainers have on the impact of the U.S. English Language Fellows (ELF) on the institute and the trainers and on the effect of the AEC on the use of English and on English language education in the country.

In the first of two chapters about Vietnam, Diana Dudzik and Quynh Thi Ngoc Nguyen report on the policy focus on Vietnam's educational system and the subsequent increased investment and improvements. A further focus on English language education to develop a competitive workforce has given rise to the National Foreign Language 2020 Project; the authors discuss the initiatives put in place and the challenges encountered in providing teachers nationwide with the training and resources to increase their own language proficiency to benchmark CEFR levels and develop in accordance with Vietnam's English Teacher Competencies Framework. The chapter concludes with lessons learned, recommendations for Vietnam and other ASEAN countries, and suggestions for further research.

Noor Azam Haji-Othman and Salbrina Sharbawi explore the role of the English language as social and political capital for Brunei. While the official language of Brunei is Malay, the educational system has included English-medium classes since 1985, resulting in a bilingual population. The authors describe Brunei's contributions to ASEAN integration through several English language capacity building programs and initiatives for diplomats, other government officials, and teacher-trainers from six ASEAN Member States.

From Singapore, Caroline Ho and Susan Gwee review recent school-based and corpus-based studies involving Information

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Communication and Technology (ICT) in English-language learning and teaching contexts. The integration of ICT in education is at an advanced level in the country; the considerations learned in program design and implementation can make future ICT interventions in education in the region more successful.

While the first chapter on Vietnam provides an inside view of the construction of the framework for the National Foreign Language 2020 Project, the second chapter, by Lan Nguyen Thi Phuong and Thuy Phung Nhu, offers perspectives on current issues, challenges, and development in English language teaching and learning in Vietnam, and suggestions to address the issues and challenges.

Utami Widiati and Nur Hayati describe a recently established professional development program for primary and secondary English language teacher candidates in Indonesia. The one-year postgraduate program aims to ensure that the candidates have the necessary competencies to develop the communicative competence of their future students; successful completion of the program results in certification. The authors provide a comprehensive overview of the program goals, administration, and content.

In the final chapter, Stephen Hall writes from Malaysia on the challenges of English language teacher training in rural, multilingual educational settings. An in-service professional development program incorporated a level of interactivity new to the participants, with the idea that the teachers would teach in the same way they had learned. Addressing teachers' ordinary classroom needs with practical techniques and activities and giving them the confidence to selectively use the national language to manage the realities of their multilingual classrooms instead of imposing a top-down policy that may be unsuitable for local contexts is discussed.

A number of authors make reference to English as a regional lingua franca. With integration and a growing sense of ASEAN identity, the citizens of ASEAN Member States form not only an economic community but a secondary speech community. According to Seidlhofer, "English as a lingua franca is a language of *secondary socialization*, a means of wider communication to conduct transactions outside of one's primary social space and speech community" (2011, p. 86). Dudzik and Nguyen recommend the creation of regional English language proficiency standards based on international instead of native-speaker standards. Noor Azam and Salbrina state that the Forum on English for ASEAN Integration, a component of the Brunei-U.S. English Language Enrichment Project for ASEAN attended by representatives from all ASEAN Member States, has become "a platform for academic and professional discussions of the policies and practices of the Southeast Asian nations in strengthening English as a

lingua franca across ASEAN.” Widiati and Hayati note English as “a language of written and spoken communication among Member States and citizens of ASEAN” is essential for the success of the programs and initiatives in the ASEAN blueprints.

The importance of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) was also mentioned in several chapters. ICT has an essential role in the integration and growth of the AEC to the extent that ASEAN has an ICT Masterplan (ASEAN Secretariat, 2011). According to McKinsey Global Institute report, English proficiency is one of the necessary skills to fully access the potential of ICT (Woetzel, Tonby, Thompson, Burt, & Lee, 2014). In addition to Ho and Gwee’s chapter, Dudzik and Nguyen note the training of teacher trainers in ICT for language teaching in Vietnam last year, Widiati and Hayati state that ICT is integrated throughout Indonesia’s English language teacher training program and that teachers trainees are expected to incorporate it in their lesson plans, and Nguyen and Phung mention plans for IT (Information Technology) use in English to be implemented in a gradually increasing number of urban secondary schools in Vietnam from 2016.

Several authors additionally note that incorporating content about ASEAN in English language education would be of benefit in creating a sense of ASEAN identity and community and increasing knowledge about what regional integration involves. Widiati and Hayati point out the need to link Indonesia’s teacher education program curriculum for English teachers to that of the ASEAN curriculum to “be more outward looking” and so that the teacher candidates can teach their future students about ASEAN. Tweed and Som, in researching their chapter on Cambodia, noticed a general lack of knowledge about the AEC and also suggest incorporating content about the AEC, including its relationship to English, in teacher education. Ho and Gwee encourage web-based school projects between students from ASEAN Member States that involve learning more about each other’s countries and cultures; such projects can help to promote knowledge of and cooperation within the ASEAN community.

The further integration of the ASEAN Member States and the development of the AEC will have far-reaching effects, not only throughout Southeast Asia, but certainly beyond as a regional community is developed that may rival those in Europe and North and South America. Yet there remain real challenges to overcome if the AEC will live up to the expectations of the governments in the region. The emerging, regionally competitive workplace will require important changes to the quality of and accessibility to educational opportunities so that all can realize benefits. Approaches, perceptions, and teaching

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methodologies related to English language learning will be questioned as the focus of instruction moves from examination preparation to proficiency and language use. However, if examples in the region are indicative, the process of change will take time. Nevertheless, the benefits of these challenges if addressed are significant. The further cooperation between the ASEAN Member States may test the international relationships in the region as well as strengthen them, but over the long term, the AEC can quite possibly realize its goal of becoming an economic community characterized by stability and economic growth along with global influence.

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English Language Education in Cambodia and International Support Ahead of ASEAN Integration

Andrew D. Tweed

U.S. Senior English Language Fellow

National Institute of Education, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Mony Som

National Institute of Education, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Cambodian English language educators believe that the opening of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) will have an impact on English language use and English language education in Cambodia. English is emerging as a necessary skill for those in domestic and regional job markets, and it is also important for Cambodian university students. Recognizing the importance of English in connection with the AEC, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) is introducing initiatives to enhance English language education in Cambodian state schools. These include introducing English from Grade 4 and writing new English language textbooks. However, MoEYS has a number of important challenges to address in order to ensure that these reforms are successful. Since the designation of English as a taught foreign language in secondary schools in 1989, Cambodia has received English language education support from foreign governments, including those of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Regarding American support, U.S. English Language Fellows (ELF) have been based at the National Institute of Education (NIE) since 2010. For this chapter, data from English language teacher trainers at the NIE were collected from interviews and questionnaires to measure the perceived impact that the ELFs have had on the NIE and its trainers. Questionnaire and interview data also reveal Cambodian educators' ideas about the importance of English within the context of the AEC. The chapter concludes with a discussion of ways that ELFs or other language educators can provide English language support to assist Cambodia or other ASEAN countries with preparation for integration in the ASEAN Economic Community.

Is Cambodia ready for ASEAN integration? This is a complex question because it entails preparedness in a number of important areas, including business, economics, government, society, and education. The ability to use English, ASEAN's only officially designated working language (Kirkpatrick, 2010), is also important because it is a common thread between these areas—this is particularly true in Cambodia, which hosts a large number of foreign aid and development organizations operating in various sectors (T. Clayton, 2006). While it is difficult to assess Cambodia's overall readiness for joining the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), a more manageable task is to consider the current status of English language education in Cambodia.

There is not an extensive amount of literature about this topic. This can be attributed, at least in part, to Moore's (2011) claim that there is a "very small number of Cambodian TESOL professionals who are active researchers" (p. 337). Relevant studies for this chapter include those which discuss aspects of English language education and use in Cambodia. While Neau (2003) wrote about the history of foreign language education in Cambodia, Neau (2002) and Igawa (2008) discussed Cambodian English teachers' preferences for professional development. Kirkpatrick (2010) provided brief accounts of the history and current state of English and English language education for all 10 ASEAN nations; he argued that English should be understood as a *lingua franca* and that its inclusion in state school curricula should not detract from students' development in L1. T. Clayton (2006) also wrote about English education in Cambodia, but the focus of his descriptive accounts is on English *use*. He argued that the spread of English in Cambodia is related to both the promotion of the language by outsiders as well as the choice of individual Cambodians who see the ability to use the English language as an advantage. S. Clayton (2008), in contrast, viewed the spread of English in Cambodia more critically, seeing its demand as something created by external agencies; he argued that choice is often only possible for those of particular socio-economic classes. With the exception of Kirkpatrick (2010), the above literature includes little or no discussion of the future role of English in Cambodia after it enters the AEC. In addition, some of the basic facts reported about English education have since changed. Due to these shortcomings, and the rather limited amount of extant, traditional research, a variety of other sources have been used in this chapter. These include newspaper and magazine articles, personal communication through interviews and email, U.S. Embassy internal documents, information on websites, and conference presentations.

This chapter addresses a few of the key issues in English language education in Cambodia. First, it seeks to better understand the current state of English language education in Cambodia, including teacher education. In doing this, it will consider current challenges and initiatives within the larger context of preparation for the AEC. The second issue is concerned with the impact of international support for foreign language education. In the past, Cambodia has received such support from France, Australia, and the U.K. (S. Clayton, 2008; T. Clayton, 2006). This chapter will attempt to evaluate the perceived impact of the U.S. English Language Fellow (ELF) program at the National Institute of Education (NIE). Finally, the role of English in Cambodia in conjunction with the opening of the AEC is explored through interviews with English trainers and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) officials. While reflecting on these three issues, the authors discuss some ways that the ELFs and other language educators can support English language education to effectively contribute to Cambodia's participation in the AEC.

The first section of the chapter will consider the impact of recent important historical events and policies on foreign language education and on English language use. The second section provides a description of English language education in Cambodian state schools and teacher training centers, including current challenges and initiatives. In the third section, the chapter discusses the U.S. ELF program, and details of the ELFs' work at the NIE. The primary research question being asked is: What is the perceived impact of the ELFs at the NIE from the perspective of its primary recipients, the English language teacher trainers? This chapter also attempts to better understand the NIE trainers' beliefs about the AEC's effect on English use and English language education in Cambodia. A methods section is followed by a results section for data collected from questionnaires and interviews. One set of questions concerns the perceived impact of the ELFs at the NIE from the perspective of its primary recipients, the English language teacher trainers; the other set focuses on NIE trainers' beliefs about the AEC's effect on English use and English language education in Cambodia. The final section includes a summary of the chapter and the authors' reflection on the results of the evaluation within the context of ASEAN integration.

English Use in Cambodia and the Impact of the Opening of the AEC in 2015

A Brief History of Contemporary English Use in Cambodia

Until 1975, as a carryover from the colonial period, French was the only official foreign language taught in Cambodian schools (Neau, 2002). When the Khmer Rouge—also known as Democratic Kampuchea (DK)—took over the country in 1975, the study of foreign languages was banned (Neau, 2002). However, the banning of foreign language study seems almost insignificant when compared to the DK's other policies and practices. While reports of casualties vary, Chandler (2008) estimated that:

over the lifetime of the regime, nearly two million people—or one person in four—died as a result of DK policies and actions . . . Perhaps as many as four hundred thousand were killed outright as enemies of the revolutions. (p. 258)

The killings had a direct impact on the educated, including teachers (Igawa, 2010). It has been estimated that “75% of teachers, professors and educational administrators were liquidated” (Neau, 2003, p. 259). Chandler said that many teachers were killed as class enemies since they were assumed to be opposed to the Communist Party; the so-called “evil microbes,” or people suspected of being counter-revolutionaries, included “those who had been exposed to foreign countries” (2008, p. 268). By banning the study of foreign languages and punishing those associated with foreign countries, the DK government thus strongly discouraged the use of foreign languages.

Nineteen seventy-nine saw the start of a decade-long takeover of Cambodia by Vietnam, which was supported by the Soviet Union. Therefore, during the Vietnamese occupation, Vietnamese and Russian were taught in Cambodian schools, while the teaching of other languages was prohibited (Moore & Bounchan, 2010; Neau, 2002). However, Cambodia started to move in a new direction in 1989 with the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops and a shift toward economic liberalization (Ayers, 2000; Springer, 2013), and English and French were approved to be taught as foreign languages in state schools (Ayers, 2000; Neau, 2003).

In the following decade, two major events encouraged greater use of English in Cambodia: in 1991, the United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia (UNTAC) arrived to help stabilize the nation and set up free and fair elections, and in 1999, Cambodia became a member of ASEAN (T. Clayton, 2006). The UNTAC personnel included around 20,000 people from more than 30 countries (S. Clayton, 2008; T. Clayton, 2006). While officially both French and

English were UNTAC's working languages, the reality was that, in general, English was the lingua franca for this multi-national, 2-year mission (S. Clayton, 2008). Since few UNTAC representatives knew Cambodia's main language, Khmer, Cambodians used English to communicate with the UNTAC workers (S. Clayton, 2008). Even after UNTAC left, the demand for English in Cambodia has continued with the large presence of aid and development workers in Phnom Penh and around the country (S. Clayton, 2008; T. Clayton, 2006). As with UNTAC, non-governmental organizations require English-speaking staff as well as translators and interpreters, and the relatively high number of foreigners in Phnom Penh means that many restaurants and cafes, which have apparently sprung up to meet the needs of expatriate aid and development workers, have English-speaking staff as well (S. Clayton, 2008; Moore & Bounchan, 2010).

Since English is the working language of ASEAN, Cambodia becoming a member encouraged more Cambodians to learn English. As T. Clayton (2006) explained, particularly for ministry officials, ASEAN "exerts considerable pressure towards English language learning, for Cambodians realize that without English skills they would be unable to participate in the regional political forum or defend national interests in the ASEAN Free Trade Area" (p. 245). While English has not enjoyed a particularly long history in Cambodia, the presence of UNTAC personnel and Cambodia's entry into ASEAN has resulted in it being used with increasing frequency.

English in Cambodia and the Opening of the AEC in 2015

When the ASEAN Economic Community opens at the end of 2015, the 10 member countries will be transformed into "a region with free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labour, and freer flow of capital" (ASEAN Secretariat, 2014). Regarding the movement of skilled labor, seven Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) have been established in the following professions: engineering services, nursing services, surveying qualifications, architectural services, accountancy services, dental practitioners, and medical practitioners (Hirawan & Triwidodo, 2012). It is expected that English, ASEAN's working language, will be used to facilitate communication in these mobile professions (Pitsuwan, 2012). In addition to its use with the 7 MRAs, Kirkpatrick (2010) sees English in ASEAN "as the language of creation and dissemination, and as the language of modernization. The desire to participate in modernization, the so-called knowledge economy and globalization is the major reason why ASEAN governments want their citizens to learn English" (p. 180).

English language proficiency in the ASEAN region ranges from country to country and this variance has been attributed to nations' colonial histories, where those which were former American or British colonies, such as the Philippines and Malaysia, generally have a higher level of English than those such as Indonesia and Cambodia, which had different colonial experiences (Kirkpatrick, 2010). This reality puts countries like Cambodia at a linguistic disadvantage for integration. However, as discussed above, since the arrival of UNTAC in 1991, there has been an association between English and development in Cambodia. The use of English, particularly in urban areas, is increasing in Cambodia (Moore & Bounchan, 2010). In addition, Chea, Klein, & Middlecamp (2013) mentioned ASEAN's designation of English as its sole working language as well as its promotion of English use in international business as reasons why English is increasingly being used as a *lingua franca* in Cambodia.

Officials within MoEYS believe English language skills provide advantages to Cambodian students. In terms of higher education, a MoEYS official who is the deputy head of education at the National Institute of Education explained that "if you go to university, for some universities, some subjects are conducted in English, so that's why without the English knowledge we won't be able to catch up with our study" (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014). In addition, some private Cambodian universities such as the American University of Phnom Penh and Pannasastra University of Cambodia use English as the medium of instruction. A MoEYS official who is the deputy director of the Department of Curriculum Development (DCD) believes English is important for Cambodian students so that they "can exchange their experiences and study among [other ASEAN] countries through the learning of English" (S. Or, personal communication, November 1, 2013). As Cambodia is a participating member of the ASEAN University Network—a group of universities that have developed equivalency and accreditation schemes so that students around the region can gain credit for courses studied in other ASEAN countries—Cambodian students have the opportunity to study at 28 regional universities in the other 9 ASEAN countries (ASEAN University Network, n.d.). Whether in Cambodia or abroad, knowledge of English leads to increased opportunities in higher education.

Many Cambodians also believe that English is an important skill for jobs. For instance, Sum Mab, the executive director of the Royal School of Administration, explained that, "in the private sector, if you do not speak English it is difficult to find work" (Vernailen, 2013, para. 8). Similarly, Mao said, "without English in Cambodia it is very difficult to find jobs" (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014). While the necessity for English may not apply to all jobs, English language skills

are crucial for many working in Cambodia's growing tourism sector. Tourism is an important sector of the Cambodian economy, as it is for most developing nations, since it brings foreign income to the country. According to the Ministry of Tourism (2013), the number of foreign visitors to Cambodia has increased every year from 2003, with just over 700,000 visitors, to 2013, with more than 4.2 million visitors. As the number of visitors to Cambodia is expected to double to 7 million by 2020, the number of people required to work in tourism would also need to increase, from the current 400,000 to around 800,000 (Rann, 2013). The Minister of Tourism, Thong Khon, believes that from 2015, ASEAN nations will be expected to "meet certain standards" in tourism (Rann, 2013, para. 8). With the government's focus on tourism, more Cambodians will therefore be required to use English in their work.

It has been shown that English plays a key role in supporting Cambodia's integration into the AEC. English helps Cambodians to access higher education at home and abroad, and makes them more competitive in domestic and regional job markets, including the growing tourism industry. The next section will discuss the state of English language education in Cambodia, including current challenges and initiatives.

The State of English Language Education and Teacher Training in Cambodia

English Language Education in Cambodian State Schools

English was officially approved as a foreign language to be taught in state schools in 1989 (Ayres, 2000; Neau, 2002). Following that decision, from 1989 to 1993, the Quaker Service of Australia (QSA) began to support English education in Cambodia through its "recyclage" program (T. Clayton, 2006). As there was a shortage of English language teachers to provide instruction to students in secondary schools, the QSA trained teachers of Khmer, Russian, and Vietnamese, teachers of other subjects with some English ability, and teachers with strong English skills but little or no teaching experience. By 1993, 300 English language teachers had been trained for Cambodian secondary schools (T. Clayton, 2006).

In 1993, the QSA project was followed by a much more substantial one funded by the U.K. The nearly decade-long Cambodia Secondary English Teaching (CAMSET) project trained over 700 Cambodian teachers and teacher trainers in Cambodia and in the U.K. and helped to establish ELT pedagogy courses for both upper-secondary school (USS) and lower-secondary school (LSS) English language teachers (S. Clayton, 2008; T. Clayton, 2006). Of equal significance, CAMSET was

instrumental in developing the English language textbooks for Cambodia. The six books which make up the *English for Cambodia (EFC)* series were designed for Grades 7-12 and are still the only MoEYS-approved English language textbooks used in Cambodian secondary schools. According to Neau (2002), these books were published in sequential order, beginning with *EFC Book 1* in 1997, and ending with *EFC Book 6* in 2002.

Initially, Cambodians studying in secondary schools were to study English five hours a week in LSS (Grades 7-9) and four hours a week in USS (Grades 10-12) (Neau, 2002, p. 198). Each of the *EFC* books, which contain between 60 and 67 two-page units, was presumably created with this in mind. However, in 2010, the DCD scaled back the number of English hours taught to four hours per week for LSS and two hours per week for USS due to a broad re-allotment of hours across the secondary school curriculum (K. Eng, director of DCD, personal communication, January 2013; S. Or, personal communication, November 1, 2013). As a result, many English teachers are not able to finish the books in the 38-week academic year (Sin, 2014; Tweed, Wallis, & Peterson, 2013).

The reduction in the number of hours taught may be responsible for teachers' changing attitudes toward the *EFC* books. In a survey which Neau conducted in the spring of 2002, 56 teachers, representing both LSS and USS teachers, expressed overwhelmingly positive views of the then new ELT textbooks; all of those surveyed indicated that the books were interesting, and 91% thought the books contained a variety of activities (Neau, 2002). These responses contrast with those in a smaller study conducted in December 2012 (Tweed, Wallis, & Peterson, 2013). Eighteen English language teachers, consisting of both USS and LSS teachers, completed a questionnaire about their opinions of the *EFC* books. From this group of 18 teachers, ten responded that the books were unsuitable, 9 indicated that the books should be replaced, and 5 said that they should be revised. Regarding the unsuitability of the textbooks, common views were that the grammar and reading sections were too difficult for the students; they also expressed that the speaking activities were "weak" and "difficult to execute." One other notable result of this study was that, on average, the teachers said they were only able to finish 12 out of 20 chapters of the book in an academic year.

The MoEYS does have plans to develop and introduce new English language textbooks, although they are experiencing some difficulties with this. The deputy director of the DCD explained that "first the MoEYS plans to introduce new textbooks in primary schools in 2013-2014, and then replace *EFC* in 2014-15" (S. Or, personal communication,

November 1, 2013). The plan is to begin introducing English in Grades 4 to 6; however, only the books for Grade 4 have been written thus far (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014). Furthermore, the DCD deputy director expresses doubts about their textbook writing team's abilities:

We don't have enough English teachers or trainers to help us develop the curriculum and textbooks . . . Right now, we don't have any NGOs or counterparts helping us. We just have a team working on a volunteer basis. We have been writing textbooks, and all of us are Khmer. We don't have any native [NES] specialists. We really would like to have an English specialist to help us write textbooks.

(S. Or, personal communication, November 1, 2013)

The authors agree that new books are needed to replace *English for Cambodia* as well as for the study of English in Grades 4-6 and share Or's concerns about the textbook writing team's capacity to produce effective and suitable textbooks for Cambodia.

In addition to requiring quality English language books for primary and secondary schools, there are other significant challenges which affect English and general education in Cambodia. These include relatively low rates in Khmer literacy and school life expectancy (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013). In addition, schools lack adequate facilities and resources, and teachers struggle to teach large, mixed-ability classes (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014; S. Or, personal communication, November 1, 2013). Another frequently mentioned issue is the low salary of teachers which, after recent pay increases, is approximately US\$100-150 a month (Besant, 2014; Wilkins & Sek, 2014). Because of their low pay, many teachers find other sources of income, including "moonlighting" at private language schools (Neau, 2003) and holding extra classes for their students (Yeap & Mom, 2012). One of the root causes of these problems is the rather low allotment of funds which goes towards education. Cambodia's expenditure on education is amongst the lowest in ASEAN (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013). Even after a planned increase in educational funding, with education accounting for just 2% of the GDP, former Education Secretary of State Nath said that "if we want to output quality graduates we need quality input, and that means better trained, better paid teachers. We should be inputting between 4 and 6 percent [of GDP]" (Peter & Hul, 2013). If the MoEYS does not receive adequate funding, then it will be difficult to tackle the myriad problems it faces.

English Language Teacher Training for State Schools in Cambodia

As English is currently taught in LSS and USS, teacher trainees can major in English language teaching at the appropriate teacher training center. The six Regional Teacher Training Centres (RTTCs) prepare and certify teachers of English and other subjects to teach in LSS (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport [MoEYS], 2010). In the two-year program, teacher trainees take courses to develop their English language proficiency and learn about ELT methodology as well as general education (Sin, 2014; Yus, Pang, & Srey, 2013). In addition, participation in a teaching practicum in schools is required, and trainees must choose a minor, which is often Khmer literature (Yus, Pang, & Srey, 2013). Those entering the RTTCs must have graduated from USS (Yus, Pang, & Srey, 2013).

While the RTTCs train LSS teachers for a number of certain provinces, the NIE trains prospective USS teachers for the entire country (MoEYS, 2010). To enter the NIE as an English language teaching major, a relevant bachelor's degree is required (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014). Trainees at the NIE study for just one year, and similar to the RTTCs, the curriculum at the NIE includes general English, ELT methodology, general education, minor courses in Khmer literature, and a teaching practicum (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014). Both the NIE and RTTCs require applicants to take an entrance exam prior to being accepted (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014).

The RTTCs and the NIE exhibit some of the same deficiencies as Cambodian schools: some of the buildings are in a very poor state; basic facilities such as electricity, lighting, and fans are not available at all training centers; and educational resources such as desks and whiteboards are in a bad condition, making teaching and learning more challenging (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014). According to the current English Language Fellow, while some of the RTTCs have reasonable class sizes of 25 or 30, others have around 50 to 60 trainees in a class (H. Fridriksson, personal communication, April 5, 2014). The classes at the NIE are much larger, however. In the 2013-14 academic year, the ELT Methodology class has 77 trainees, and some general English language classes have more than 100 students studying together (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2014). As with secondary school teachers, the trainers are not paid well, earning approximately US\$150-200 per month (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2014).

On the positive side, the NIE has been working to improve its facilities. A new large building with about 50 classrooms was completed in early 2014 (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2014). The NIE has put new whiteboards in a number of classrooms, and the

ELFs have also used their professional budgets to provide the NIE with educational resources such as whiteboards, LCD projectors, CD players, portable microphone-speaker units, books, and visual aids (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2014). Finally, the ELFs have provided training and other assistance. A discussion of the ELF program and the work of the ELFs at the NIE is included below.

The United States English Language Fellow Program

History and Objectives of the English Language Fellow Program

The English Language Fellow (ELF) Program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, began in 2001 and is currently administered by Georgetown University's Center for Intercultural Education and Development (Georgetown University, 2013). For the year 2013-2014, there are 135 ELFs in the program, with 48 based in the East Asia Pacific region (A. Mutter, personal communication, November 2013). The primary objectives of the ELF Program include:

- Enhance English teaching capacity overseas.
- Provide people around the world with the English communication skills they need to fully participate in the global economy and society.
- Broaden foreign teachers' and students' perspectives on international issues.
- Share information about American values, democratic representative government, free enterprise and the rule of law.
- Advance the larger goal of reaching mutual understanding among nations.

(Georgetown University, 2013)

It is worthwhile noting that most of these objectives, which support the development of English language communication skills and an increase in international understanding, would also likely have a positive impact on Cambodia's integration into the AEC.

English Language Fellows in Cambodia

According to U.S. Embassy records, an ELF was first based in Cambodia from 1994 to 1995 (U.S. Embassy, 2013a). Perhaps due to political tensions in the country over the next several years (Chandler, 2008), there were no ELFs based there until 1999. Since 1999, most ELFs have been based at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP),

working in the English Language Support Unit—which serves the university’s general population of students—or in the Institute of Foreign Languages, which currently houses the Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Foreign Language program. ELF’s have also worked at the Royal University of Agriculture and at the Teacher Training Department of MoEYS. As with ELF’s in other countries, those in Cambodia have worked as English language teachers and teacher trainers and have supported various curriculum development projects (H. Fridriksson, current ELF, personal communication, April 5, 2014; A. Klein, former ELF, personal communication, November 2013; J. Wiskin, former ELF, personal communication, June 2011). ELF’s have also led ELT methodology workshops at the RTTCs and helped the U.S. Embassy with various English language initiatives (U.S. Embassy, 2013b).

English Language Fellows at the National Institute of Education

Since 2010, an ELF has been based at the NIE, and since 2012, the U.S. ELF has been joined by two Brunei-U.S. ELF’s—one Bruneian and one American (U.S. Embassy, 2013b). The Brunei-U.S. ELF Program is funded by Brunei, but the program is jointly administered by Georgetown University and the East-West Center in Hawai’i (H. Fridriksson, current ELF, personal communication, April 5, 2014). As mentioned previously, the NIE is responsible for training future Cambodian USS teachers. The ELF’s primary duties at the NIE are to conduct workshops for the NIE English language trainers and to teach the USS English language teacher trainees (U.S. Embassy, 2013b).

Workshops and classes have included topics on ELT methodology and second language research. Trainers are generally only expected to be at the NIE when they have classes to teach, specific administrative duties to perform, or when workshops or meetings are run by the NIE. Attendance at most ELF-run workshops is not mandatory. Despite offering workshops at various times, including on weekdays and Saturday mornings, attendance at ELF workshops has fluctuated a great deal.

Since 2012, the ELF’s have worked with the NIE to develop the curriculum of the English teacher training department (S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014). Specifically, ELF’s have worked with NIE trainers to redesign the Core English and ELT Methodology classes so that they better prepare trainees for the practical realities of teaching in Cambodian USSs. Finally, ELF’s support the teaching practicum for the English language teacher trainees at the NIE by running workshops for teacher trainers prior to the practicum and going to high schools in Phnom Penh with trainers

to observe lessons and provide feedback to the trainees (H. Fridriksson, personal communication, April 5, 2014).

The ELF's have experienced a number of challenges in Cambodia. A former ELF stated that his biggest obstacle to working at the NIE was not being granted a space in which to conduct workshops for trainers; it took several months before his training could commence at the NIE (J. Wiskin, personal communication, June 2011). In addition, both the former ELF and the current ELF (one of the authors, Andrew Tweed) have struggled with getting a high percentage of the NIE trainers to attend their workshops on a regular basis. The trainers say that they are busy working at other schools to increase their monthly income of US\$150-200.

There are a number of activities that the ELF's do which support English language enhancement ahead of the AEC's opening in 2015. At the NIE, as well as at the RTTCs, ELF's have conducted training on such topics as teaching pronunciation, teaching speaking, communicative language teaching, student-centered learning, classroom management, and managing large and multi-level classes (H. Fridriksson, personal communication, April 5, 2014). Directly or indirectly, all of these topics are about enabling teachers to enhance students' communicative abilities; these will hopefully give teachers useful strategies to make their students more able and confident users of English, especially in spoken communication. As the *EFC* books are rather weak in this area (Tweed, Wallis, & Peterson, 2013), these workshops fill an important gap. In addition, the ELF's use their professional funds to support NIE trainers in attending and presenting at national and regional conferences. In 2014, four NIE trainers presented at CamTESOL and three presented at Thailand TESOL (H. Fridriksson, personal communication, April 5, 2014). Through this support, NIE trainers attending and presenting at conferences are able to meet English language education professionals from other ASEAN countries and share knowledge and experience related to better preparing English language students and teachers for the opening of the AEC.

Methods

An evaluation of the ELF's work at the NIE was conducted in the autumn of 2013. Data from a questionnaire (see Appendix) and interviews were collected to better understand the impact that the ELF's activities have had at the NIE and on the NIE trainers from September 2010 to the autumn of 2013. The questionnaire also included questions related to English and English education in Cambodia ahead of the opening of the AEC. Out of fourteen NIE English language

trainers, nine completed the questionnaire, and two of the nine participated in interviews. Of the five trainers who did not complete the questionnaire, three trainers chose not to participate; another trainer was new and thus had no prior experience working with the ELF's; and the fifth trainer, Mony Som, is one of the authors of this chapter. Mony Som conducted the interviews, as it was anticipated that if the current ELF and co-author Andrew Tweed had done the interviews, the responses may have been biased by his presence. The interviews, as well as the questionnaires, were done in English. To preserve the anonymity of trainers, their names are not used in this chapter. The two trainers who were interviewed are referred to simply as NIE Trainer 1 and NIE Trainer 2.

The questionnaire (see Appendix) consists of three parts. For Question 1, respondents indicated how valuable they felt certain activities conducted by the ELF's at the NIE had been. For each activity, they indicated their opinion by assigning it a value: 1 = *not valuable*, 2 = *only a little valuable*, 3 = *valuable*, or 4 = *very valuable*. The precise meaning of these values was expressed in more detail on the questionnaire (see Appendix). Questions 2 and 3 asked NIE trainers to list advantages and disadvantages of the ELF's being based at the NIE. Finally, the last two questions were about the AEC and English, and English education in Cambodia: Question 4 asked trainers whether they thought the opening of the AEC in 2015 would affect English use in Cambodia and Question 5 asked trainers whether they thought the opening of the AEC has affected the MoEYS's planning for English education in Cambodia.

Interviews were done so that richer data could be gathered to complement the responses on the questionnaire. Interview questions were thus created based on NIE trainers' responses to certain questions. The three main themes of the interviews were improvements brought about by the ELF's, challenges of working with the ELF's, and suggestions for the future.

Results

Evaluation of the English Language Fellows' Activities at the NIE

Table 1 shows the results of trainers' responses to Question 1 on the questionnaire. Overall, while the results suggest that all professional development activities range from being *valuable* to *very valuable* from the trainers' point of view, some were judged to be more valuable than others. Items F, G and I were rated as the most valuable activities that the ELF's have done at the NIE. While Item F represents *supporting trainers to attend conferences outside of Cambodia*, Item G refers to *supporting trainers to attend CamTESOL*. Item I refers to *supporting the NIE with*

resources, such as books and equipment. It was noted earlier that the Cambodian education system as a whole suffers from being underfinanced. The ELF's capacity to materially support the NIE with books and equipment and to fund trainers' involvement in conferences fills a need which the trainers value. The trainers indicated that Item A, *training NIE trainers*, and Item D, *developing the NIE curriculum*, were the next most valuable.

Table 1
Results of Questionnaire Question 1: NIE Trainers' Evaluation of ELF Activities at NIE

Item	English Language Fellows' Activities at NIE	Average
I.	Supporting the NIE with resources, such as books and equipment	3.78
G.	Supporting NIE trainers to attend CamTESOL	3.78
F.	Supporting NIE trainers to attend conferences outside of Cambodia	3.78
A.	Training NIE trainers	3.75
D.	Developing the NIE curriculum	3.67
H.	Supporting NIE trainers with their conference presentations	3.56
K.	Building a stronger community among the NIE trainers	3.44
B.	Training NIE trainees	3.38
J.	Supporting NIE trainers with research	3.33
C.	Supporting the NIE teaching practicum	3.33
E.	Helping NIE trainers to plan their lessons	3.13

Note. $n = 9$; 1 = not valuable; 2 = only a little valuable; 3 = valuable; 4 = very valuable.

Helping NIE trainers to plan their lessons, Item E, was rated the lowest of all activities that the ELF's have done. Looking more closely at the NIE trainers' responses this item, two trainers indicated that the ELF's help with lesson planning was *only a little valuable*, and one trainer did not mark any value. These three trainers had actually received little support from the ELF's in lesson planning. While these three trainers teach general English to the broader NIE trainee population, the ELF's have focused much of their efforts on supporting the ELT Methodology and Core English trainers who teach the English major trainees, and this support includes assistance with their lesson planning (H. Fridriksson, personal communication, April 5, 2014). Items J and C, *supporting NIE trainers with research* and *supporting the NIE teaching practicum* respectively, were ranked the next lowest. While two trainers

indicated that support with research was *only a little valuable*, five other trainers thought it was *very valuable*.

Questions 2 and 3 asked the NIE trainers about the advantages and disadvantages of having ELF's based at the NIE (see Appendix). For Question 2, all nine trainers listed at least two advantages. The most common theme was the mention of improvements, changes, or increased confidence in their teaching and training. This general view was expressed by seven of the nine trainers. For example, one trainer wrote, "I am more confident in teaching English methodology courses and subjects. I have gained new knowledge and experience from EL Fellows." Similarly, another trainer explained that ELF's "can help me enhance my teaching profession as well as myself. I change my teaching style by using modern technology in the classroom."

Trainers also mentioned similarly positive developments during the interviews:

For me, yes, I think there are a lot of changes in me in terms of teaching, so I feel more confidence about teaching, and I improve a lot of English knowledge, general knowledge especially, and also improve my speaking. (NIE Trainer 1)

After the presence of the ELF's I can see a lot of improvements in myself. Especially we got the new ideas of the ELT community, we have got the way to travel and participate in conferences and the training and workshops prepared by the ELF's is quite important, it can improve our knowledge in terms of ELT. Yep, I can see lots of improvements. (NIE Trainer 2)

In addition, and echoing the results of Question 1, two trainers listed advantages related to the ELF's financial support. One trainer wrote that ELF's "help supply teaching materials and equipment," while another listed the following advantages: "support NIE trainers to attend conferences outside of Cambodia; support NIE trainers to attend CamTESOL; support with resources and extra more when it [teaching resources] cannot work." While both of the trainers who were interviewed also expressed gratitude toward the technical resources provided by the ELF's, NIE Trainer 2 said that there were still not enough resources, however: "so far we have got 2 new projectors but these new projectors are not enough, I mean, to let all the trainers use these things at the same time since we have classes running at the same time."

Regarding the disadvantages of ELF's being based at the NIE, 5 trainers listed at least one, while 4 trainers listed no disadvantages. The most commonly expressed theme, by four of the trainers, was that they

feel pressure to join workshops, but do not have much available time to do so. For example, one trainer wrote that there is “a little pressure on trainers in terms of time constraints and availability since trainers have two or three jobs to make their living.” A similar view was stated by another trainer, who misses “some workshops due to time available and money for traveling.” From these comments, it can be seen that while the pressure to attend the ELF’s workshops puts time demands on the trainers, it can also impact their financial lives. It was mentioned previously that some NIE trainers must do extra work outside of the NIE. Trainers may therefore decide not to attend workshops because they need to earn extra income at their other jobs. The second comment above, about money for traveling, also requires a little clarification. While the trainers are not compensated with money such as travel expenses or per diem to attend the ELF’s workshops, according to NIE Trainer 2, they do receive such funds when they attend NIE-run workshops, including those held at the NIE. Since the ELF’s in Cambodia are not authorized to use their program funds to support the trainers in this way (anonymous U.S. Embassy Foreign Service officer, personal communication, December 2013), some NIE trainers seem disappointed that they do not receive financial support or incentives to attend the ELF’s workshops. The lack of availability and compensation for workshops was also mentioned in one of the interviews. One trainer suggested that monthly workshops should be held so that more trainers can benefit from the training, and that they should be compensated for their time and / or travel:

If they can just call on all of the trainers, to have all English language trainers to come once or twice a month to have meetings, maybe they can learn something, or doing as workshops and maybe give some financial support, for example, the MoEYS, they just [pay] 10, 000 riel, [U.S.] \$2.50 for the workshop . . . they have to go to work in order to earn extra money so they don’t come to the [ELF’s NIE] class or to the workshop or they didn’t attend most of the workshops.

(NIE Trainer 1)

The NIE trainers are not paid well, and so it is understandable that they highly value the ELF’s financial support in sending them to conferences and enhancing the English department’s technical resources; furthermore, the NIE trainers sometimes feel burdened by the demand to attend the ELF’s workshops for which they do not receive compensation.

NIE Trainers' Thoughts on the Effect of the AEC on English and English Education in Cambodia

The final two questions on the survey are related to English and English education in the AEC. All nine trainers responded affirmatively to Question 4, which asks "Do you think that the opening of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 will affect the use of the English language in Cambodia?" In their comments on Question 4, more than half of the trainers expressed the view that Cambodians will use English more due to the opening of the AEC. For instance, while one trainer commented that, "English will be used as *lingua franca*," another stated that "English will be used more in social [and] business communication." Two trainers also mentioned the relationship between jobs and the ability to use English in the AEC. As one trainer put it, "ASEAN EC will be a motive to motivate students to pay more attention to English if they want to compete in ASEAN job markets." Another trainer said that "people with English knowledge will find better jobs." Two trainers, however, expressed concern with Cambodia's current English language capacity. As one trainer said, "most of Cambodia people cannot speak English and the official language of ASEAN is English. So we cannot communicate effectively with people in the region." Similarly, another trainer is worried that countries which have better English skills will have an advantage over Cambodia: "some of the countries in ASEAN such as the Philippines, Malaysia use English as a second language but for Cambodia uses English as a foreign language so we can't compete with them."

Similar concerns were expressed in comments to Question 5, which asks if the opening of the ASEAN Economic Community has affected the MoEYS's planning regarding English education in Cambodia. While eight out of nine respondents answered affirmatively, in their comments, four trainers expressed pessimism about the readiness of Cambodia's English education system ahead of 2015. One trainer wrote "the quality of education in terms of human resources and learning is very low and cannot compare with the countries in the region; therefore, Cambodian people will lose their chances." Another stated "the effort is so little to prepare Cambodians to get ready for the opening. MoEYS has done so little. The nation depends so heavily on private schools." Finally, one trainer believes that Cambodia's poor education system will hold it back: "we have much poorer education system in the region, thus we may not be able to compete in the job market."

Nearly all of the trainers believe that the opening of the AEC has affected the MoEYS's planning regarding English education in Cambodia, and a few of them discussed this in more detail in their comments. One respondent remarked on the MoEYS's duty to prepare

the country, stating that “the MoEYS has to think about English program for students at schools because it’s very important for students and learners to communicate within the ASEAN community.” More generally, another trainer said “MoEYS duty is to see the educational development. Of course, ASEAN really affects to MoEYS.” Two trainers mentioned specific actions that they believe MoEYS will do. One trainer said, “English language will be included in primary school curriculum and the English exam for Grade Twelve will be realistic. More English teaching hours at high school will be increased.” In addition to considering a “more effective English curriculum,” another trainer thinks that “capacity building of English teachers and trainers will be more considered.”

From the above, it can be clearly seen that the NIE English language trainers believe that the opening of the AEC will affect the use of English, and that this reality will affect MoEYS’s planning. Despite this agreement, the trainers differ in the relative amount of optimism expressed in their comments on the questionnaires.

Discussion

Just as the AEC is currently affecting the use and importance of English in Cambodia, so have events in recent decades. The departure of the Vietnamese in 1989 triggered a shift in foreign language education policy, and the presence of UNTAC in 1991 and Cambodia’s admittance to ASEAN in 1999 created an increased demand for English. While English has been an officially taught foreign language since 1989, at present, English language education still faces a number of challenges: the English language coursebooks and curricula in secondary schools need to be replaced or revised; as with general education, there is a lack of educational resources; many classes are large with mixed-ability students; and teachers are not well paid, putting pressure on teachers to hold other jobs. Teacher training colleges such as the NIE and RTTCs face similar challenges.

The opening of the AEC in 2015 is certainly one reason why Cambodia and MoEYS are paying increasing attention to English and English language education. As Or put it, “for me personally, as well as MoEYS, we put top priority on English, because it’s the language of ASEAN. We should be concerned about English because it helps us to connect to other societies” (personal communication, November 2013). It was also noted earlier that many believe English to be an increasingly necessary skill for jobs. However, despite the seeming consensus that Cambodia needs to prepare for integration and that enhancing English language proficiency is part of that preparation, some Cambodians are doubtful that the country is ready. NIE’s deputy head of education is

concerned that the government is not doing enough, and that this will make Cambodia less competitive:

We are not so confident that we will be able to compete with the countries in the region. So in terms of, even if we look at the quality of our human resources, the quality of our teaching staff are still limited and we can see that our government does not have a clear policy yet in terms of promoting . . . the participation in the ASEAN community, and we see that we don't have any documents . . . in terms of the policies which are written by the government in order to prepare Cambodia for the integration.

(S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014)

Cambodians thus worry that they will be outcompeted for jobs at home and in other ASEAN countries, and that their comparatively low level of English language proficiency is one reason why they will be less competitive. Significant changes in English language education are needed if Cambodia is to effectively prepare students and teachers for ASEAN integration, but major structural issues such as introducing an improved English language curriculum, improving learning facilities, and raising the pay of teachers can only happen if Cambodia's government decides to take action to address these shortcomings.

International support for English language enhancement can also help Cambodia achieve its English language related goals. Examples of this, discussed earlier, are the British and Australian governments' provision of training to teachers and teacher trainers in the 1990s. Regarding the U.S. English Language Fellow program in Cambodia, one of its strengths is that the ELF's are working inside the national education system, where they can see how the system operates from an insider's point of view. Still, it can be challenging to evaluate what the needs of a country are and how one's particular program can effectively meet those needs. It was mentioned above that one of the goals of the ELF program is mutual understanding among the United States and host nations. While this is often interpreted to refer to understanding on a cultural, societal, or governmental level, it could also be applied strictly to the technical training and support that is being provided. If ELF's or others working in an educational development context lack an understanding of the specific needs and expectations of those with whom they work, they are less likely to provide useful support. Similarly, it is important that those providing international assistance clearly communicate what they can or cannot offer. The survey and interviews were thus an attempt to better understand the needs of the trainers at the National Institute of Education.

Considering the responses of the NIE trainers, some important points can be ascertained. First, as demonstrated by the results of the questionnaire (see Table 1), the trainers believe that all of the ELF's activities are valuable. Second, the trainers value the ELF's support with resources and to attend conferences more highly than the other activities, including workshops. Third, some trainers feel that the workshops can be a burden, financially and in terms of the time commitment necessary to attend. One implication for the ELF's is that they should offer workshops for trainers less frequently, so as to cause fewer disruptions in the lives of the trainers. In addition, it was agreed among the three ELF's and the NIE English department head that the focus of the ELF's work will shift to the trainees, as they are already at the NIE for the entire day, and so would not be inconvenienced and would have no expectations of receiving per diem (H. Fridriksson, personal communication, April 5, 2014; S. Mao, personal communication, April 2, 2014).

Concerning the NIE's role in preparing teachers for ASEAN integration, one final way that the ELF's could help is through leading workshops specifically related to the connections between English and the AEC. Throughout this study, the authors noticed that whereas many Cambodians have some awareness of the AEC in 2015 and believe that English is going to become increasingly important, most were not able to discuss the AEC in great detail. The ELF's could therefore address this gap by conducting workshops at both the NIE as well as at RTTCs to raise awareness of the relationship between English and the AEC. Such workshops could include a discussion of the AEC and how integration will impact Cambodia, as well as ways of tying the AEC into English language lessons for students. Kirkpatrick (2010), for instance, suggests that cultural communication could be taught through English "but with a focus on the cultures of ASEAN member states" (p. 181). Finally, as Cambodia's English teachers need to be able to talk to their students about the role English plays in higher education and in tourism, teacher training workshops could include ideas about how to make students more aware of these connections.

This chapter has considered the state of English language education in Cambodia as it prepares for integration into the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015, and it has included an evaluation of international support provided by the English Language Fellow program, focusing on the evaluation of its activities at the National Institute of Education. Similar evaluative research could be conducted at other institutions based in ASEAN countries to better understand the perceived impact of international support provided and hopefully to enhance the effectiveness of the programs. While the authors do not consider

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international support to be a necessary condition for progress to be made in English education, it can, however, be particularly beneficial in contexts where education receives limited government support.

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Appendix Questionnaire

U.S. Senior English Language Fellows have been present at the NIE from autumn of 2010 until the present. Brunei-U.S. English Language Fellows have been present at the NIE since autumn of 2012. Questions 1 to 3 have been included to collect data regarding the impact of *all* of these English Language Fellows. Your honest responses to these questions would be appreciated. Please be assured that your identity will not be revealed.

1. How valuable do you think the English Language Fellows' work has been in the following areas? For each of the 10 items please *circle* the appropriate number to indicate how valuable you believe it has been for the NIE.

1 = not valuable; the EL Fellows' work in this area has not made a positive impact

2 = only a little valuable; the EL Fellows' work in this area has only made a slightly positive impact

3 = valuable; the EL Fellows' work in this area has made a positive impact

4 = very valuable; the EL Fellows' work in this area has made a significantly positive impact

A. training NIE trainers	1	2	3	4
B. training NIE trainees	1	2	3	4
C. supporting the NIE teaching practicum	1	2	3	4
D. developing the NIE curriculum	1	2	3	4
E. helping NIE trainers to plan their lessons	1	2	3	4
F. supporting NIE trainers to attend conferences outside of Cambodia	1	2	3	4
G. supporting NIE trainers to attend CamTESOL	1	2	3	4
H. supporting NIE trainers with their conference presentations	1	2	3	4
I. supporting the NIE with resources, such as books and equipment	1	2	3	4
J. supporting NIE trainers with research	1	2	3	4
K. building a stronger community among the NIE trainers	1	2	3	4

2. In your opinion, what are the *advantages* of having EL Fellows based at the NIE? Please be specific.

3. In your opinion, what are the *disadvantages* of having EL Fellows based at the NIE? Please be specific.

Questions 4 and 5 are about the opening of the ASEAN EC and English Education in Cambodia.

4. Do you think that the opening of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 will affect the use of the English language in Cambodia? Please *circle* your answer and explain.

YES

NO

5. The ASEAN Economic Community is scheduled to open in 2015. Do you think that this has affected the MoEYS's planning regarding English education in Cambodia? Please *circle* your answer and explain.

YES

NO

6. Do you have any other comments related to this questionnaire? If so, please write them here.

Would you be willing to do a short interview about your responses to this questionnaire? As with your answers on the questionnaire, your identity would not be revealed. Please *circle*.

YES

NO

Thank you very much!

Vietnam:**Building English Competency in Preparation for ASEAN 2015**

Diana L. Dudzik

International Education Consultancy, Minnesota, USA

Quynh Thi Ngoc Nguyen

University of Languages and International Studies,

Vietnam National University, Hanoi

Ever since widespread economic reforms were instituted in the late 1980s, Vietnam has experienced intense growth. Educational reforms have followed these economic reforms. The country joined ASEAN in 1995 during this period of economic growth. This chapter describes Vietnam's hopes regarding the ASEAN Economic Community's (AEC) integration in 2015 and highlights relevant challenges and changes in education policy to foster regional and international integration, focusing on foreign language proficiency and teaching competency. It then describes several major initiatives of a national project that was created to implement a major government decision to build national foreign language capacity. The next section summarizes lessons from Vietnam regarding ASEAN integration-enabling policies and implementation strategies and makes recommendations for regional proficiency assessment, teacher competency tools, alignment of teacher training curricula and materials, and vehicles to carry out capacity-building priorities. The final section suggests the need for further research regarding English teachers' language proficiency, language assessment instruments, regional capacity-building centers, and the effectiveness of the national foreign language project.

Background

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam is among the largest, most populous, and most densely populated of the ten countries that make up the ASEAN region, ranking fourth largest in land area and third highest in population and population density (Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN], 2013b). Vietnam's population is reportedly

over 86 million (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2009) with 25% under 15 years of age (Ministry of Education and Training [MOET], 2013a). The population is highly literate (93.2%) and education is a societal priority, evidenced by a primary education net enrollment of 88.3% (MOET, 2013b). It ranks in the middle to lower half of ASEAN countries in trade and GDP, is fifth highest in total trade and foreign investment inflow figures, and has the sixth largest GDP (ASEAN, 2013b). However, the country also has an unemployment rate between 2.3% (ASEAN, 2012b) and 3.6% (ASEAN, 2013c) and the highest inflation rate among ASEAN countries at 18.6%, according to 2011 figures (ASEAN, 2013c). Vietnam became a full member of ASEAN in 1995 and has demonstrated a national will to expand regional economic and trade initiatives (ASEAN, n.d.), hosting the 43rd anniversary of ASEAN meetings in Hanoi and providing a Vietnamese chairman in 2010 (T. D. Nguyen, 2010).

ASEAN Integration and English Capacity

Regional economic integration by 2015 as the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) has great potential and presents great challenges for Vietnam. The commitment to bolster amiable relationships and seek mutual benefit among neighboring countries (ASEAN, 2013d) along with human resource development, soft borders allowing free movement of laborers, goods, and capital, and the creation of a regional market that is economically competitive, integrated into the global economy and characterized by more equitable development are ambitious goals (ASEAN, 2013e). Language capacity is a key factor in the accomplishment of this regional integration. However, language capacity is an often unstated assumption in ASEAN documents. Article 34 of the ASEAN Charter designates English as the working language of ASEAN (ASEAN, 2008b). This factor is implicit in the AEC Blueprint (ASEAN, 2008a), which mentions English only once on the signature page, stating: “DONE in Singapore on the Twentieth Day of November in the Year Two Thousand and Seven, in single copy, in the English language” (p. 3). The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, however, explicitly discusses English language capacity-building in its blueprint, along with educational investment, life-long learning, human resource training and capacity-building, and applying technology (ASEAN, 2009). The current ASEAN Secretary General, who happens to be Vietnamese, calls English “the language of our competitive global job market, the lingua franca of ASEAN” (Le, 2013, p. 3). A clear example of the role of English in ASEAN integration in 2015 can be seen in the work of government officials: “. . . except for the prime minister, every other level of meetings doesn’t allow interpreters . . . senior level official meetings are [conducted] completely in English” (N.

H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013). Thus, one can imagine the disadvantages Vietnam's officials would have to face in these ASEAN events if they lacked adequate English capacity to participate and contribute intelligibly to the development of communication (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013).

The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) is an important component in building the hope of prosperity in the region in general and in Vietnam in particular, and the link to English competency is highlighted as of grave importance. The role of English was clearly stated by the Secretary General of ASEAN at a conference in Thailand entitled "Educating the Next Generation of Workforce: ASEAN Perspectives on Innovation, Integration and English":

[English is an] indispensable tool to bring our Community closer together . . . [enabling] us to interact with other ASEAN colleagues in our formal meetings as well as day-to-day communications . . . Through English, we are raising awareness of the ASEAN region.

(Le, 2013, p. 2)

Secretary General Le also cited the need to prepare the current generation of students to face the challenges of integration by helping them to become competent regional working professionals. He referenced the 2012 ASEAN Agreement on Movement of Natural Persons (ASEAN, 2012a) that facilitates movement among regional countries for trade in goods, services, and investment, and stated that a skillful, educated labor force is both a strength and a draw for investment in the region. The Secretary General also described the Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA) that validate education, experience, or licensing among Member States for business, health care, and tourism and relaxes restrictions for educational services in the region. In the strongest of terms, Secretary General Le stated the "imperative" of providing opportunities to professionals and students to master English (Le, 2013, p. 3). This imperative will make it possible for Vietnamese workers to go, work, have contracts, and bring Vietnamese technologies and products overseas (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013).

Current evidence for Vietnam's economic potential for international and regional integration is apparent. For example, a project outline prepared by Vietnam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) details capacity-building at the levels of policy-making, policy-implementation, strategic planning, and leadership, as well as at the

level of international collaboration and exchange to enhance Vietnam's economic development through international integration (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2012). This integration into the global community is viewed not only in terms of economic integration, but also integration in terms of the social, cultural, science and technology sectors. As a corporate example, the Vietnamese telecommunications company, Viettel, is moving regionally into Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar, and internationally into Africa and South America. Vietnam's ICT sector is also conducting work outsourced from the U.S., Europe, Japan, and South Korea.

However, a major challenge to the nation's regional economic, trade, and labor collaboration brought about through the AEC is the quality and qualifications of its workforce, of which English language ability is an important component. According to the founding director and senior advisor to Vietnam's National Foreign Language 2020 Project (NFL2020), the country "does not have a qualified labor force to meet investors' needs" and workers "do not have the language skills needed to communicate effectively in an international working environment," although "soft skills" such as "the ability to work together, decision making . . . presentation skills, how to speak up, and also critical thinking" are among the qualities and skills that the labor force needs to develop (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013).

ASEAN integration is an ambitious endeavor with far-reaching implications for member nations. Vietnam's educational publications reflect goals that strongly relate to ASEAN integration goals. These goals are described below.

Vietnam's Goals related to ASEAN 2015

The goals of Vietnam's education sector reflect ASEAN 2015 integration goals - especially in the areas of regional and international integration for education, science and technology, and economic development. MOET's (2013a) publication, *Education in Vietnam in the Early Years of the 21st Century*, states that the nation's major goal "is to become an industrialized and modernized country by 2020" (p. 10). MOET's goals reflect the need for further development of educational quality and human resources, the universalization of primary education, the development of teachers and educational managers, vocational education, continuing education, international cooperation, improved cooperation in education, foreign language (FL) competency, and research (MOET, 2013a).

Vietnam has been partnering with other countries to prepare its workforce for regional integration. Some of the initiatives include:

- Developing international-standard universities in collaboration with other countries; and
- Promoting partnership programs with Vietnamese universities and international partners to address the quality of specific disciplines.

(N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013)

These programs “ensure high quality training at Vietnamese universities” (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013).

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam issued Decrees No. 34/2008/ND-CP and 46/2011/ND-CP (2008a, 2011) on the recruitment and management of foreigners working in Vietnam to address the free movement of labor among ASEAN nations - regulating the employment of foreign expatriates in Vietnam (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013). These decrees expand upon an earlier decree that limited foreign investors from employing foreign workers as more than 5% of their workforce. However, these decrees allow enterprises to hire foreign workers as up to 80% of their managers, executives and specialists after an appropriate search for local workers has been conducted.

Another decision, No. 1400/QĐ-TTg, entitled *Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages in the National Educational System, Period 2008-2020* (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2008b), was issued by the Prime Minister in 2008 to address Vietnam’s competitive advantage through FL capacity. These policy changes were motivated by the nation’s need to prepare for ASEAN economic integration as well as by the nation’s acceptance into the World Trade Organization and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), whose meetings were held in Vietnam in 2006 (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013). The following section provides further details of the policy initiatives in Vietnam to build English capacity.

Vietnam’s Education and Policy Context

Vietnam has made widespread educational improvements since 2000. The percentage of the government’s budget allocated for education increased from 15.3% in 2001 to 20% in 2008, with 20% of the total state expenditure allotted to education since that time (MOET, 2013a). The number of teachers increased at each level from preschool to university between 1.5 to 3.6 times between 2001 and 2010. For example, in 2001-2002, there were 144,257 preschool teachers, but by 2011-2012, there were 229,724 (MOET, 2013a, p. 31), while the number of higher education lecturers rose from 32,205 in 2001-2002 to 84,109 in 2011-2012 (p. 78). In addition, the number of people educated

at these levels increased 3.4 times, from 5.9 million in 2000 to 20.1 million in 2010 (MOET, 2013a, p. 21). A cycle of general education textbook and program innovations was completed from 2002 to 2008, focusing on “new educational content, teaching methodology, and textbooks to improve the quality of education” (MOET, 2013a, p. 37). This content is described as systematic, comprehensive, and foundational and is linked to workplace realities. There is also a Human Resource Development Strategy for 2011-2020 which focuses on developing the quality and efficiency of the educational workforce and which aims “to have about 30.5 million personnel trained by 2015 (accounting for approximately 55% of the 55 million working people) and 44 million personnel by 2020 (accounting for 70% of the total 63 million working people)” (MOET, 2013a, p. 22). However, according to the Vice Minister of Education, limitations in English capacity are among the nation’s “biggest limitations” (V. H. Nguyen, interview, June 18, 2013).

Foreign Language Policy Changes

In response to growing regional and international demand for workers with FL skills, the government of Vietnam issued a decision to “renovate thoroughly the tasks of teaching and learning foreign language within the national education system” in order to produce graduates who “gain the capacity to use a foreign language independently” (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2008b, p. 1). Decision 1400 gave birth to the National Foreign Language 2020 (NFL2020) Project. According to Vice Minister of Education Nguyen Vinh Hien, who oversees general education, the NFL2020 is expected to bring about a “fundamental change by 2015 in the quality and the methodology of teaching English” and other FLs with the expected outcome of a nation where a strengthened FL capacity is a competitive advantage in the region (V. H. Nguyen, interview, June 18, 2013). This educational renovation addresses a context in which students aged between 16-18 years old who have studied English for approximately 900 hours at upper-secondary level can often not communicate in English effectively, and where teaching and learning are often exam-oriented and focused on vocabulary, grammar, and translation rather than communication.

According to 2013 statistics, there are an estimated 22 million English language learners in Vietnam. This number refers to learners in school of all types and levels of education (MOET, 2013c, 2013d). There is also a disproportionate demand-supply. “With a population of over 85 million, of whom a sizeable proportion have a strong desire to learn English, the demand for English language teaching far outstrips the

supply of native speaker and competent non-native speaker teachers” (Hoang, 2010, p. 15).

Policy changes to support the renovation of FL teaching and learning in Vietnam include beginning English education in Grade 3 rather than Grade 6 as had been the previous practice, with plans to serve all 3rd graders by 2018-19, and creating a unified language proficiency framework with benchmarks for students and teachers (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2008b) compatible with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe, n.d.). Primary and lower secondary teachers are now required to be at the B2 level on the CEFR while upper secondary and university English teachers are required to reach the C1 level. The government has more recently issued additional benchmarks for the C1 level for graduates from English-major tertiary programs and the B2 level for those from non-English major programs, effective from the school year 2012-2013 (MOET, 2013c).

National Foreign Language 2020 Project

Vietnam’s need for FL capacity building is massive, with more than 20 million students studying English and a workforce of an estimated 80,000 public school English teachers, most of whom are in need of further professional development (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013). The management board of the NFL2020 was established in 2010 to implement Decision 1400 - the national renovation of language teaching and learning (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013). Since its inception, the NFL2020 has been addressing a number of major challenges, including: improving English teachers’ language capacity, building 21st Century teaching capacity, and effectively delivering teacher development to the nation’s 80,000 public school English teachers. These challenges and several major initiatives of the NFL2020 are discussed in more detail in the next section.

Vietnam’s Capacity-Building Challenges

The quality and qualifications of Vietnam’s workforce is a major challenge to the regional economic, trade, and labor collaboration brought about through integration into the ASEAN community. According to Vice Minister of Education Nguyen Vinh Hien, major challenges include English teachers’ language skills and teaching methodology, curriculum, facilities, and management. These issues need to be addressed simultaneously to achieve the goals of the national project and to integrate with Vietnam’s ASEAN neighbors. (V.

H. Nguyen, interview, June 18, 2013). Three major challenges to build English capacity in Vietnam for ASEAN 2015 are:

1. Improving teachers' language proficiency;
2. Developing teaching capacity that reflects the demands of the 21st Century; and
3. Delivering effective teacher development.

In the following section, these challenges will be discussed in further detail.

Improving Teachers' Language Proficiency: Widespread Assessment

As described earlier, Vietnam has instituted a new policy for FL proficiency, setting benchmarks for teachers at every level of instruction as well as for students and government workers. The benchmarks consist of five levels that correspond with the CEFR. Upper secondary (high school) teachers are required to reach Level C1 while both lower secondary (junior high) and primary teachers are expected to reach the B2 Level, with a provisional B1 Level for primary teachers (MOET, 2012a; NFL2020, VNIES [Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences], & MOET 2013).

As a part of the NFL2020, an unprecedented, widespread assessment of teacher proficiency has been conducted since 2011 among public school English teachers. Findings from these assessments are alarming when compared to the new proficiency benchmarks. Assessment statistics for 2011 indicate that 97% of the 3,591 primary school teachers tested fell below the B2 benchmark set by the government, 93% of the 3,969 lower secondary teachers who were assessed fell below the B2 level, and 98% of 2,061 high school English teachers fell below the C1 benchmark. In a paper presented at the *Seminar on Strategies of the National Foreign Language Project 2020 During 2013-2020* on 20th September, 2013 in Hanoi, a senior advisor to the NFL2020 reported that 44,995 English teachers had been assessed to date since 2011 (N. H. Nguyen, 2013). The results of those assessments show that 83% of primary English teachers' English language proficiency levels fell below the provisional B1 benchmark level, 87.1% of lower-secondary English teachers tested below the B2 benchmark, 91.8% of the upper-secondary English teachers assessed did not meet the C1 benchmark, nor did 44.6% of college and university English teachers (N. H. Nguyen, 2013).

A major challenge in this national initiative to assess teacher proficiency is the assessment instruments that are used. Although a common guideline on the format of the assessment of teachers' English

was issued by the NFL2020, the quality and reliability of the test instruments that were employed varied among the authorized assessment institutions (N. H. Nguyen, 2013). There has been little or no validation of the tests developed and used within and across the institutions. Variations also exist in the ways different institutions administer and mark their tests. Some institutions employ longer or more tests than others, while some use one or two standardized assessment instruments (for example, the listening and speaking sections of Cambridge, IELTS, or TOEFL tests in place of instruments created by the various testing institutions). Because of these issues, it was difficult to ensure that all teachers were assessed equally and accurately. Moreover, many teachers were not prepared to be assessed, and there was some fear among teachers that assessment data would make their shortcomings public (T. T. H. Nguyen, 2013). It is believed that this attitude would affect assessment outcomes.

In order to address teachers' language proficiency, concentrated training sessions (400 hours per level) have been held for the past three years for thousands of teachers throughout the country (Phan, 2013). These courses have focused on teachers' general language proficiency, and have varied by location, with each training institution developing its own training curriculum.

Building 21st Century Teaching Capacity: The English Teacher Competencies Framework

Decision 1400 (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2008b) mandates that FL teaching methodology be improved for the good of the nation and the capacity of its labor force. This mandate is a response to the needs of Vietnam's society and the 21st Century skills required for the labor force in an integrated ASEAN region. These skills differ from what were called for under the "command economy" where people "listen and act on the orders or instructions from above" (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013). In contrast, soft skills such as collaboration, presentation and discussion skills, critical thinking, and project development are among the abilities needed for the new regional and international labor market (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013).

The nation's need for highly qualified English teachers to build the language and soft skills of the nation's labor force led the NFL2020, major English education institutions, teacher educators, teachers, and international partners (including U.S. and British Council consultants) to ask: What kind of English teachers does Vietnam need for the 21st Century? (N. H. Nguyen & Dudzik, 2013; Dudzik, 2013b).

The exploration of this question began a nearly three-year journey to develop Vietnam's English Teacher Competencies Framework

(ETCF). Drafts of the ETCF were informed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (2002), the Hue University-World Bank EFL Teacher Education Standards project (Hue University, 2010), TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) International Association position papers such as the paper on teacher quality (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages [TESOL], 2003), the China English as a Foreign Language Standards Project: Teacher Performance Standards (TESOL, 2006), the TESOL Standards for ESL / EFL Teachers of Adults Framework (TESOL, 2009), and the TESOL / NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) Standards for the Recognition of Initial TESOL Programs in P-12 ESL Teacher Education (TESOL, 2010). Research information such as that from Allwright and Tarone (2005), Ball and Cohen (1999), Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage (2005), Freeman and Johnson (1998), and Velez-Rendon (2002) also informed the drafting of the ETCF.

Vietnam's ETCF was approved by MOET in December 2012 as the country's first subject-specific teacher competency framework. The ETCF is the result of careful consideration of Vietnam's FL teaching context and goals, international teacher development research, international examples of FL teacher standards, and collaboration among Vietnamese educators, administrators, institutions, and international consultants.

The framework for the ETCF is based upon five domains:

1. Knowledge of subject matter (English) and curriculum;
2. Knowledge of teaching;
3. Knowledge of learners;
4. Professional attitudes and values embedded across knowledge domains; and
5. Learning in and from practice and being informed by context.

(MOET, 2012a; NFL2020, VNIES, & MOET, 2013)

Each of the framework's five domains consists of between two and six competencies. Each competency is elaborated with a number of performance indicators. A parallel pre-service version of the ETCF, the first version drafted, is more academic in content and rigorous in its performance indicators. (Dudzik & Tran, 2012; NFL2020, VNIES, & MOET, 2013)

The vision of Vietnam's ETCF is to develop English teachers who are "professional practitioners with adaptive expertise" (Dudzik, 2008,

p. 135, 2009, p. 109; NFL2020, VNIES, & MOET, 2013, p. 8). This vision combines teacher professionalism with “adaptive expertise” - the ability to adjust teaching competencies as teaching beliefs are challenged, as opposed to routine knowledge performed more efficiently over a teacher’s lifetime - which is considered the “gold standard” (Bransford, Deny, Berliner, Hammerness, & Beckett, 2005, p. 76) of professional practice in teacher preparation (NFL2020, VNIES, & MOET, 2013). This notion counteracts the commonly held image of teachers as teaching machines.

The four major purposes of the ETCF are: needs assessment, program evaluation, program improvement, and teacher self-assessment. The ETCF is intended to guide English teacher professional development content and processes. Competency-based teacher development is intended to employ the methodology, values, and knowledge represented in the ETCF, providing a new “apprenticeship of observation” (Lortie, 1975, p. 61) whereby teachers experience and practice the types of activities, behaviors, and processes in teacher development workshops and courses rather than merely learning about and passively receiving information regarding current innovations (NFL2020, VNIES, & MOET, 2013).

Vietnam’s English teacher competencies are relevant to ASEAN integration in several respects. ETCF Domain 1 (the knowledge of English) includes not only competencies related to the language system (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.), language proficiency, and understanding of how languages are learned, but also competencies regarding the cultures of English-speaking countries and basic academic content in English. Cultural and academic knowledge as well as language proficiency are necessary among ASEAN users of English for successful regional integration. Teachers are expected to develop competencies in these areas in order to be able to help students be able to develop and use language in meaningful ways. ETCF Domain 4 (professional attitudes and values) includes 21st Century skills such as collaboration, teamwork, and lifelong learning. These soft skills are important for multilingual users to develop in order to work in multicultural and multilingual regional environments. ETCF Domain 5 (the context of language use) includes competencies regarding contextual awareness of multilingualism, the uses of English as a lingua franca, regional varieties of English and relevant regional content, contextually appropriate methodology and language standards, and understanding the role of English as a global language. These contextual understandings are vital for developing a nation of competent language users with intercultural and communicative competence - major goals of Decision 1400 (Socialist Republic of

Vietnam, 2008b). These contextual competencies are more fully represented in the rigorous pre-service version of ETCF intended to inform teacher training curricula and programs (NFL2020, VNIES, & MOET, 2013; MOET, 2012).

Application of the ETCF began in the spring of 2013 with a national symposium (Dudzik, 2013b) and curriculum workshops which were held at four major regional teacher development centers in the north, south-central, and southern parts of the country. A total of 252 teacher trainers and curriculum developers from all five centers began to explore ways to map their training curricula to the ETCF, evaluate their existing curricula in light of the ETCF, and embed competencies into existing course curricula (Dudzik, 2013c).

A user's guide for English teacher trainers was also developed. This guide includes an ETCF-based teacher self-reported strengths and needs assessment (Section 4, NFL2020, VNIES, & MOET, 2013). However, ETCF-based observation protocols to assess teachers' classroom performance have not been implemented to date. According to the NFL2020 founding director, this lack hinders the application of new teaching methodology (N. H. Nguyen, 2013).

A major FL teacher education (TE) university in Hanoi used the ETCF as a lens through which to conduct competency-based curriculum evaluations of their premiere English TE curriculum (Dudzik & Vu, 2011) and, in cooperation with the NFL2020, of the national English teacher education curriculum (NETEC) (Dudzik & Tran, 2012), resulting in improved curricula. Changes that resulted from these ETCF-based curricular improvements support ASEAN integration in a number of ways, including linking the language proficiency components of the university's English TE curriculum and the NETEC to CEFR benchmarks that prioritize language use and replacing a previous overemphasis on theoretical knowledge with usable language and skills by adding content and soft skills that their students will presumably need for ASEAN-regional communication. The university received ASEAN University Network (AUN) accreditation of this revised English TE proficiency curriculum in 2012. This program is the first English TE program to receive AUN accreditation in Vietnam. Additionally, three new contextual courses, *Teaching English as an International Language*, *World Englishes*, and *South East Asian Cultures* were added to the university curriculum as a result of the ETCF-based evaluation (Dudzik & Tran, 2012). These achievements support ASEAN integration goals as reflected in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint (ASEAN, 2009). The sub-points for the Strategic Objective for the development of education include "the teaching of common values and cultural heritage in school curricula and developing . . . materials . . . for this purpose [and] develop . . .

courses on ASEAN studies” (p. 2). Finally, an international publisher, National Geographic Learning / Cengage Learning, mapped its online ELTeach program to the ETCF framework for use in Vietnam.

The ETCF was introduced to English educators nationally at a symposium in May of 2013. Symposium presentations explored topics such as using technology to address national teacher development (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2013), influencing the future of ELT with the ETCF (Dudzik, 2013b), and using the ETCF to improve pre-service teacher training curricula (Do, 2013). Additionally, a major educational publisher mapped two online teacher development courses to the ETCF in the spring of 2013 (Dudzik, 2013a).

Although there has not been any official evaluation of the ETCF to date, there are good signs of its effectiveness. An increasing number of teacher training programs, including those at major teacher training universities, are beginning to use the ETCF in program development. For example, the University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University (ULIS / VNU) has revised the curricula of their five bachelor TE programs in line with the ETCF. They are currently designing the detailed course syllabi of these programs. At the end of 2013, ULIS / VNU also developed an ETCF-based training program on teaching methodology for English teachers at non-English major tertiary programs at the request of the NFL2020. The training modules were designed to address the five components of the ETCF. Thirty trainers from the leading teacher training institutions and about one hundred English teachers from non-English major colleges and universities have been trained. The program was appraised as one of the most practical and effective teacher training programs by the NFL2020 in 2013 (Phan, 2013).

Delivering Effective Teacher Development: Regional Foreign Language Centers

In light of the sweeping changes in FL teaching and learning called for by Government Decision 1400 (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2008b), the nation’s already over-burdened English TE institutions were deemed inadequate to address the needs of the estimated 80,000 public school English teachers. As a result, a network of flagship English teacher training universities was created to address teachers’ language proficiency, teaching capacity, action research, assessment, and use of technology in language teaching. The concept of regional “Centers for Excellence in English Education at Vietnamese Universities” was originally recommended by the Advisory Group on English Language Acquisition of the U.S.-Vietnam Education Task

Force (U.S. Department of State & MOET, 2009, p. 49). The task force recommended that these centers serve five major functions:

- provide teacher-training programs for practicing English teachers at all levels;
- offer relevant (TESOL, applied linguistics, linguistics) graduate degrees;
- host regional English teacher conferences;
- alternate hosting an annual, national ELT conference in Vietnam; and
- introduce new language teaching methodologies.

Based upon these recommendations, the NFL2020, in collaboration with two major universities, proposed the formation of Regional Foreign Language Centers (RFLCs) at flagship language and TE universities throughout the country. MOET appointed the first five RFLCs in January 2013 (Nguyen, H., 2013). The Deputy Minister of Education and Training charged the centers with the responsibility of leading FL teaching and learning innovations. Specific tasks include:

- renovating the contents, methods, and technology for language teaching and learning;
- ensuring that proficiency benchmarks for both students and teachers are met;
- conducting research regarding language teaching, learning, and assessment;
- training teachers in CEFR-based proficiency assessment;
- strengthening the use of technology in language teaching, learning, and assessment;
- spearheading lifelong learning of FLs in the society;
- creating a network among regional centers in teacher training, action research, technology, and assessment.

(V. H. Nguyen, 2013)

During initial conceptualization of the RFLCs, leaders from each of the five centers chose a national capacity-building focus from among the ETCF's major domains. The five emphases originally chosen were: language proficiency, teaching methodology, technology for language teaching, action research, and assessment. (Dudzik, 2012)

The former deputy director of the NFL2020 reported in 2013 that in-service teacher training programs developed for the NFL2020 include:

- proficiency programs (consisting of 400 hours of training at each proficiency level);
- a teaching methodology training program for primary English teachers (conducted for 2 years, in 2012 and 2013, consisting of 180 hours) which received positive feedback on its usefulness, effectiveness, and practicality;
- a teaching methodology training program for lower-secondary English teachers (conducted for one year, consisting of 50 hours and 5 modules) which received positive feedback from trainees on its practicality and usefulness;
- a teaching methodology course for English teachers at non-English major universities and colleges (pilot course conducted in late 2013 with 30 teachers from English major universities and colleges, consisting of 50 hours).

(Phan, 2013)

The activities discussed above as well as other major activities of the NFL2020 have been conducted primarily through the five RFLCs. The contribution of these centers was discussed at the *Seminar on Strategies of the NFL2020 during 2013-2020*. It is expected that in the next phase of the NFL2020 (2014-2020), RFLCs will continue to provide national leadership in five identified areas (language proficiency, teaching methodology, technology for language teaching, action research, and assessment) not only by strengthening their own involvement in the project activities, but also by guiding and coaching other language training institutions in the country to meet the goals of the NFL2020 (V. H. Nguyen, 2013).

In the summer of 2014, the NFL2020 conducted training of trainers (ToT) for more than 800 English professionals to be prepared to train English teachers in their provinces in two major foci: ICT for language teaching and, in an online course, development of teachers' classroom English proficiency. It remains to be seen whether the NFL2020 will follow through with the next vital step of using some of these newly-trained trainers to deliver professional development on these two important foci to those who really need it - provincial English teachers (Dudzik, field notes, August-September 2014).

Discussion

The NFL2020 is an ambitious, multifaceted national project to build FL capacity that was created in response to Decision 1400

(Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2008b). A number of accomplishments can be observed from the first five years of the project which, while conceived in 2008, did not begin to function until 2010 with the establishment of the NFL2020 project office. Policy-level changes such as the establishment of CEFR-based proficiency benchmarks for students and FL teachers, the development and adoption of the ETCF, the nation's first subject-specific teacher standards, as well as widespread proficiency assessments and short-term training programs for public school English teachers are among those accomplishments. Reflecting on the achievements of the project to date, the Vice Minister of Education stated that while significant achievements have not been measured, there have been some initial positive changes to the landscape of FL teaching and learning in Vietnam. One of these is a greater awareness of the importance of addressing teacher quality. For years, the solutions to improve the quality of teaching focused primarily on revising teaching materials and providing more teaching aids. In other words, the focus has been on what the teachers are equipped to teach, rather than on the capacity of the teachers themselves. However, MOET leaders are now not only aware of the critical role of teacher quality, but also determined to capture a more accurate picture of the nation's English teachers. Their determination has been strong, which can be seen from the widespread assessment during the last three years. These are significant initiatives in an Asian context where teachers are normally believed to be "good" and "right"; in such a context, expecting teachers to accept ongoing assessment of their proficiency and performance is not a simple matter. The fact that many teachers are not ready to be assessed or may have negative opinions regarding teacher assessment is an inevitable challenge for the NFL2020. For these reasons, the wider awareness of the importance of teacher quality nationwide, and the widespread assessment of English teachers at public schools are judged to represent initial success.

In addition, the adoption of the CEFR-based benchmarks and the development of the ETCF based on international research and standards can ensure that Vietnamese teachers are assessed in line with those international standards. It is hoped that by aligning Vietnam's teacher development curriculum to these frameworks, national teacher preparation and development will be raised to international standards. These issues are crucial to reach the goal of developing new Vietnamese generations of human resources with adequate English capacity for international and regional integration (V. H. Nguyen, interview, June 18, 2013).

Moreover, one RFLC leader highlighted major achievements and challenges of the NFL2020 after three years of implementation. Dr. Phan Van Hoa, President of Da Nang University of Foreign Languages,

described the core of the NFL2020 as “the synergy of wisdom, commitment and heart” (T. T. H. Nguyen, 2013). According to Dr. Hoa, the NFL2020 has empowered teachers, equipping them with new teaching methodologies to improve their teaching and better help learners to reach national and international FL proficiency standards necessary for the nation’s regional and international integration and development. However, challenges to meet the goals of the NFL2020 include limited financial resources, limited public awareness of the ambitious project goals, inadequate compensation of trainers, lack of designated, adequately-compensated managerial staff, and inadequate professional and managerial capacity. According to Dr. Hoa, local human resources are not enough and it is necessary to mobilize additional resources, including national and international specialists and international resources, to support the NFL2020 (T. T. H. Nguyen, 2013).

According to Nguyen Ngoc Hung, founding director of the NFL2020 (interview, June 20, 2013), despite the initial achievements, a major challenge is the limited resources to address the scope of the project. He stated that the Government of Vietnam and the NFL2020 cannot build national English capacity alone and feels there is a need for international investment and cooperation, coordination and initiatives among different sectors, and an increase in the number of FL centers, schools, evening classes, and programs to meet the variety of English learning needs that national, regional, and international opportunities present. Teachers’ language proficiency is only “Step One” with improvements in teachers’ communication skills and quality of teaching as the goal. The role of the NFL2020 is to “empower teachers with the capacity for self-study, for the development of lifelong learning so they don’t forget and lose the capacity [they previously gained]” and to exploit technology for this purpose as well (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013). The Deputy Minister of Education echoed the sentiment that the NFL2020 needs the involvement and support of international partners and their expertise in order to succeed (V. H. Nguyen, interview, June 18, 2013).

The Vietnamese government needs to continue to promote the AEC within Vietnam because awareness is very important for any change in preparation for ASEAN 2015. According to one former official, the public does not know much about ASEAN integration or the implications and challenges ahead, beyond the “vanguard educational task force” that the NFL2020 has been, to work actively for ASEAN 2015 (N. H. Nguyen, interview, June 20, 2013).

Some of the directions that Vietnam must take in the next six years, stated by Deputy Minister of Education Nguyen Vinh Hien, include steps to:

- continue the assessment, development, and capacity building of teachers at all levels;
- develop FL curriculum in line with Vietnam's 6-level (CEFR-based) proficiency benchmarks;
- build a national FL testing center;
- improve teaching and learning facilities and develop technology, software, and materials for teaching and learning; and
- expand the NFL2020 selectively, based on institutional and local capacity profiles, work plans, detailed financial estimations, and monitoring and reporting capacity.

(V. H. Nguyen, 2013)

The importance of networking and collaboration among the five RFLCs as well as between the regional centers and local universities and colleges was also highlighted. Collaboration and coaching are considered the key factor of the next phase of the NFL2020 (V. H. Nguyen, 2013).

The NFL2020 goals are ambitious, and the evidence stated above demonstrates progress as well as continued challenges to meeting those goals in order to build a nation with FL competency as a competitive advantage regionally and internationally, as stated in Decision 1400 (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2008b). Lessons from Vietnam's national project and recommendations for further action follow in the next section.

Lessons and Recommendations

The NFL2020's English capacity-building initiatives clearly support ASEAN integration goals of promoting English language use, building English language capacity, enhancing human resource development, and preparing a competent and well-qualified work force. Lessons and recommendations are summarized below.

Lesson One: Create ASEAN Integration-Enabling Policies

Vietnam has created new language education policies that should help to enable successful regional and international integration. These policies include the development of language proficiency benchmarks and English teacher competencies.

Proficiency framework. Vietnam has developed a CEFR-based proficiency framework, using this international standard to assign benchmarks for general education, higher education, and English and other FL teachers, as well as for government officials. To date, this framework has been primarily applied in the educational sector. However, it can be expected that it will soon be applied in the wider public and eventually nationwide. In fact, according to Circular 05/2012 (MOET, 2012b), the requirements of FL capacity for all postgraduate education programs of all majors (B1 for master's degrees and B2 for doctoral degrees) can impact human resource development in other industries and sectors, particularly their core and elite staff and professionals, who often pursue further study for their professional development. Thus, the application of the CEFR-based framework in education is a wise choice to prepare new generations for international and regional integration.

English teacher competencies framework. Vietnam has begun to address English teacher quality through the development of an English language teacher competencies framework, the ETCF. This initiative is built upon the assumption that more highly qualified (including highly proficient) teachers will contribute to raising the level of FL competency in Vietnam's society. As discussed earlier, this assumption seems to be common sense, but the development and actual application of such a framework to assess and develop teachers in an Asian nation requires a certain level of political determination. In the context of Vietnam, the need to meet ASEAN integration goals may be an important driving force for this determination. However, Vietnam's ETCF took nearly three years from drafting to approval, and is still in the early stages of adoption and application.

Lesson Two: Apply Frameworks to Evaluate and Improve Curricula

Vietnam has successfully begun to use the ETCF and the CEFR frameworks to evaluate and improve both pre-service and in-service teacher English education curricula. Teacher educators and teacher training curricula developers nationally and regionally need to become equipped to conduct curriculum evaluations and to use competency-based frameworks to improve curricula, identify strengths and gaps, assign and embed relevant competencies into courses, and design measurable curriculum and course-level objectives that employ the framework's competencies and benchmarks. Primary and secondary curricula and materials developers need to understand and be equipped to use CEFR-based proficiency benchmarks to design language learning curricula and materials that lead to the achievement of those benchmarks' outcomes. They also need to be aware of ETCF content,

methodology, and processes in order to create curricula and materials that reflect the content, methodology, and processes that teachers are developing.

Lesson Three: Make Room for New Emphases in Teacher Training Curricula

An early version of the ETCF was used as a lens through which to examine and identify strengths, gaps, and redundancies in Vietnam's NETEC. When a leading university used these findings to improve its own pre-service ELT curriculum, it omitted some general courses, downgraded the number of credits in some others, and made it a priority to develop several new courses (initially to be offered as electives) whose content were found lacking in the curriculum. Three contextual courses added - *Teaching English as an International Language*, *World Englishes*, and *South East Asian Cultures* - are among the first of their kind at public institutions in Vietnam. These courses are informed by ETCF Domain 5 and by ASEAN and international integration goals. Additionally, even traditional English skill subjects (i.e., speaking, listening, writing, and reading), have the potential to be informed by ETCF Domain 5, no longer by teaching and assessing only native speaker varieties of English from the UK, the U.S., and Australia, but also by introducing those spoken in neighboring countries and by other regional multilingual speakers such as Singaporeans and Malaysians.

Lesson Four: Create Suitable Vehicles for National Foreign Language Capacity-Building

Vietnam identified and appointed RFLCs to lead the country in building FL capacity. These centers are located at leading language and TE universities throughout the country. They have been given government funding to assess teachers' proficiency and conduct proficiency and methodology trainings for in-service English teachers. However, leaders and staff of these centers most often play several major roles (e.g., administrators, teacher educators) at their institutions and usually have to take on additional work to make a living wage. The establishment of these RFLCs has been a way to address resource limitations on a national scale. However, it is important also to find solutions to the limited resources at the institutional scale of these RFLCs, that is, to find enough staff for these centers and provide adequate incentives and funding for the important tasks they are assigned to perform.

Lesson Five: Set Priorities and Provide Adequate Funding, Personnel and Time

The four lessons above require massive funding, high levels of expertise, and dedicated staff. The Vietnamese Government's solutions to address the challenges of resource limitations include, first, mobilization of and partnerships with international experts and organizations, and second, the setting of priorities for each period. For example, teacher proficiency assessment was identified as "Step One," along with the development and revision of assessment instruments during the first years of the NFL2020. The establishment of the RFLCs, each with one identified national capacity-building focus, makes it possible to allocate limited resources for optimal quality. For example, one RFLC located in Hanoi was appointed as a center of excellence in assessment, and is being invested in and prioritized to conduct research and projects on an assessment instrument in order to lead the application of the framework on the national scale. It will take time to equip language teachers, teacher educators, and language TE curriculum developers with understanding of the CEFR and ETCF frameworks and with practical knowledge of how to apply these to their teaching, self-assessment, curriculum improvement, materials development, and staff development initiatives. The development process was a collaboration among government ministry institutions, universities, and outside experts, but was plagued with redundancies, delays, and insufficient numbers of qualified and dedicated staff. These initiatives require further national oversight, coordination, and funding as well as institutional support, buy-in, and staff who are assigned and dedicated to the project for sufficient lengths of time.

Recommendations

Vietnam's NFL2020 is an example for other nations in the region. While it is plagued with problems and redundancies, lacks funding, personnel, and staff dedicated to its task, and changed leadership after the first five years, it has begun to impart a national vision and created initiatives to impact FL learning throughout the nation. Several recommendations for Vietnam and its ASEAN neighbors are detailed below:

Create a Common Regional Proficiency Assessment Framework

Create a valid and reliable regional standard for the assessment of language proficiency that employs international standards of intelligibility (rather than native-speaker standards) and regional corpuses. Ideally, this common regional standard, similar to the CEFR,

should be regionally developed, perhaps by ASEAN and SEAMEO (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization) and a consortium of leading universities in the region with funding perhaps from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and key regional and international stakeholders. Individual member nations can then develop their own national tests that align with this framework.

Create Regional English Teacher Competency Assessment Tools

Create English (and FL) teacher competency assessment tools such as teacher self-assessments and praxis assessments for pre-service teachers at all levels of instruction: primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, pre-service graduates, and even to college and university teachers. Develop regional tools using national language teacher competency frameworks such as Vietnam's ETCF and Malaysia's Pedagogy Standards, perhaps led by ASEAN, with collaboration among SEAMEO and a consortium of leading universities in the region with funding from key regional and international stakeholders.

Align Teacher Training Curricula and Language Learners' Curricula and Textbooks to Benchmarks and Competencies

Proficiency benchmarks (such as the CEFR) should be explicitly stated as outcomes of language learner curricula and materials. Also, the content and processes that teachers are being trained to use (through frameworks like the ETCF) should be explicit and evident in language learner curricula. For example, if teamwork and collaboration are processes being required in the ETCF, then English language learner curricula and textbooks should provide activities and opportunities for teamwork and collaborative exercises. As another example, if teaching language through academic, international, or regional cultural content are important teacher competencies (as in the ETCF), then students' language learning curricula and textbooks should also reflect those emphases (in addition to the skills and topics generally found in language courses). Ministries of education officials from a variety of departments as well as curriculum developers from major universities need to become aware of and equipped with the skills to use proficiency benchmarks and teacher competencies as they improve curricula and create new materials. Regional and international publishers should also be made aware of national benchmarks and teacher competencies frameworks and be encouraged to "map" or align their products and services to these national interests, as National Geographic Learning / Cengage Learning has mapped its computer-based *ELTeach* professional development series to Vietnam's ETCF.

Develop National or Regional Centers to Carry Out Capacity-Building Priorities

Vietnam's RFLCs can be a model for other countries in the region. These centers are beginning to function as national flagships to network and coordinate teacher capacity-building priorities throughout the country. These centers can also host national and international experts and put them to use in national capacity-building initiatives such as the five RFLC emphases of language proficiency, teaching methodology, technology for language teaching, action research, and assessment. For example, the U.S. Embassy in Vietnam began prioritizing the placement of their English Language Fellows at regional centers in 2012. The contributions of other international expertise such as British Council personnel, Fulbright Scholars and Fulbright English Teaching Assistants, and English volunteers from international non-governmental organizations could also be coordinated through the oversight of a national project such as the NFL2020 and connected to capacity-building efforts being carried out by regional centers such as Vietnam's RFLCs. If adequately funded and governed, these centers can in turn hire local staff to carry out national teacher development activities and conduct assessments and innovative research to inform ELT in the nation as a whole.

Consider the Role and Development of Other Regional and International Languages

During its first five years, the focus of the NFL2020 was primarily on English capacity-building. However, the NFL2020 is, by its name, a national project to build FL capacity. This emphasis is beginning to be addressed more fully in Phase Two of the project. In addition to other international languages, however, regional languages should be emphasized among the ten ASEAN nations. Perhaps several of the most populous regional languages represented by ASEAN should be chosen as additional languages, and regional capacity should be built for using those languages in addition to English as the language of ASEAN.

Additional Research

Additional research needs to be conducted regarding Vietnam's NFL2020 capacity-building initiatives. Some suggested research is described below.

National Project

The NFL2020 has made impressive progress since 2010. Research about the major issues, policies, and initiatives would inform future

planning and also inform other ASEAN countries about how to use this model for effective FL capacity building. Questions regarding teacher proficiency, language assessment instruments, Vietnam's RFLCs, and the effectiveness of the project as a whole need to be asked. Questions may include:

Research regarding teachers' language proficiency. What progress is being made toward reaching teachers' language proficiency benchmarks? What factors contribute to that progress? How are teachers addressing their own proficiency improvement? How are NFL2020 teacher development courses affecting teachers' language proficiency levels? What innovations are being developed to address teachers' language proficiency? What challenges or hindrances are there? How does teachers' language proficiency improvement affect language learners' outcomes? How does it affect the amount of English used in classrooms?

Research regarding English teachers' competencies. How are teachers' competencies being built through the ETCF? To what extent are institutions (primarily the RFLCs) linking English teacher training curricula to the ETCF? How are these competencies affecting the content, methodologies, values, and processes teachers use in their classrooms? What are students' responses to new content, methodologies, and processes?

Research regarding assessment instruments. What instruments are being used to assess teachers' language proficiency? What instruments are being used to assess learners' language proficiency? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these instruments? What innovations in language assessment are being used? What unintended consequences are being experienced as a result of the instruments and processes of assessment being used? How can teachers' performance be assessed using the ETCF?

Research regarding RFLCs. How do Vietnam's RFLCs act as flagships in their major capacity-building areas of building teacher proficiency, teaching capacity, assessment, and action research? How are the RFLCs coordinating human resources from other institutions? How are the RFLCs partnering with non-governmental organizations to reach their goals? How are the resources and agencies of foreign governments being utilized at RFLCs to build language capacity? What policies help or hinder the effective work of the RFLCs?

Research regarding NFL2020 effectiveness. How can we evaluate the effects of the implementation of the NFL2020 on the institution? How do ASEAN goals inform the NFL2020? How does the NFL2020 serve the nation's integration into the ASEAN economic community?

Conclusion

Building national and regional FL capacity is a multi-dimensional task. This task is an essential component for successful integration into the ASEAN Economic Community as English is used as a lingua franca for Southeast Asian regional integration. Vietnam's NFL2020 demonstrates this multi-dimensionality. It exhibits national, governmental, policy-level, institutional, administrative, financial, and human resource-building initiatives. At the national level, the NFL2020 has issued education policies such as the CEFR-based language proficiency benchmarks for teachers, learners, and officials. It has developed a competency framework for English language teachers (the ETCF). The NFL2020 has also appointed regional centers (RFLCs) to carry out teacher assessments and development throughout the country and to strategically coordinate national capacity to achieve the goals of the project. The CEFR-based proficiency benchmarks and the ETCF provide guidance for English TE curriculum development, evaluation, and improvement, as well as for English teacher assessment and materials' development. The RFLCs are the major vehicles to provide technical expertise to design English teacher training curricula, deliver focused, framework-based teacher development, and utilize international expertise for a national impact. Valid and reliable assessments and framework-based curricula and materials need to be carefully developed in order to implement these new proficiency and competency standards. Public school English textbooks and materials need to be aligned with the CEFR benchmarks and incorporate the content, processes, and methodologies contained in the ETCF and serve as guides for teachers as they seek to work more competently and professionally. The NFL2020 contributes to the ASEAN goals of regional socio-cultural, economic, and political integration by addressing educational disparities, creating educational standards, and building the English language proficiency capacity and 21st Century soft skills called for by the ASEAN regional labor market. Although still in its initial phases, through its initiatives, the NFL2020 is making concrete and positive changes that address the vast demand for English language in light of ASEAN integration. The ASEAN hope for peace, stability, and prosperity in the region is at stake for the establishment of regional synergy and the good of the nations and citizens of the ASEAN region.

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Brunei's Role in ASEAN Integration: English Language as Capital

Noor Azam Haji-Othman
Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Salbrina Sharbawi
Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Two significant events that immediately followed Brunei Darussalam's independence from Great Britain in 1984 were the sultanate's joining ASEAN as a new sovereign state, and its introduction of the bilingual English-Malay education system. Both of these events will be central to this chapter. Ever since joining ASEAN, Brunei has steadily gained confidence in its role as a team-player in ASEAN, leading up to its inaugural chairmanship in 2013. Certainly, Brunei has been a strong supporter of ASEAN integration. The significance of the bilingual education system is that generations of Bruneians have become fluent in both Malay and English so that today, the nation can confidently reach out to ASEAN partners and offer English language training on the merit of its qualified and well-trained teachers, as well as because of the conducive bilingual environment for effective language learning. It is against this backdrop that this chapter outlines Brunei's role and contribution to ASEAN integration through education, in particular, English language education. Brunei's Ministry of Education and Universiti Brunei Darussalam work with other government ministries and departments in providing training opportunities to ASEAN citizens through various programmes in Brunei such as the English language programme for diplomats from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Thailand (CLMVIT) and the Brunei-U.S. English Language Enrichment Project (ELEP) for ASEAN. The chapter ultimately illustrates Brunei's commitment to the idea of ASEAN integration, and how it uses its strong education and unique linguistic back-ground to help materialise the vision.

Brunei is situated on the north-east of Borneo Island, with a northern coastline of about 161 kilometers along the South China Sea, and is divided into two. The smallest district by population, Temburong District, is separated from the capital Bandar Seri Begawan by the Malaysian town Limbang. Most of Brunei's population lives in the Brunei-Muara District, where the capital is located, or in the Tutong or Belait Districts. Brunei-Muara has the smallest land area, but it is the most urban part of the country and the most populous. This district is the most significant in terms of it being the centre of government and commerce. The Tutong District is where indigenous groups such as the Tutong, Kedayan, Dusun, and Iban reside. The Belait District is the traditional district of residence of the Belait community. There are of course other ethnic groups such as the Chinese, the largest ethnic minority in Brunei, who live across the country.

Historically, Brunei became a British protectorate in 1888, and this status was reinforced in 1906 when Brunei appointed its first British Resident who acted as governor of the state in all matters except religion and custom. This event was significant in terms of becoming the starting point of educational developments in Brunei and how this changed the linguistic landscape in the country.

Noor Azam (2005, 2007, 2008) has traced how previously monolingual communities in Brunei became bilingual in Malay and their traditional languages, and how as the nation transitioned into the modern day Brunei, the English language assumed increasing importance amongst Bruneians. In fact, Martin (2002) argued that any "discussion of the sociolinguistic context of Brunei would be incomplete without reference to the position of English." Such is the prominent role of English that a local variety has become the subject of writers such as Cane (1994), McLellan and Noor Azam (2012), Deterding and Salbrina (2013), and Salbrina (2011), each of whom have focused on various features they believe identifies a nativised English variety. That a local variety seems to have emerged suggests that the environment is conducive to the stabilisation or persistence of those various identifying features. This in turn indicates the pervasive use of the English language in a country that professes the epicentral role of Muslim Malay culture, including the Malay language. To fully appreciate how English, the language of British colonial masters, became one of Brunei's own, one must look at the education system that helped infuse English into the Bruneian daily life. The year 1984, when Brunei regained full independence, is pivotal in this discussion, as that was also when it joined ASEAN upon independence. But educational developments pre- and post-independence have significance in terms of how and why Brunei has invested so much money

into the English language, as well as how and why it is now able to capitalise on the rewards for diplomatic purposes.

Formal Education Pre-Independence

Noor Azam (2012) outlined the development of education in Brunei. The country has in fact just celebrated 100 years of formal education, which began with the opening of the first Malay vernacular boys' school in 1914, followed by three others in Muara, Tutong and Belait in 1918. Gunn (1997) cited the Annual Report for 1918 as stating how Bruneians were still unready for compulsory universal education, as evidenced by the notable absence of development in the education sector in the 1920s. But in the 1930s, there was more optimism among the public, as more schools were opened, including the ground-breaking opening of Brunei's first girls' school. In addition, there was also an encouraging increase in student attendance for those aged between 7 and 14. Between 1938 and 1941, five mission English schools were set up. When the war began in 1941, Brunei had an impressive enrollment of 1,746 students; nearly 19% were female. The 32 schools throughout the country included 24 Malay vernacular schools and 8 private schools: five Chinese and three English (Ministry of Education, 2002).

Brunei was occupied by the Japanese military from 1941 to 1945. Gunn (1997, p. 98) argued that the Japanese had realised the importance of "social engineering" in Brunei more than the British did. One of their efforts was to introduce the Romanized script (*Rumi*) for the Malay language, which had traditionally been written in Arabic script (*Jawi*). Jasmin Abdullah (1987, p. 7) recognised this as one of the Japanese "lasting legacies" in Brunei, in that they had promoted an awareness of the importance of education among the population.

The first Government English school was opened in October 1951 in Brunei Town, and the second in Kuala Belait in 1952, paving the way for English-medium secondary education in Brunei. Noor Azam (2012) remarked on how Malay-medium secondary education only became available 15 years later. Despite this oddity, the 1950s saw huge developments in education in Brunei, facilitated by the 1954 Five-Year Development Plan.

According to Jones (1994, pp. 115-116), in the 1960s and 1970s, Brunei had readied itself for a planned switch-over to Malay-medium instruction in primary and secondary education, resulting from recommendations of the 1962 National Educational Policy and the Education Commission in 1972. But a diplomatic breakdown between Malaysia and Brunei left Brunei with no choice but to send its students, teachers, and officers to British universities. English had suddenly

become important, as Bruneian students had to be prepared to study and live in the UK.

Formal Education Post-Independence

At independence, Brunei declared itself a Malay Muslim Sultanate, but instead of imposing a full Malay-medium national curriculum on its students, Brunei controversially and rather radically introduced an unprecedented bilingual education policy in 1985. This was Brunei carving a Malay national identity for itself amidst its peers in Southeast Asia, and yet at the same time it had to compete with other ASEAN member countries in terms of education and national development.

The *Dwibahasa* system, literally meaning “two-languages,” required the use of English and Malay in different subjects throughout the national primary and secondary education curricula prescribed by the Ministry of Education. The Malay language was used in all subjects except English Language from pre-school to the third year of primary school. From then on, the medium of instruction was English for all other subjects except for Malay Language, Islamic Religious Knowledge, Physical Education, Arts and Crafts, Civics, and MIB (Malay Islamic Monarchy).

The ultimate aim of the *Dwibahasa* system was to produce competent bilinguals (c.f. Phillipson’s notion of “parallel competence,” 2008, pp. 1-43). But Braighlinn argued that “the supposed development of the Malay language as a medium of literary expression and analytical thought has instead been thwarted by the introduction of the *Dwibahasa* system” (1992, p. 21). This was supported by Martin (2002), who argued that the national education system did more good for English than it did for Malay. Noor Azam (2012) referred to the “valorization of English” throughout the 1990s.

Brunei updated its education system in January 2009 with the introduction of the *Sistem Pendidikan Negara Abad Ke 21* (SPN 21, the National Education System for the 21st Century), replacing the *Dwibahasa* system over the next three to four years. It aims for students to become autonomous and productive learners so that they may successfully join Brunei’s professional labor force (Ministry of Education, 2009). Implicit in these aims is the notion that English language proficiency is seen as a 21st Century skill for global communication. Noor Azam (2012) noted that this new system has been criticised for seemingly having a greater focus on English than did the *Dwibahasa* system.

English Language as Capital

The history of English language in the Brunei education system outlined above can be seen within the construct of “investment.” Norton (2013, para. 2), building on the work of Bourdieu (1991), argued “the construct of investment signals the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language” as well as their motivation to learn the target language. The country’s choice to invest in English may have been by accident of circumstance rather than by design initially, but Brunei’s decision to invest in both Malay and English through the *Dwibahasa* system was far from accidental. Likewise, its motivation for investing was ultimately for nation-building initially, but regional integration gained as much significance. According to Norton (2013, para. 2), such investments are done “with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic resources (language, education, friendship) and material resources (capital goods, real estate, money), which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power.” Indeed, English has become a major resource of Brunei to the point where it can confidently share it with other members of ASEAN who might require training. In other words, Brunei is using language as social and political capital for ASEAN integration.

On 9 October, 2014, on the 24th Teacher’s Day celebrations, Brunei also marked the centenary anniversary of formal education in the country. In his speech, the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei noted:

At the international level, the Sultanate has participated in the global commitment to provide basic quality education for all children, young and adult persons. I am pleased to note that the literacy rate for male and female between 15 and 24 is 99.18% and 99.53% respectively. This goes to prove that we have succeeded in reaching our Millennium Development Goals in literacy.

We have also achieved 6 objectives of the Education For All (EFA) initiative, which needed to be attained by 2015 . . .

I am extremely happy to learn that our country has played a more significant and wider role in this region and internationally. In the past Brunei was well-known for its financial contributions alone, but now we are capable of providing a service to others in the form of “human capital” by sending Bruneians to teach English Language in the neighbouring countries.

(Rajak, 2014)

This development was reiterated again recently during the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) Congress in Bangkok, Thailand on 21 October 2014. In the Special Ministerial Session of the Congress, Brunei’s Minister of Education highlighted the role of Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) in reaching out to neighbouring countries, with particular reference to undergraduate-led initiatives to work and teach English in impoverished communities outside of Brunei.

Clearly the English language has become a source of pride for the monarch and the Brunei government, and this royal speech can be considered the highest formal recognition of this development. At the helm of its effort for regional integration has been the premier educational institution in Brunei, UBD, which was pivotal in reaching out to ASEAN members for integrative purposes. Being a state university, UBD has been instrumental in facilitating training that has been conceptualised or sponsored by other government agencies such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, as well as the Ministry of Education, as outlined below.

The Initiative for ASEAN Integration

The Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), launched during the ASEAN Summit in 2000, is aimed at bridging the development gap between the ASEAN countries where the more developed nations

assist the newer Member States to integrate into ASEAN and to reach ASEAN-wide targets and commitments through a series of human resource capacity building initiatives. In achieving all these goals, the government of Brunei has recognised that one way in which it can contribute to the regional development of human resource is through providing English language training at Universiti Brunei Darussalam. These language training programmes have become very active in the last 10 years, illustrating Brunei's confidence in its infrastructure for effective language training.

Under the general framework of the IAI, the Government of Brunei funded three specialized English skills courses in June 2011 for officers and diplomats from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam (CLMV). The three courses, *Effective Professional Communication*, *Writing Project Proposals and Reports*, and *Special Training for Junior Diplomats*, were attended by 35 CLMV officials and ran concurrently for two weeks. Among the objectives of the courses were to share best practices on professional English language communication in cross-cultural settings, to increase technical fluency and accuracy in both written and spoken English, to develop the participants' confidence in using English in work-related domains, and to impart necessary negotiation skills for social skills upgrade and movement.

The above courses have their predecessor in the specially designed Intensive English Language Training for Diplomatic Communication offered by the UBD Language Centre in 2003. This programme was initially meant for diplomatic officers from Vietnam only, but it soon grew to include Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Indonesia and Thailand, whose governments became interested in the programme.

The IAI programmes in Brunei are entirely sponsored by its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The purpose of the programmes is to provide language skills training to ASEAN participants to promote goodwill and rapport between member nations. The programmes have proven to be a success as they have continued to grow, with positive feedback from participating ASEAN governments who have also committed to sending more of their personnel. UBD continues to host this bespoke training programme alongside another major programme under the Brunei-U.S. English Language Enrichment Project (ELEP) for ASEAN.

The Brunei-U.S. English Language Enrichment Project for ASEAN

Following the success of the IAI courses and programmes, and as a testimony to their confidence in Brunei's ability in English language teaching within ASEAN, in 2012, the Government of the United States of America (U.S.) initiated collaborations with the Government of Brunei to launch the Brunei-U.S. English Language Enrichment Project

for ASEAN (Brunei-U.S. ELEP). The primary goal of this project is to further unite ASEAN. As the working language of ASEAN, English plays a critical role in helping to achieve this vision of a cohesive ASEAN community. English is used in official communication as well as internal and external interactions within the community. However, in ASEAN's formative years, discourses in English occurred only mainly among well-travelled, high-level officials or those who had completed higher education in the English medium in "native-speaking" countries abroad, and the need to achieve wider levels of English proficiency was, therefore, limited. With increasing emphasis on closer socio-cultural integration among its Member States and on creating a greater shared sense of ASEAN identity, the role of the English language correspondingly has become more prominent as a vehicle of communication for the broader ASEAN society. This has proved to be an obstacle for nations without a history or current practice of English-language instruction in their schools and institutions, and the opportunity for advanced study which requires English bypassed all but a small community who had grown up with English proficiency.

Hence, the need for a coordinated regional approach to alleviate the problem became apparent. The Brunei-U.S. ELEP has been designed to address this need. His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and U.S. President Barack Obama agreed on this 5-year project in November 2011, a testament to their commitment to a stronger partnership and to Brunei's strong reputation in English language education. The Government of Brunei and the U.S. Government chose UBD and the East-West Center (EWC) to implement the initiatives under the project and on 7 September 2012, the Brunei-U.S. ELEP was officially launched by His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Brunei's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Hillary Rodham Clinton, the then U.S. Secretary of State.

11-week English Language Programme (ELP). The main initiative under the Brunei-US ELEP is the annual 11-week English Language Programme, which first ran in September 2012. Each year, the programme welcomes some 70 participants from the 10 ASEAN countries who spend seven weeks in Brunei and four weeks in Hawai'i, where they undertake a series of modules geared towards their professional needs. The participants are divided into two groups: the English teacher-trainers, and the officers and diplomats. The bulk of the modules are on English for Specific Purposes and topics covered include the language of negotiation and persuasion, action research, and English for networking. In addition to the English core modules, more specialised modules are also offered, such as *Peoples and Cultures of ASEAN* and *Regional Issues in ASEAN*. The goals of these modules are to

promote understanding, increase awareness, and enhance appreciation of the cultural, social, and ethnic diversity within the region while also imparting knowledge on the current debates and issues surrounding the socio-political scene.

With the growing importance of English as a global lingua franca, participants of this programme learn about World Englishes for a better understanding of the pluricentric nature of the English language in this modern world and era. Through the introduction of the vital concepts of multiplicity and pluralism, the participants should be able to appreciate the role of English as a medium of intercultural communication.

The programme, which is now in its third-year stage, has produced close to 130 alumni, many of whom have seen career progressions in terms of job promotions and overseas job postings representing their governments. Others have gone on to Master's or PhD studies in various countries, including Australia, New Zealand, and the United States.

Forum on English for ASEAN Integration. The Forum on English for ASEAN Integration is also an important element of the Brunei-U.S. ELEP. The Forum brings together policymakers and English language specialists to participate in a series of panel discussions and debates on the language policies and practices which contribute towards the strengthening of English as the medium of communication within ASEAN. The first of the two Forum series was held in November 2013 in UBD and all ten ASEAN countries as well as the U.S were represented (Borneo Bulletin, 2013).

One of the major challenges in promoting English Language Teaching (ELT) highlighted by the presenters, particularly from the countries where English is regarded as a foreign language, is the imbalance between top-down centralized controls of the ruling authority over the local or regional autonomy. The polarization of bilingual versus mother-tongue education, and the disalignment between public and private school education were among the issues and obstacles cited in efforts to achieve more widespread knowledge and use of English.

The Forum became a platform for academic and professional discussions of the policies and practices of the Southeast Asian nations in strengthening English as a lingua franca across ASEAN. It also provided insights on pathways to take in the years ahead on how best to utilize English as one of the tools to unite ASEAN as one community. The second and final Forum is scheduled to be held in November 2015, where UBD will again play host.

The English as Foreign Language Fellowship Program. Also part of the Brunei-U.S. Project is the English as a Foreign Language

Fellowship Program. The aims of this programme have certainly been aligned to the broader aims of ASEAN integration, as follows:

1. To strengthen multilateral ties;
2. To affirm Brunei's position as an advocate of ASEAN integration through English;
3. To build human capacity; and
4. To meet the goals of Brunei's *Vision 2035*, which encourages the development of well-educated and well-accomplished Bruneians.

Under this programme, five American English Language Fellows (ELFs) and five Bruneian ELFs work collaboratively at selected institutions in five ASEAN countries.

As part of the Brunei-U.S. ELEP, this programme is administered by the EWC in collaboration with UBD. The EWC in turn collaborated with the Center for Intercultural Communication and Development at Georgetown University (GU / CIED) to administer the placement and basic support of the American ELFs, although the EWC directly manages the Brunei ELFs (Mohamad, 2013).

For 10 months, the ELFs are expected to carry out English language teaching and training through workshops, teaching practicum, and sharing sessions, as well as through participation in outreach programmes.

The first cohort from Brunei and the U.S. began their 10-month placements in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam in January 2013. Myanmar joined this initiative in 2014. The assignments include teaching at a university but may also include work at government ministries, non-governmental organisations, teacher training centres, and schools. In addition, the ELFs also participate in community outreach activities by sharing their English skills and bringing English materials to children in rural areas.

The English Teaching Apprenticeship Programme. A recent addition to the Brunei-U.S. ELEP, the English Teaching Apprenticeship (ETA) Programme has a broader aim of producing quality and experienced English teachers from Brunei and consequently elevating Brunei as the focal provider of teachers of English for ASEAN. From 2014, Bruneian volunteers undergo intensive training in ELT in UBD and the EWC, followed by 10-month internships as teaching aides in primary schools in Myanmar, Phnom Penh, and Vientiane. It was this initiative that was being referred to in the Sultan's speech quoted above.

Throughout the ETA Programme, the apprentices have a chance to engage with and to reflect on the role of the teacher in today's classroom, and undertake specific teaching-related tasks such as materials design and curriculum development which will be guided and mentored. Through this, they develop their teaching portfolio, and build their confidence in their teaching abilities.

ASEAN concept of "Narrowing the Development Gap"
The concept of 'Narrowing the Development Gap in ASEAN' (NDG) is contained the ASEAN portfolio and it refers to initiatives aimed at "reducing various forms of disparities among and within Member States where some pockets of underdevelopment persist" (ASEAN, 2014, para. 1). These initiatives are broad-ranging, but the principle is to capitalise on each member's strengths so that projects or activities that are aimed at the larger goal of ASEAN integration "foster[ing] regional cooperation, [and] greater social and economic integration, consistent with the objective of building an ASEAN Community in 2015" (ASEAN, 2014, para. 2). Certainly, through the various programmes and projects outlined above which involve the Brunei government and agencies such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Education, and Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Brunei is capitalising on its strength in English language to live up to the NDG aims.

Discussion

The underpinning theories in Brunei's increased activities in offering English language training in various forms to ASEAN counterparts can be discussed from various angles.

The Sociolinguistic Value of English in ASEAN

Cane (2011) observed that a visible development in many parts of Asia in recent times has been the common practice of using English with native-English speaking foreigners being replaced with the use of English with other Asians within the region. This is certainly a matter of great interest in the context of a population of 650 million in the region. English has been accepted as the official language of communication at ASEAN meetings (ASEAN, 2008) because it the only code commonly shared by all ASEAN representatives. This development, according to Cane (2011), contributes to the growing trend among many Asians to use English to speak to other Asians, which he argues will persist for the foreseeable future.

Conducive Setting for English Language Learning

Brunei is like a microcosm of ASEAN, a representation of the multilinguality of the ASEAN region and population, where English across the lectal spectrum can be found and recognised, attuning the learners to familiar accents and forms in use in real-life contexts. This is particularly significant in view of the points made by Cane (2011) above. In comparing Brunei as an English language context with other countries in ASEAN, Noor Azam (2013) stated that Brunei ranks in the upper bracket in terms language-learning setting. This owes much to the history of English and the education system in Brunei as outlined earlier. English is practically a second language in Brunei due to its prominent role in the education system prior to independence, and its even greater prominence post-independence with the *Dwibahasa* system in place. The result is a nation of bilingual speakers who use English fluently without any intimidating cultural overtones (the native speaker versus non-native speaker conundrum) for learners.

Multilingual Setting to Support Multilingual Performance

In relation to the above, Kirkpatrick (2011) stated that “we need to consider language acquisition in the context of complex multilingual settings.” Multilingual performance and proficiency should be the goal of learning a language, rather than to acquire “idealised native-like proficiency.” In addition, in a multilingual context such as ASEAN, “international intelligibility” becomes a more important goal (Jenkins, 2001).

ASEAN learners who come to cosmopolitan Brunei will certainly find that they will have to learn to negotiate their way through a cross-cultural learning environment, which will simultaneously teach them about the cultures of the people they are likely to be communicating with in the region, as suggested by Kirkpatrick (2007).

Conclusion

There is no question that Brunei is committed to the idea of ASEAN integration. But as argued above, it displays its commitment through a strength of its own: English language education. This commitment has become even more evident in the last decade by capitalising on the English language, the multilingual and multicultural contexts in Brunei, and the conducive setting in Brunei for English language development of learners. Brunei started off investing in the English language for the purpose of nation-building, that is, to educate its people to be fluent in English to allow them to go out and engage with the outside world and to bring back new knowledge and new skills for

the good of the nation. It would seem that that investment is now reaping its rewards, resulting in a nation that is highly educated and bilingual in Malay and English. This expertise is now being shared with ASEAN friends as political and social capital to narrow existing gaps. Such is the commitment of Brunei to ASEAN integration that it continues to invest hugely in such high-level and high profile English language programmes, but with the development of its neighbours in mind.

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Information and Communication Technology-Mediated Interventions in English Language Learning in Singapore: Trends and Developments

Caroline Ho
English Language Institute of Singapore

Susan Gwee
English Language Institute of Singapore

This chapter offers a review of information and communication technology (ICT)-mediated interventions in English language learning in Singapore from year 2000 to the present. This review is contextualised against the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) education priorities as part of ASEAN's development agenda in creating a knowledge-based society. The chapter takes into account human development concerns, in particular, professional development of teaching staff, and the sharing and transfer of best practices of ICT in education among member countries. Studies of school-based projects at the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels are examined against the background of Singapore's Masterplan for ICT in Education implemented in all institutions. Key aspects of the studies in terms of the targeted outcomes and the actual implementation of specific programmes that seek to empower learners' language skills development in specific areas are presented. The expectations, needs and challenges encountered with regard to ICT-mediated interventions in language and literacy contexts are discussed. The chapter closes with a consideration of pedagogical implications and recommendations for the way ahead in light of local, regional and international trends and developments within the AEC.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Within the ASEAN Economic Community

Human development has always featured prominently as a key concern of ASEAN. The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) aims to enhance the lives of the peoples in the region through providing equitable access to education and life-long learning, and investing in human resource training and capacity building. Among the areas of

what is promoted are “innovation and entrepreneurship, . . . the use of the English language, ICT [Information and Communication Technology], and applied science and technology in socio-economic development activities” (ASEAN, 2009, p. 2-3).

Specifically, in terms of promoting ICT, the strategic objectives include facilitating the implementation of regional ICT initiatives and supporting active cooperation in research, science, and technology development (ASEAN, 2009, p. 4). Attention is also given to programmes that help ASEAN countries increase their ICT literacy and promote the positive use of ICT, in particular the Internet. There is also interest in introducing ICT from primary school onward, supporting e-learning with ICT, and developing a workforce highly skilled in using ICT (ASEAN, 2009, 2011).

Education networking is realised in various levels of educational, scientific, and technological institutions to “enhance and support student and staff exchanges and professional interactions, including creating research clusters among ASEAN institutions of higher learning, in close collaboration with the Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) and the ASEAN University Network (AUN)” (ASEAN, 2009, p. 2-3; UNESCO, 2013).

ICT in Education in Singapore

This chapter draws on select studies reviewed from 2000 to the present, which encompasses three phases of the Masterplan for ICT in Education developed by the Ministry of Education. The Third Masterplan (mp3) for ICT in Education (2009-2014) represents ICT use in education, and the Second Masterplan (2003-2008) paved the way for innovative use of ICT in schools, that is, “to enrich and transform the learning environments of students and equip them with the critical competencies and dispositions to succeed in a knowledge economy” (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2008b, para. 1).

The broad strategies of the third Masterplan for ICT in Education are:

- To strengthen integration of ICT into curriculum, pedagogy and assessment to enhance learning and develop competencies for the 21st century;
- To provide differentiated professional development that is more practice-based and models how ICT can be effectively used to help students learn better;
- To improve the sharing of best practices and successful innovations; and
- To enhance ICT provisions in schools to support the implementation of mp3.

(MOE, 2008b, para. 2)

Overall, these strategies are aimed at harnessing ICT to enhance teaching and learning in a student-centric way. ICT-enabled teaching methods target students' development of 21st Century competencies, including information, communication, and collaboration skills. Further, the emphasis strengthens ICT-enabled learning and teaching innovations and instructional leadership in technology. Enhancing collaboration within the teaching fraternity also promotes the scaling of sound ICT pedagogical practices across the system.

These are consistent with the AEC strategic thrusts of developing programmes for increased ICT literacy in ASEAN, thereby levelling up the proficiency levels of the working population (ASEAN, 2009). The challenge is in identifying related areas of interest and concern that cut across countries within the network in order to further strengthen and reinforce collaboration in the field.

Collaborative Projects Across Countries

Collaborative projects involving Singapore with other countries have revolved around Internet-based, student-generated web design and development to showcase their countries' distinctiveness and ICT professional teacher development. One such study was the SEAMEO Regional Schools Internet Project involving six countries – Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei – with the intent of having students from schools at the secondary level produce webpages for their own countries (SEAMEO, 1998). This project promoted “the development, use and sharing of digital content among ASEAN Member States” (ASEAN, 2009, p. 4). The project, over the years, saw increased participation with a change in the format of participation implemented in 2007 where teams were involved in addition to individuals from member countries (SEAMEO, 2011, p. 31)

working on a specific thematic focus identified for each year (for example, Unique Sports and Games of Southeast Asia in 2009 / 2010). A Virtual Forum was also set up for language teachers from SEAMEO Member Countries and Associate Member Countries to interact and engage with each other. Active participation by individuals was rewarded with prizes.

The other study was a five-year project involving Singapore and Bhutan (Wong, 2007) which resulted in changes in professional development for teacher educators in ICT where their ICT skills were enhanced to a large extent. Although Bhutan is not an ASEAN country, lessons from Singapore's collaboration with Bhutan may be applicable to collaborations among ASEAN countries concerning teacher training in the use of ICT. There was a shift in pedagogy: instead of using traditional teacher-directed approaches, teacher educators used more student-centric strategies in the classroom. Group work, project-based teaching, exploratory methods of learning, and constructivist approaches were more evident in teaching. The success of the project was the result of the efforts by all the organizations involved.

There is room for greater collaboration and more related studies among countries in the region. Specifically, web-based projects that involve students from member countries in researching into specific content areas that would benefit other member countries and foster a deeper understanding of each country's unique identity would be invaluable. Further, professional exchange among practitioners within the AEC through collaborative projects would also enhance the transfer of knowledge and skills set of the professionals involved.

School-Based Studies

The school-based studies reviewed comprise work in the fields of design and implementation issues, developing students' voice, multi-modal meaning-making and corpus-based studies. These studies reinforce the strategic ASEAN objectives of implementing "capacity building programmes to increase ICT literacy in ASEAN," encouraging "the use of ICT at all levels of education," and developing "a workforce and manpower with high levels of ICT proficiency and expertise" (ASEAN, 2009, p. 4).

Design and implementation issues. During the implementation of school-based studies, it is important to ensure that the ICT skills that students acquire will position them in "high value-added industries that enhance ASEAN global competitiveness" (ASEAN, 2009, p. 3) as set out in the *ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint*. Studies on design and implementation issues have focused on the implementation

of software such as *Second Life*, *PhotoStory 3*, *Microsoft PowerPoint*, and *Voices of Reason* in English language lessons in Singapore, in both primary and secondary schools (Ho, Nelson, & Mueller-Wittig, 2011; Ho, Rappa, & Chee, 2009; Lee & Ho, 2013; Towndrow, Vaish, & Mohammed Yusoff, 2011). The underlying design and implementation issues that ran across these studies were (a) the collaboration between the university research centres in Singapore and the school, (b) teacher scaffolding of the task, (c) the integration of traditional academic literacies with multimodal literacies, and (d) technical support needed during the implementation of the technology in the English classroom.

The first issue that surfaced was that having external parties involved in the design as well as the implementation of computer-assisted lesson activities appears to result in a more positive experience for students and teachers. However, the ICT lessons would have benefited from the direct involvement of teachers from the start of the design process (Ho, Rappa, & Chee, 2009). Accessibility, orientation, and the students' continued use of the technologies needed more attention in the initial stages of the process (Ho, Rappa, & Chee, 2009). Ho, Rappa, and Chee (2009) also recommended reflection-in-action to be a built-in feature to guide students during role-play rather than having a reflection-on-past action that added a heavy cognitive load on students.

Another important consideration during the design process is the need to plan for teacher scaffolding of the task that they require students to do. Ho, Rappa, and Chee (2009) noted that "teacher demonstration and modeling of effective critical evaluations of enactments would have concretized the task for students" (p. 28) because students would then know what was expected of them, while Lee and Ho (2013) felt that more explicit teaching of the use of semiotic resources available in the software and scaffolding in the use of these resources for the task at hand would support student learning. For example, Lee and Ho (2013) also agreed that students needed to be taught explicitly about how images and music represent meanings or evoke different moods in their digital stories.

Moreover, to prepare students for the demands of the 21st century workplace, it is imperative to integrate technology with traditional ways of learning the English language, i.e., balancing multimodal literacies with print-based academic literacies. Towndrow, Vaish, and Mohammed Yusof (2011) suggested that teachers could jointly discuss the learning objectives and assessment rubrics for tasks with their students and allow them the flexibility to choose the necessary tools, both digital and non-digital, to achieve measurable outcomes. In Lee and Ho's (2013) study, students had to use print-based literacies to select a story and write the script before they used multimodal

literacies for voice recordings and the choice of images to represent the characters and the settings of the stories. Students in Ho, Nelson, and Müller-Wittig's (2011) study used still images with accompanying text to generate a virtual museum.

During the implementation of a project requiring technology in the teaching of the English language, on-going follow-up support was needed to help teachers implement technology in English lessons. This is because technical and logistic issues frequently occurred during the implementation phase, especially at the beginning (Ho, Nelson, & Müller-Wittig, 2011; Ho, Rappa, & Chee, 2009). Ho, Rappa, and Chee (2009) reported technical problems such as Internet connectivity, time lag, frequency of updates needed, initial student problems with the use of software tools, and student difficulty in finding their arguments on an online argumentation board. Logistical adjustments had to be made so that participating classes did not have ICT lessons at the same time because of access limitations on the private network line required for one of the software programmes. In addition, when there were required software patches for *Second Life*, school technology assistants had to install them onto student devices, given that only these assistants had administrator rights.

Ho, Nelson, and Müller-Wittig (2011) also pointed out that there were technological issues with access and retrieval during initial lessons. They had more user-friendly, freely accessible 3D modelling software as well as software for efficient data conversion and transfer installed for students' use. In addition, computing specialists had to write easy-to-understand instructions on software use for *Google Sketchpad* and *Audacity*, and model the use of such software explicitly so that students could construct their virtual museum project more easily. The researchers also had to address teachers' concerns around classroom logistics and lesson execution issues.

Developing students' voice. It is generally acknowledged that technology use in the classroom allows teachers to develop students' voice. Online spaces provide a dialogic space where multiple voices can exist, thereby giving students ample opportunities to express their opinions. The use of technology allows girls to develop specific communication skills in the classroom as all students, regardless of gender, will be given a voice. This is in line with the strategic ASEAN goal of developing a "qualified, competent and well-prepared ASEAN labour force" (ASEAN, 2009, p. 3).

Unlike in the mainstream classroom where interaction is often teacher-dominated and the teacher leaves little room for student ideas and voices (Nystrand, 1997), students can develop their voice in an online space when they actively offer viewpoints and contribute to

discussions by building on and questioning what other students say. The following studies involved the use of web-based argumentation tools to scaffold argument construction and analysis, and virtual learning environments which involved students in virtual role-play and argumentation.

Ho and Chee (2011) focused on using a web-based structured argumentation tool, *Voices of Reason*, designed for teaching pre-university students argumentation construction and analysis, drawing on the Toulmin (1958/2003) model of argumentation. Scaffolding prompts facilitated students' self and peer analysis of the internal structure of arguments generated. The findings showed that students used claims most frequently, followed by rebuttals, grounds, warrants, and backing. Students' arguments were not substantiated by supporting evidence providing concrete grounds for claims asserted. Students also did not consistently use warrants, that is, the underlying assumptions and beliefs linking grounds to claims. Students did attempt to critique, question, and counter viewpoints and perspectives presented. Feedback from students showed that the web-based argumentation tool created an opportunity for their voice to be heard and helped them to look at differing viewpoints and the underlying evidence for these.

In Jamaluddin, Chee, and Ho's (2009) study, Grade 12 students were able to contribute their opinions and develop their argumentation skills in an online setting. Jamaluddin, Chee, and Ho (2009) explored the relationship between the interactions of 17- to 18-year-old students in the virtual environment and the effect on their critical thinking and writing skills. They found that on the argument dimension, students moved from simply making assertions to "making statements that aim to balance and advance a preceding argument" and on the social dimension, the students moved "from simply articulating thoughts to the group to disagreeing, modifying, or replacing the perspectives" of their peers (Jamaluddin, Chee, & Ho, 2009, p. 325). The Science stream students benefited from the enactive role-play sessions in *Second Life*. The interview data indicated that students felt that they were able to voice their opinions more, to express their opinions more effectively, and to consider other people's perspectives. Students adopted a more balanced stance.

In the same vein, Chandrasegaran (2006) found that 15- and 16-year-old students were able to express their opinions in an informal online forum even though their preferred language was not English. Students defended their position explicitly. Chandrasegaran proposed showing students how they could construct their arguments using the language-specific features. Chandrasegaran (2008) examined the application of online argumentation skills to formal essay writing. The

author did not find counter-argument moves in the formal essay; however, these moves were made in forum postings. This suggested that these argument practices could be developed into competencies for expository writing for academic purposes.

Chandrasegaran and Kong (2006) also found that students who showed more interest on a contested topic might be more motivated in argument construction so as to persuade their peers to accept a position that meant something more to them personally. Choosing topics that are of interest to the students helps them to write more balanced expository essays.

Multimodal meaning-making. The studies in multimodal meaning-making have encompassed the extent to which literacy practices mediated through new media platforms have impacted learning and pedagogic and assessment practices. These new literacy practices support the development of specific skills required in “high value-added industries that enhance ASEAN global competitiveness” (ASEAN, 2009, p. 3). Challenges raised included teachers’ awareness of the technological affordances to cater for purposeful learning and curriculum-assessment alignment for more effective implementation. Vaish and Towndrow’s (2010) year-long study investigated whether new literacy practices should be integrated into the language classroom to enhance student learning and which aspects of language and literacy acquisition were changed as the result of technology use for language learning. Three hundred and fifty secondary students aged 13 to 14 years and four English language teachers were surveyed. In addition, video-recordings were captured of the teachers for one unit of a lesson (a thematic or topical focus lasting approximately one or two weeks). Teachers did not use technology very often for fear of the non-standard English variety being promoted through online and social media platforms. Classroom management problems and lack of professional development on the use of technology in the English classroom were other concerns. An additional concern was that the materials found on the Internet might not be relevant to the students as the English variety found there was very different from the way English is spoken in Singapore. The researchers recommended heightening teachers’ awareness of multimodal expression catering to their learners’ needs and interests and digital technologies providing students access to new media and publishing outlets.

Tan and Guo (2009) focused on a qualitative study of one Secondary 2 teacher’s experience with new literacies in two English classes. The results of the study showed that although the students were not able to provide reasons for their use of semiotic choices, they demonstrated their knowledge of multiliteracies “through their choice

of scripting, language, giving voice to their characters, camerawork, lighting, gestural moves, and scene changes” with the help of the software used (Tan & Guo, 2009, p. 322). The study further highlighted the gap between traditional assessment modes and what is required of multiliteracies, and brought to the surface the need for closer alignment between curriculum and assessment for more effective implementation.

Tan’s (2010) ethnographic study of adolescents’ literacy practices in Singapore examined teenage Chinese high achievers’ participation in media text production in language arts, values placed on such work, and participants’ negotiation of their media practices in and outside school. Students moved from being text consumers to text producers in adapting a Shakespearean play to contemporary times using multimedia software. Media literacy education was allowed to take place in the school by the school management as part of English lessons only if it also improved conventional language skills. Students’ literacies that included the media texts outside of school were not valued by teachers. The study emphasized the need for students’ media literacy practices to be considered before incorporating media literacy education into the English curriculum.

Corpus-Based Studies

Corpus-based studies conducted in Singapore revolved around visualisation and classroom discourse analysis with specific attention given to teacher discourse although students’ responses were also featured. The corpora contribute to building up the repository of digital content in this region for member countries (ASEAN, 2009). Doyle’s (2012) work on data visualisation techniques explored ways to visualise classroom “teacher talk.” The task was to make pedagogic practice visible and easy for teachers to comprehend from the beginning, and for analysis and its representation to be concise and meaningful. At the same time, the research provided analytical value through attempting “to capture both the analytical aspect of a concordance and the more visual elements” (Doyle, 2012, p. 4). “Wordles” (Feinberg, 2013) or word clouds, visualisations in which the font size reflects the frequency of occurrence of words or phrases in a text, and scatterplots comparing questioning techniques used were examined. Interactive data visualisations that let users view different aspects of the analysis with a click on a word were explored. Through these visualisations, teachers were able to begin to explore the pedagogy they have adopted. Bar charts, a familiar format to teachers, showed open and closed question use. Further, software interactivity allowed the teachers to examine what was said at a particular time in the lesson. Focused discussions centred around the specific segments

of a lesson could be facilitated as teachers reflected on their significance.

Doyle and Hong (2009) worked on the Singapore Corpus of Research in Education (SCoRE). This is a 2.3 million word database of lesson transcripts from audio / video recordings of lessons comprising 122 units of lessons based on 253 hours of classroom teaching. The multimodal, multilevel-annotated classroom discourse corpus drew on classrooms at Primary 5 and Secondary 3 levels for four subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies). Students' response types and teacher feedback were examined within the Initiation-Response-Follow-Up (I-R-F) discourse framework (Cazden, 2001; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Key findings in the global analysis included the dominant nature of teacher talk (75% or more of all words spoken and class time used), the prevalence of the I-R-F discourse structure in teaching (60% of words uttered), and the relative brevity of students' utterances compared to teachers (mean of 3 words per utterance and normally half the length of teacher utterances). Further, Mathematics discourse was significantly different from the other subjects across a number of measures and factors, such as type-token ratio dependence on formulaic language structures (lexical bundles), and I-R-F patterns.

Doyle (2009) focused on an empirical investigation of the variety of English used in the educational system at the primary and secondary levels using a corpus-based approach to analysing classroom talk drawn from SCoRE. Specifically, attention was centred on describing selected linguistic features of the English used by teachers through quantitative analyses and comparisons with the spoken British English component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-GB), given the historical association of English in Singapore with British English and the spoken Singapore English component of ICE (ICE-SIN). This is aimed at informing discussions of language development. A list of "key" (Scott, 1997, p. 236) words, that is, a "word which occurs with unusual frequency in a given text . . . by comparison with a reference corpus" from SCoRE was drawn up for analysis.

The features examined included discourse or pragmatic particles. Students' use of discourse particles was more frequent compared to teachers. Teachers' use of some specific discourse particles differed from ICE-SIN speakers. This could be due to the instructional nature of the discourse in the classroom and how teachers and students differed in terms of social status in the interaction.

Hui's (2009) corpus-based analysis of the differences in teachers' instructional discourse quality in I-R-F exchanges with students examined discourse in two streams - Normal Technical (NT), catering

to low ability students, and Special (SPE), for high ability, bilingual students. While frequencies of the follow-up question types were similar between streams, the question types used by the NT teacher were inferior, which may have reflected lesser expectations for the NT students.

Implications

Collaborative Projects and Interventions

The current state of work in ICT in education shows that there is room for strengthening linkages with inter-centre, national, regional, and international institutions to foster greater collaborative exchange and enhance practitioners' professional development skills and knowledge in the field. To meet the ASEAN strategic objectives of enhancing "the IT skills of the workforce in ASEAN through joint training programmes and courses," designing and implementing "training programmes to address the needs of high value-added industries that enhance ASEAN global competitiveness," developing "a consolidated plan for regional cooperation for skills development" (ASEAN, 2009, p. 3), and strengthening "collaboration with other regional and international educational organisations to enhance the quality of education in the region" (ASEAN, 2009, p. 2), there is the need to establish training programmes across regional / international institutions. This could lead to the mounting of specific ICT-mediated collaborative interventions conducted with inter-centre / regional / international institutions that target focused training programmes, fora, seminars, and research projects to meet specific needs identified.

Multimodal Engagement

To address ASEAN's strategic objectives of improving "the quality and adaptability of education" (ASEAN, 2009, p. 2) and "enhancing ASEAN global competitiveness" (ASEAN, 2009, p. 3) in order to meet the new demands of technology, students in the region need to be well-equipped in responding to the new literacy practices of using multimodal representations in communication. Multimodal construction of meaning-making essentially involves a process of learning and not merely the final product(s) targeted (Ho, 2012, p. 131). The foci are essentially on the specific measures to integrate meaning-making opportunities and processes carried out through various semiotic modes (Ho, 2011). Understanding and awareness of the possibilities and constraints of each mode are necessary to strategize and better harness the potential of each. The move is towards a meaningful synthesis in establishing coherent links across the multimodal configuration of different semiotic modes. The multimodal

products are evidence of participants' "sign making" (Jewitt, 2008, p. 253) and are the foundation for critical engagement, interpretation, and response to multimodal composing in specific contexts (MOE, 2008a). The need for greater alignment of multimodal construction of meaning making with the relevant evaluation or assessment practices is necessary to support and reinforce initiatives in the field.

Visualisation and Corpus-Based Work

To align with the ASEAN strategic objectives of promoting "the development, use and sharing of digital content among ASEAN Member States" (ASEAN, 2009, p. 4), establishing "platforms for networking and sharing of best practices on ASEAN children and youth development strategies and tools" (p. 3), and providing "training for teaching staff and staff exchange programmes" (p. 2), the scope of work in visualisation can be extended to examine the extent to which visualisation can be further applied to the classroom, specifically at the student level in all ASEAN Member States. The interest is in capturing what exactly students are engaged within the classroom, how they participate in class, and for what purpose. Deciding on the appropriate means of visualisation that will best make sense to teachers is critical. There is immense potential in visualising corpus data, particularly for teacher training and teacher professional learning, given the rapidly developing technology for corpus-based research so that learning using corpus data can be successfully implemented in the classroom.

Conclusion

ASEAN Member States face the following current realities. There is a great diversity of resources in terms of ICT infrastructure and manpower available to support the ASEAN strategic objectives. The current landscape comprises studies from collaborative projects across countries in the design and implementation, in developing students' voice, in multimodal meaning-making, and in corpus-based work. The challenges associated with the specific learning environments have recognised the on-the-ground realities in different school settings and existing constraints in various contexts. Specific ASEAN Member States need to be identified so that they can develop, use, and share digital resources among themselves for the learning of the English language. Subsequently, a more consolidated, long-term professional training and development programme for English language teaching staff could be mounted for greater sustained impact. More teacher and student exchanges could help maintain interest and deepen cooperation among Member States. A blended or distance learning

programme could also be part of this programme to promote and invest in education and lifelong learning for all English language teachers in ASEAN. A concerted effort from all member countries involved in systematic networking and sustained collaboration to address specific, targeted needs and concerns is not only timely but also highly necessary within the AEC.

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Innovation in English Language Education in Vietnam for ASEAN 2015 Integration: Current Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, Investments, and Solutions

Lan Nguyen Thi Phuong
Hanoi Pedagogical University No. 2

Thuy Phung Nhu
Department of Teachers and Educational Professional Managers
Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam

ASEAN governments have been improving all aspects influencing economic integration in 2015, including English language skills. Like other ASEAN countries, Vietnam has been developing English language teaching with the aim of meeting the higher demand for English skills in the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). This chapter discusses the current situation and issues of English language teaching and learning in all educational levels in Vietnam, the challenges of English education inside and outside the formal English education system, the government's policies and investments, assistance and cooperation obtained from international organizations, and suggestions to address current issues.

Current Issues of English Learning and Teaching in Vietnam

The development of English language learning requirements is shown clearly in the curriculum at all educational levels in Vietnam. Among foreign languages taught as a subject from primary school to university, English is most frequently chosen as the main foreign language subject in high schools and colleges while the teaching of other foreign languages (Russian, Chinese, and French) are far less common (Nguyen, 2012). An increasing number of students now consider the English language as the major foreign language subject to learn. Some students even think that they are deprived the opportunity of an adequate English education if they are required to learn languages other than English at school. English is a popular and common subject not only in lower and upper secondary, but even in primary schools. English was an optional subject for primary school students until the academic year 2011-2012; however, based on the Primary Education Department report to the National Foreign Language 2020 Project, the

number of students learning English in primary school has been increasing, resulting in 105,716 students learning English in Grade 3 (92,830) and Grade 4 (12,886) in just over 1,000 schools in 2011-12 (Ministry of Education and Training, 2012c).

Testing. Testing, a potentially problematic issue at any education level, is a major cause of the negative learning attitudes of students and significantly affects teachers' methods of grading students. Generally, in most schools and colleges in Vietnam, except for some English language classes in schools for gifted students, teachers continue to emphasize grammar, reading, and writing skills to prepare their students for midterm or final term tests, as the tests, both institutional and national, are still designed with a major focus on testing grammar and written structures. Ta (2012) reported that the common situation in schools today is that students and teachers focus so heavily on English grammar that practical English used in working situations is almost completely overlooked. Because the focus of assessment, and thus teaching, is on grammar, reading, and writing, innovations in language teaching are difficult to adopt.

Ta (2012) stated that less than 45% of teachers invest time and energy in developing a four-skills approach to teaching and learning English for their students. This emphasis on primarily grammar and test preparation is suggested as the cause of over 50% of students being unable to communicate or use English orally after seven years of learning English in lower and upper secondary school and two more years at colleges or universities. According to Nhat (2012), some Vietnamese educators confirm that most students who have learned English for seven years in the national education system cannot effectively communicate in English.

Teaching materials. In terms of English teaching materials in many vocational schools in which English is a compulsory subject, materials are generally compiled by teachers who have not been trained to develop teaching materials (Chau, 2011). While no research on the relationship between such "in-house" materials and students' ability to develop English language proficiency is available, the lack of specialists or teachers with experience in designing materials means that these schools face difficulties when attempting to change their current materials immediately.

Curriculum. Although English has been a compulsory subject for a long time in lower and upper secondary schools, it has not had an official direction. According to the Deputy Minister of Information and Communication, Doan Do Quy, Vietnam has lacked a strategy in teaching and learning English for a significant time (Ha, 2009). The curriculum is not consistent among varying multi-level standards and

has not been related to a form of international standards. The official curriculum also lacks continuity throughout different grades, resulting in students learning the same functions or points in different grades in some cases. For an example of the repetitiveness and inefficiency of the curriculum, in English 6, students learn how to introduce themselves using the simple tenses and in English 10, students are again taught these same functions or points. Furthermore, the time allotted for students to learn the English language is much less than in other countries.

In other education levels, the textbooks used in different regions or different schools vary significantly. In Grade 3 or 4, *Let's Go* is used in some schools, *Family and Friends* is used in others, and *Tieng Anh 3* and *Tieng Anh 4* are used mostly in the countryside. Because there is no unity in using a specific textbook for the same grade, maintaining consistency and output achievement in English education across all grades, levels, and regions is difficult.

More recently, the guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) (Ministry of Education and Training [MOET], 2012a; 2012b; 2013) increase consistency among English language programs by specifically providing the official required teaching periods for each education level (Grades 3-5: 4 periods / week, 35 weeks / year, 3 years, totaling 420 periods; Grades 6-9: 3 periods / week, 35 weeks / year, 4 years, totaling 420 periods; Grades 10-12: 3 periods / week, 35 weeks / year, 3 years, totaling 315 periods [MOET, 2012c]). However, challenges related to the curriculum and other variables within the English language teaching and learning system remain.

Teacher training. With respect to teacher training, the current capacity of English teachers in Vietnam must be considered. Unfortunately, the capacity of English teachers in Vietnam is much lower than the qualified standard, which results in difficulty in meeting the demands of teaching and learning English in this decade. This is the reality in all parts of Vietnam, even in major urban areas. The English proficiency of 12% of the teachers is below the stated standard of qualified teachers and 18% have had no pedagogical training (Ha, 2009). Moreover, many teachers are not qualified to teach the English classes they have been assigned.

MOET has been preparing to retrain most teachers so that they can be qualified to help students meet the demands and requirements of society as well as the regional integration process. MOET reported, based on the National Foreign Language 2020 Project, that after testing 10,161 English teachers at all levels in 10 provinces, 97% of primary school teachers, 93% of lower secondary school teachers and 98% of upper secondary school teachers did not exhibit the required English competency as described by the Common European Framework of

Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Ministry of Education and Training, 2012c). The English language proficiency levels of teachers of English from primary to upper secondary school are illustrated in Figures 1 to 3. As can be seen in Figure 1, approximately 47% of primary school teachers are at the B1 level and less than 10% are at the B2 level. There are still approximately 3% of teachers below the A1 level.

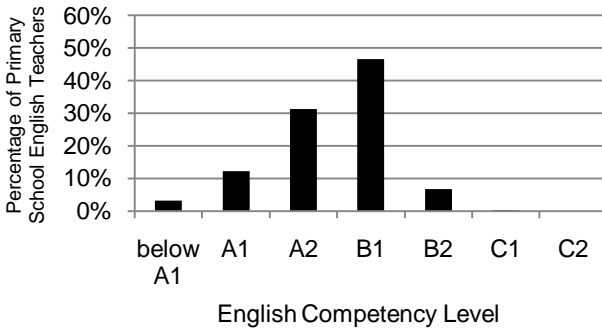


Figure 1. The CEFR English competency level of primary school English teachers reported from National Foreign Language 2020 Project (Ministry of Education and Training, 2012c).

Figure 2 shows that approximately 16% of lower secondary school teachers are below the A1 level, and about 23% are at the A1 level. The majority of lower secondary school teachers are at the A2 (31%) and B1 (27%) levels. Only 3% of secondary teachers are at the B2 level.

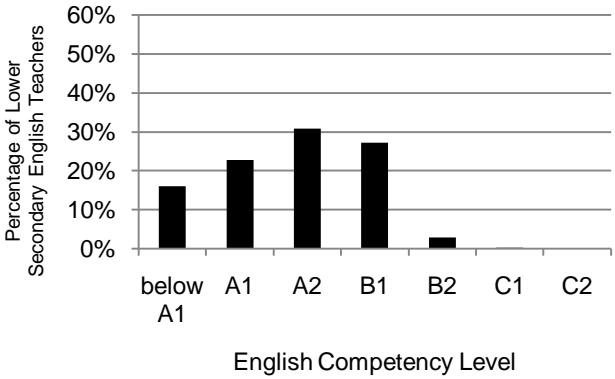


Figure 2. The CEFR English competency level of lower secondary school English teachers reported from National Foreign Language 2020 Project (Ministry of Education and Training, 2012c).

Figure 3 shows that 3% of upper secondary school English teachers are qualified at the C1 level. Meanwhile, half of the teachers are at the B1 level, which is considered the qualifying level of primary school teachers. The research reported that no teachers received the C2 level in any grade. Most teachers and educators in Vietnam believe that C2 is an ideal level for teachers in the country.

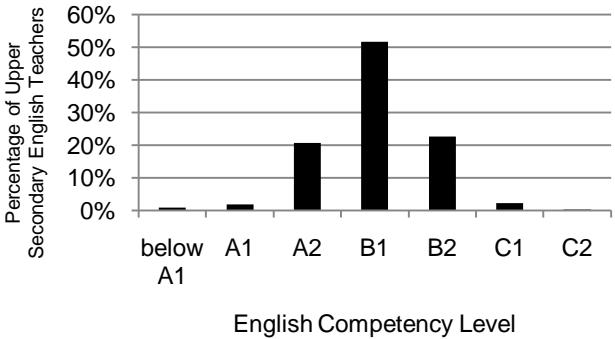


Figure 3. The CEFR English competency level of upper secondary school English teachers reported from National Foreign Language 2020 Project (Ministry of Education and Training, 2012c).

Comprehensive reform of the teaching and learning of English to meet the prescribed MOET standards would require all schools and

institutions to focus on developing the language competency of teachers.

Nevertheless, many teachers of English in Vietnam have been trying to learn about and implement new techniques and methodologies in their teaching contexts. However, while it is easier for teachers in urban centers and towns to implement different methods, it is still quite difficult for teachers in rural areas to apply new teaching techniques, particularly related to new technology, which is limited in rural schools. Another issue is the limited opportunities for teachers to learn, know, and implement new methods of teaching. These opportunities are not equal for teachers in different areas. Teachers in urban areas enjoy more opportunities to be trained in updated teaching methodologies, so they can implement more innovative practices than those who are teaching in rural areas. A large number of teachers in rural areas are not familiar with and therefore cannot apply innovative practices. However, some teachers even in urban areas or in some schools that have purchased advanced teaching equipment do not want to change their traditional methods of teaching. In many cases, teachers are so familiar with their traditional teaching methods that they do not want to change, or they do not want to change because they would have to spend a significant amount of time preparing new lesson plans.

Lastly, the government and the local authorities have not provided contracts, adequate salaries, or professional training for teachers. Working without official contracts can result in teachers feeling insecure. Regarding salaries, primary school teachers earn less than one million Vietnam *dong* (VND) (approximately 47 USD) per month, whereas those who have an official contract received over 2.5 million VND (approximately 117 USD).

Challenges of English Learning and Teaching in Vietnam

Teaching practices. A current challenge for teachers at all grade levels in Vietnam is crowded classes. There are more than 35 students in most English classes, with up to 70 or more in some college and university courses. Another significant problem is students' poor participation in learning activities. Teachers find it difficult to have a successful lesson because there is limited student participation. Despite teachers' efforts, in a class of over 35 students, only a small number of learners may be active. Teachers must find ways to solve this problem and enhance the effectiveness of English lessons. Lack of participation is always a popular topic at pedagogical conferences, and many solutions have been suggested, but within the current educational system of Vietnam, this problem has not yet been solved.

Materials and curriculum. Another challenge that all teachers face is the use of centrally determined textbooks (even though there is limited consistency among schools related to which textbook is assigned) and a strictly controlled syllabus. All teachers must follow the syllabus regardless of their own beliefs or opinions, or whether they can manage to finish the lessons in the syllabus or not within the time allotted. This is a major obstacle for the development of new teaching techniques in English classes. If it is difficult for teachers to follow all the tasks or activities in the textbooks, they are not permitted to change or reorder any parts of the textbooks in class. It is also difficult for teachers to stay current with the changes in the testing system because, as noted earlier, different textbooks are used in different areas and no one can be sure which textbooks the tests are based on. Another limitation of textbooks used in Vietnam is the materials are not culturally relevant to the context (Huỳnh, 2013). To illustrate, in one popular textbook, the example “*What do you have for lunch?*” – “*I have a sandwich and hamburger.*” (*Let’s Learn*) is used. However, in Vietnam, a sandwich or hamburger for lunch is not common.

Assessment and curriculum. According to Ha (2009), another important challenge in teaching practice is that there remains a significant mismatch between assessment practices and the curriculum content. The testing system used in all school grades has not changed although there have been changes in the requirements of language abilities in recruitment and employment policies. It is recommended that the first priority of assessment or tests for learning is to serve the purpose of promoting learners’ learning. However, the paradox in the English testing system in Vietnamese schools is that the tests do not motivate the students or develop all four major language skills, but focus only on grammar and structure. This is the major reason why many students who are successful on their English tests cannot communicate in English, and some students who try to speak English outside the classroom do not perform well on the tests. The question raised here is whether MOET should design a new system of English testing so that the mismatch between the suggested teaching and learning methodologies and the testing system can be lessened. Many educational experts suggest that if the testing system of MOET is not changed, few teachers can teach or design tasks to improve students’ communicative skills while at the same time focusing primarily on grammar and structures to prepare their students for their examinations (Huỳnh, 2013).

In addition, teachers typically only provide grammar instruction or general knowledge of English, and do not focus on the communicative skills that are necessary for learners in modern life. Therefore, teaching listening and speaking competently is a complex task since both

teachers and students are under the pressure of students passing national and final examinations. Due to their own limited English language competency, teachers often rely on rehearsing prepared scripts presented in the texts. Teachers are also not allowed to use other supplementary materials because they are required to prepare their students for the national exams.

Resources. Not many schools or universities have been equipped with modern technology from audiovisual equipment to computer labs or multimedia platforms to serve English teaching and learning. Modern teaching aids are often provided in the key universities in urban centers, but not in other areas. Projectors and videos are common in schools and institutes in cities, but in remote areas or in vocational schools, teachers hardly know about these technological devices or techniques for their use in the classroom. According to a survey in three districts of Phu Tho Province, sixty kilometers from Hanoi, on average, in a primary school, only one teacher has a laptop or desktop computer, but even for these teachers, there is no Wi-Fi or Internet connection. As a result, classes are typically textbook driven.

In addition to physical resources, human resources – qualified teachers and native English speaking teachers – are in short supply. In some rural areas in Vietnam, there are still a large number of children who have not learned English despite being in Grade 3. For instance, a lack of primary English teachers is a significant problem in some districts in Ca Mau Province. To solve this problem, some secondary English teachers are required to teach English for one or more than one primary school on the days they have no lessons at their main secondary school.

Development of English Teaching and Learning in Vietnam

Recognizing clearly that there is a need to develop the English teaching and learning situation to prepare for ASEAN integration in 2015, the Vietnamese government and MOET have been passing a variety of new policies for investing in and developing the educational situation in order to achieve this goal.

Textbooks. MOET has appointed Professor Hoang Van Van from Vietnam National University to be the general editor of the English textbook system to ensure continuity through all the school grades. The Vietnam Education Publishing House and the Editorial Board for English textbooks are now coordinated and supported by experts from the British Council, and a number of global publishers have successfully compiled English language textbooks for Grades 3, 4, and 6. These textbooks have been assessed, approved, and piloted.

Project 911. Regarding professional development for teachers, the Prime Minister's Decision No. 911/QĐ-TTg dated 17 June 2010 issued Project 911. The project has a 14 trillion VND fund, of which 64% is for overseas study, 14% for mixed programs, 20% for training in Vietnam, and 2% for resource preparation to develop young teachers and researchers under 45 years old. One of the objectives of Project 911 is to train 23,000 doctoral degree holders for tertiary institutions, of which 10,000 candidates will enroll in overseas doctoral programs, 3,000 in mixed doctoral programs, and 10,000 in in-country doctoral programs (Vietnamese Prime Minister's Office, 2010).

National Foreign Language 2020 Project. The Prime Minister issued Decision No. 1400/QĐ-TTg on approving the 10-year National Plan for "Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages in the Formal National Education in the period of 2008-2020," named the National Foreign Language 2020 Project. The project is said to have a budget of nearly 9.4 trillion VND to improve the nation's English teaching and learning (Hoang, 2010). This is the largest project in which all teachers and students of English in Vietnam are becoming involved. The goal of National Foreign Language 2020 Project is:

by the year 2015 a vivid progress on professional skills, language competency for human resources, especially at some prioritized sectors; by 2020 most Vietnamese students graduating from secondary, vocational schools, colleges and universities will be able to use a foreign language confidently in their daily communication, their study and work in an integrated, multi-cultural and multi-lingual environment, making foreign languages a comparative advantage of development for Vietnamese people in the cause of industrialization and modernization for the country.

(Vietnamese Prime Minister's Office, 2008)

According to the goal of the project, more than 80,000 English language teachers in Vietnam will be trained as part of this ambitious initiative by MOET.

Specifically, the National Foreign Language 2020 Project consists of three phases. In Phase I, more than 13,000 English teachers at all levels will be retrained, including 500 primary school teachers and 9,500 university lecturers who will be trained abroad, and 1,000 university lecturers, and 2,000 college teachers who will be trained domestically, including 100 who will receive master's degrees, and 20 who will receive PhDs.

The second phase extends from 2011-2015. The objective of Phase 2 is to enhance English learning for students, especially for the sectors of

IT, banking, and tourism. Since 2010, MOET has been reforming the training programs in English major universities, including the actual time traveling overseas for training, directly training 9,000 teachers at all educational levels, and promoting IT applications in teaching and learning media. In addition to the previously mentioned degree programs for teachers abroad, MOET also provided some short-term overseas training courses for teachers (approximately 12 weeks). In 2012, the National Foreign Language 2020 Project offered 200 university lecturers short-term training abroad. The majority of participants were teachers of foreign language faculties at universities, who will study evaluation and assessment, the use of technology in English teaching, and English teaching methods, especially the methods of teaching English for primary school students. The participants of these courses will be the core force who will build the program and promote innovations in English learning and teaching, aiming to catch up with Vietnam's neighboring countries and to be able to meet the demands of the society as well as regional integration.

The third phase will extend from 2016-2020 and is assumed to realize faster progress through teaching mathematics and using IT in English in 30% of secondary schools in cities, increasing by 15-20% in the following years.

Eighty-five percent of the National Foreign Language 2020 Project budget will be used for teacher training (Parks, 2011). To improve the quality of English education in colleges and universities with the aim of providing a national education system for the teachers who meet the qualification standards in 2011, MOET supported a number of universities in building and testing three training programs. MOET has also issued a list of equipment for teaching and learning the English language at primary schools, colleges and universities. The Primary Education Department will undertake the key tasks of guiding regional schools and education departments. Along with the investment of MOET, the National Foreign Language 2020 Project also supported and guided 18 colleges and universities to take part in pedagogical and competence training.

Identifying the tasks involved in retraining and advanced training to improve the teachers' qualifications as well as the foreign language teaching capacity is an essential mission, and it also plays a crucial role in the success of English education. In 2011, the National Foreign Language 2020 Project requested that Da Nang University organize a course of English teaching methods for 144 leading primary teachers and the project provided a training course for 70 faculty members from 19 colleges and universities in 2012. The participants of these training

courses are currently playing a pivotal role in fostering the teaching methods for teachers of local primary schools.

Along with the development and investment in training teachers of English, teachers of mathematics and other specialized subjects have been trained to improve their English knowledge and skills. This program has been implemented in a large number of pedagogical universities (e.g., National University of Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City Pedagogical University, Thai Nguyen University, Hue University, Da Nang University, and Vinh University). As required, teachers of math and science must be trained in intensive English classes to achieve English Proficiency Level 4 (B2) to be able to provide lessons of those subjects in English, based on the curriculum program issued by MOET. Beginning in the 2013-2014 academic school year, the teachers are required to teach in English.

To smoothly implement the National Foreign Language 2020 Project, it is necessary to prioritize issues and to identify the groups and areas of priority. Teachers are prioritized in the policies, because they play a key role in the innovation process and in the improvement of the efficiency of teaching English at schools. It is required that primary school English teachers have a 4-year university degree in order for them to support effectively the learning language process of their students. If teachers are not qualified to teach the language, they may inadvertently delay the linguistic competence of their students, which will lead to multiple difficulties in correcting and developing their competence in the following school years (Ha, 2009).

Understanding the importance of testing, assessment, and evaluation in foreign language training, the National Foreign Language 2020 Project management has conducted a series of specific tasks, such as evaluating the capacity of eight pedagogical universities in the country and organizing a seminar on the auditing process of assessment and exam forms so as to be compatible with European standards. According to the plan and actions of the National Foreign Language 2020 Project, most Departments of Education and Training in the country have plans to assess and test the proficiency standards of their English teachers (for example the Departments of Education and Training of Hanoi, Vinh Phuc, Phu Tho, Can Tho, and Ho Chi Minh).

MOET has trained primary school English teachers in the task of designing English tests following the European competency framework for Grades 3 and 4. This innovation is not only useful for teachers in teaching and evaluating students but also useful for students in self-assessing their learning process and for avoiding ambiguousness in the goals of teaching and learning.

In addition, MOET has assigned some eligible standard universities the responsibility to establish the Vietnam Center to complete the task

of assessing the English language skills with the hope that it will achieve the required standard of the region and overseas organizations after 5-10 years. Furthermore, MOET has issued the forms of exams for all educational levels following CEFR to assess the level of all teachers and students as a basis for achieve enough language capability for the ASEAN integration.

Promising Results of Developing English Teaching and Learning in Vietnam

According to Dung (2013), 19 university curriculum programs of Hanoi National University, Ho Chi Minh National University, Hanoi University of Technology, Ho Chi Minh Economic University and Can Tho University have been highly assessed by the ASEAN University Network (AUN) during the period between 2007 and 2013. As a result, any students graduating from these universities will be well prepared and have many opportunities for the 2015 ASEAN integration.

A Hoa Sen University Report (2013) mentioned that in some large universities, students are fully encouraged to develop their English ability in their university programs. For example, at Hoa Sen University, for many years now, students have had many chances to choose curriculum and materials in either Vietnamese or English. According to the Vice Director of the university, the students are encouraged to study in the English-medium curriculum because in the near future, they will have to compete with foreign labor forces even in their own country. Without foreign languages, students may lose opportunities even at home.

International Collaboration and Assistance

There have been many recommendations on future collaborations among AEC member countries, envisioning that the AEC can lead to collaborating on curriculum development among ASEAN member nations. The Vietnamese government and MOET have invested as much as possible to develop cooperation and partnerships with international organizations through different types of short-term or long-term scholarships, free courses for teacher training and development, and collaborating with English specialists to train teachers and students.

In addition to textbook development, the most prominent international collaboration that MOET has initiated is with the British Council, which has conducted several programs in recent years, such as building content-based, self-study sites to support teachers in improving their qualifications independently, training 43 leading

teachers on methods of teaching primary school English for a number of universities and high schools in Hanoi, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City. From the success of these courses, MOET continued to collaborate with the British Council to organize similar training for 87 faculty trainers in 2012 and 2013.

Some non-government funds, along with MOET funds, have been invested in providing materials for teachers in rural areas to develop their skills in teaching English. For example, the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF), sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, has been designing materials and curriculum to train primary school teachers in three provinces of Vietnam (Hai Phong, Phu Tho, and Ca Mau). The volunteer teachers of AEIF who are alumni of U.S. Embassy cultural exchange programs have been collaborating, designing materials, and traveling to those three provinces to teach and present innovative methodologies of English teaching for at least 60 chosen primary schools in each province. These teachers were provided chances to work and share with the volunteer teachers who have attended some innovative teaching conferences and training courses so that they could develop their own teaching methodology and help other colleagues to implement what they have learned from the training courses of AEIF.

Suggestions for English Teaching and Learning Development in Vietnam

The dominant and significant results of training teachers and internationally cooperating and nationally investing in education presented in this chapter are signals to show that Vietnam is developing English teaching and learning to best prepare for the ASEAN 2015 integration. In addition to increased investment by the government and MOET, many suggestions have been presented in order to innovatively and effectively address current challenges in developing English teaching and learning to further prepare for the ASEAN 2015 integration.

There is an immediate need to change some education policies issued by MOET as it is the right time to “equalize the educational quality across Vietnam; raise entry level examination standards for admission into English language programs; allocate adequate funds for program development; . . . improve teacher preparation programs to develop highly qualified teachers, . . . and equip classrooms with modern technology” (Utsumi & Doan, 2009).

In particular, as reported by Hung (2010), teacher development is the key to the success of the National Foreign Language 2020 Project and teachers should review, amend, and revise mechanisms, regulations, and policies to encourage the teaching and learning of

foreign languages in the national education system. He also suggested the government increase the pay for teachers to motivate them to be more engaged in courses to improve their English competence.

Another suggestion is to establish a Vietnamese-based TESOL association, such as VietTESOL, to provide teachers and researchers of English with the chance and environment to study and share their innovative approaches and research, to build new competence in English standards, and to find solutions to such issues as the curriculum program, teaching methods, testing and assessment, technology applications, policies, and international cooperation. A large number of Vietnamese teachers attend national TESOL conferences in Cambodia, Thailand and Singapore every year to present research and attend workshops. A similar VietTESOL conference would be a place for teachers and learners to share and learn more from each other in the Vietnamese context.

The Dean of the Office for Students in Ho Chi Minh National University suggested that one major step to prepare for ASEAN 2015 integration is that all universities and institutes should register for testing or assessment by international testing systems or follow the standards on which the ASEAN University Network has agreed. It is better for a university of one country to cooperate with other universities - students can then study for a number of terms in their own country, and then they can study at another ASEAN university. As a result, their graduation diplomas will be accepted in all ASEAN countries. This is an effective method to support students studying both domestically and abroad to develop all their abilities and to enable them to use their capacity in any situation, not only in their own country.

Teachers and educational managers are advised to adopt the CEFR with six levels of proficiency in teaching and assessing students' and teachers' English levels. In addition, in the future, English tests or assessment systems focusing on all four skills instead of the current reading and grammar-based tests will be developed and implemented. Possibly, there will be new investment to build and develop the National Teacher Development Center, so that the programs for training and testing the capacity of teachers in different parts of Vietnam can be standardized for famous universities and local English centers alike.

Overall, tests should also focus on English competence through listening, speaking, reading, and writing rather than focusing only on English knowledge, i.e., grammar and vocabulary. The testing format should be changed and have language-focused tasks instead of traditional pen-and-paper focused ones. Teachers should also evaluate

students' English competence through their learning process, not tests alone.

Additionally, the government should not use the percentage of students passing national exams to rank teachers and schools. Instead, the government should significantly change the teacher ranking criteria.

Hac (2010, p. 358) suggested focusing on the six principles of ASEAN education integration, three of which focus on methods of obtaining foreign investment in Vietnam for not only opening new schools, but also inviting foreign professors and teachers to teach in Vietnam. According to these principles, the Vietnam government should establish a fund to send officials, scholars, and students to go abroad to study more, and invite foreign students to study in Vietnam. Agreeing with the suggestions of Hac (2010), Binh (2010) also recommended developing foreign cooperation among schools and institutions, especially to encourage quality institutions abroad to cooperate with Vietnamese institutions to support study both domestically and internationally.

Conclusion

Hopefully, with the current and promised investments, the potential opportunities and the problem-solving suggestions presented in this chapter, Vietnamese citizens will have more knowledge, capacity, and the necessary skills to be able to meet the higher demands of the AEC. It is also hoped that the Vietnam government and citizens will be adequately prepared for the ASEAN integration in 2015.

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Teacher Professional Education in Indonesia and ASEAN 2015: Lessons Learned From English Language Teacher Education Programs

Utami Widiati
State University of Malang, Indonesia

Nur Hayati
State University of Malang, Indonesia

The Indonesian government has a quality-oriented paradigm in teacher training, including training for English language teachers. Recently, at the national level, a one-year pre-service teacher professional education program has been established. The program aims to develop the professional competencies of teacher candidates. This chapter describes how the teacher professional education program is run as the benchmark of the country's teacher education programs, covering program management, curriculum structure, and program implementation. Following is a presentation of how the program is implemented through day-to-day workshops on planning, conducting, and evaluating lessons, peer teachings, and a workshop on classroom-based research. The chapter ends with an analysis concerning the benefits and the challenges of the program, particularly in relation to lessons that can be learned for other professional development programs in the ASEAN context.

The countries in Southeast Asia that come under the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have made a commitment toward building the ASEAN Community by 2015. The pillars of the ASEAN Community are the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). "The education sector is expected to contribute to the establishment of a socially responsible ASEAN Community, one in which citizens share a common identity and dwell in a society that enhances the well-being, livelihood, and welfare of all people" (ASEAN Secretariat, 2012, p. 3). The implementation of ASEAN Integration 2015 has great implications for education and the quality of education will

play a crucial role in the implementation of ASEAN Integration 2015 (henceforth, ASEAN 2015).

Within the framework of improving the quality of education, the Indonesian government has headed towards a quality-oriented paradigm in preparing teachers, including English language teachers. Such a paradigm is clearly related to one of the many ideals mandated explicitly in the ASEAN 2015. The ASCC and the ASEAN 5-year Work Plan on Education (WPE) emphasize improving the quality of education, teachers, and teacher education in the attempts to achieve Education for All (EFA) goals, Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Teachers in Indonesia are required to be qualified professionals with undergraduate degrees and training in teachers' competencies.

Several regulations on education that have been launched by the Indonesian government have an effect on the system of English language teacher education. The government's attention towards teacher-quality improvement programs seems to have been partly caused by the fact that teachers are at a very strategic position in the national development of the country in general. The issuance of the Government Regulation Number 74/2008 on Teachers implies that teachers by law are required to hold certificates, which can be obtained in a number of ways.

Recently, at the national level, in addition to teacher training programs, a one-year pre-service post-graduate program, *Pendidikan Profesi Guru* (PPG) or Teacher Professional Education, has been instituted. This program aims to develop the professional competencies of teacher candidates. The government, through the Directorate General of Higher Education, has assigned fourteen universities, mostly former teacher-training institutions, to carry out the PPG for elementary and secondary levels. Through such education, teacher candidates are offered opportunities to develop an understanding of the true sense of being professional. This program is intended to be the sole program in Indonesia through which selected undergraduates can undertake professional education as pre-service teachers to obtain a professional teacher certificate.

Despite the crucial role of PPG in improving the quality of teachers and education and in facing ASEAN 2015, there are hardly any studies carried out to examine the implementation of PPG thus far and how it connects to ASEAN 2015. This chapter thus attempts to examine the issues. The focus will be on PPG for Teachers of English; English is one of the core subjects in the Indonesian secondary school curriculum and in today's global world. This chapter begins with a discussion on the development of policies in English language teacher education in Indonesia. It then describes the PPG and how the program is

implemented, particularly at *Universitas Negeri Malang* (State University of Malang [UM]), covering program goals and management, the curriculum, and its implementation. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the benefits and the challenges of the PPG programs, mainly in relation to lessons that can be learned from UM, within the framework of improving the quality of teacher education and preparing for ASEAN integration.

The Development of Policies in English Language Teacher Education in Indonesia

As reviewed by Saukah (2009), after the independence, to become English language teachers in Indonesia, candidates were educated through a two-year English Language Teacher Training Program (ELTTP), which was more popularly called the Standard Training Course (STC). This program was established in and was said to be quantitatively and qualitatively successful. In 1960, the STC was closed and then integrated into the English Department of teacher colleges.

In 1954, Teacher Education Higher Education (*Perguruan Tinggi Pendidikan Guru - PTPG*) was established in Malang, Bandung, and Batusangkar. Later on, elementary and secondary teachers in Indonesia were trained by Institutes of Teacher Training and Education or *Institut Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (IKIP)*, Colleges of Teacher Training and Education or *Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (STKIP)*, or the faculty of education of universities or *Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (FKIP)*. Until recently, students in the English Department or English Language Education Study Program of institutions which offered teacher education programs were automatically considered secondary English language teacher candidates from the beginning of their undergraduate studies. Such pre-service education was also known as the concurrent system of English language teacher education (Saukah, 2009, p. 5). The concurrent system has made it easier for the graduates of English Language Education Study Program to be accepted as English language teachers at either elementary or secondary schools, private courses, or training institutions because right from the beginning they seem to “declare” themselves to take teaching as their profession. The graduates are thus assumed to possess a higher level of academic motivation to become teachers.

The institutes of teacher training and education in Indonesia have been promoted to universities, carrying out wider mandates of managing both education and non-education study programs and thus increasing the more positive image of the institutions. Formerly, students enrolling in the teacher training institutes were often

regarded as “second-ranked” compared to university students. Such a phenomenon seems to be in line with what has happened in many countries as observed by Zhu and Han (2006). Following the trend of developed countries, teachers in many countries are currently trained at multipurpose universities; many teacher-training institutes have been transformed to comprehensive universities to improve quality-oriented education (Zhu & Han, 2006, p. 68).

At present, under the new form, the consecutive system is also introduced in Indonesia. Students graduating from four-year undergraduate non-educational programs can take the one-year PPG to obtain a teaching certificate. Saukah (2009, p. 5) showed that undergraduate students who have not decided yet to become English language teachers can enroll in the PPG. However, he was still in doubt as to which system would be better, the concurrent or the consecutive.

In addition, the Teachers and Lecturers Act Number 14/2005 and the Minister of National Education Regulation Number 18/2007 on In-Service Teachers’ Certification address teacher quality improvement and are concerned with teacher certification. Teachers who are certified are considered qualified professionals, implying the quality as well as the welfare aspect of the teachers. The quality aspect is reflected in teachers having to meet the two important national standards: the academic qualification of an undergraduate degree and teachers’ competencies. The welfare aspect refers to teachers having the right to get decent payment once they are officially certified as professionals. Their salary is doubled, and in Saukah’s words (2009, p. 11), this is “sufficient to meet the needs of educated citizens.”

The policy of teacher certification refers to the issuance of the Minister of National Education Regulation Number 16/2007 on Standards of Teachers’ Academic Qualification and Competence, another piece of evidence about the government’s serious attempt to improve teacher quality. This regulation requires teachers to meet the national standards of academic qualification and teacher competence. It suggests that English teachers in Indonesia hold at least a Bachelor’s degree from an English Language Education Study Program or the English Study Program. Therefore, English language teachers who have not yet earned an undergraduate degree should pursue one of these programs.

Additionally, the regulation implies that it is compulsory that teachers in Indonesia have standard teacher competencies: pedagogical, personality, social, and professional, and that these be integratively reflected in teacher performance. Each category is then elaborated further (see Saukah, 2009, p. 17-18 for the English translation of Indonesian teachers’ core competencies as expected by the regulation). For English language teachers in particular, the first core competence is

mastery of the content, the structure, the concept, and the thinking pattern of the subject matter. This competency is more operationally specified: having understanding of communicative competence covering linguistic competence, discourse competence, socio-linguistic competence, and strategic competence and mastering English, spoken as well as written, receptively and productively to develop students' communicative competence.

Certification has been offered through portfolio assessment, teacher training, direct certification, and teacher professional education. The more frequently used schemes for in-service teachers seem to have been portfolio assessment and a 90-hour teacher training program. Officially, the Minister of National Education launched Regulation Number 18/2007 on In-Service Teachers' Certification through portfolio assessment and Regulation Number 40/2007 on In-Service Teachers' Certification through training programs.

The portfolio assessment system was intended for permanent teachers with minimum academic qualifications of an undergraduate degree and a certain number of years of teaching experience. This required submission of relevant documents (e.g., diplomas, certificates of attending seminars or workshop, research reports, or other academic products) demonstrating the teachers' professionalism or professional activities. The documents that teachers submitted contained information covering these 10 aspects: academic qualification, participation in relevant education and training programs, teaching experience, the planning and implementation of a lesson, performance evaluation by the headmaster and supervisor, academic achievements, professional-career achievements, participation in academic events, experience in educational and social organizations, and awards and recognitions in educational fields. The assessment of portfolios was done by university lecturers recruited from accredited study programs of certain universities mandated by the government to hold teacher certification.

However, document fraud was widespread (Triyanto, 2012). More specifically, Triyanto (2012) reported that there were data discrepancies such as allegations of bribery and falsification of documents in at least 87 percent of applications. Saukah (2009, p. 20) also showed that many of the documents submitted by teachers were found to be false. Economic pressure or motivation was possibly the cause of this unacceptable conduct.

Teachers who did not pass the portfolio assessment were given an opportunity to join a 90-hour teacher training program. The current practice, however, allows teachers to directly attend the training provided that they pass the online teacher competence test

administered nationally by the government. The ten-day training program is intended to improve teachers' competencies and professionalism as well as to determine whether teachers can be certified. The program has not been without problems. With the intensive schedule, it is very likely that the participants do not have enough time to completely process input or have productive discussions on how the knowledge and skills obtained in the training can be implemented in their own classrooms.

Learning from the issues with portfolio assessment and teacher training, PPG is meant for pre-service and in-service teachers. The objective is to produce teacher candidates with the skills of planning, implementing, and assessing instruction; following up assessment results by providing necessary guidance and training for students; and conducting research and continuous professional development.

In spite of the many attempts that the Indonesian government has made to ensure teacher quality, challenges have always been apparent. As the largest country in ASEAN in terms of size and population, Indonesia obviously faces problems of geographic spread and diversity of universities preparing teachers. At the national level, teacher education quality is ensured by the National Accreditation Body (*Badan Akreditasi Nasional [BAN]*) in the form of accrediting English Language Education Study Programs. In general, however, the result of accreditation by BAN is still perceived as being administrative and lacking depth. In response to the challenges and opportunities of ASEAN Community 2015, future trends of teacher education in Indonesia should be geared towards meeting the criteria set not only by BAN but also, for example, by the ASEAN University Network (AUN). As also highlighted by Shaeffer (2014, p. 8), there seems to be the need for "developing much more comprehensive and systematic approaches to educating (and re-educating) teachers."

In addition, there needs to be a national agenda concerning the development of awareness of the concepts of ASEAN 2015 and their implications on English language teacher education. The understanding of such needs has not been present at the national level. Instead of awaiting national socialization programs from the government, individual universities are beginning to take certain academic actions. Suharmanto, Hidayati, & Zen (2013), for example, have conducted research on developing course outlines for subjects for the UM English Department that conform to guidelines from the ASEAN University Network - Quality Assurance (AUN-QA). Institutions such as the Indonesia-Australia Language Foundation (IALF) have also been offering courses that will enable Indonesian academics to receive training and obtain an internationally-recognized

certificate of Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which might be needed when ASEAN 2015 has taken place.

Further concerning the English language, its effective use as a language of written and spoken communication among Member States and citizens of ASEAN is a key factor for a successful implementation of actions and programs in all the three blueprints (APSC, AEC, and ASCC) which generally include:

- a. advocacy by experts, institutions, organizations, media;
- b. networking and linkages (e.g., government institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, and media throughout the region);
- c. collaborations;
- d. joint research and publication;
- e. establishment of regional institutions;
- f. exchange of languages, cultures, information, cultural products, experts, technical assistance, students, experience, and best practices;
- g. sharing of opportunities and challenges;
- h. training, conferences, workshops, capacity building, and ASEAN forums;
- i. development of training modules, revised curricula, declaration, memoranda of understanding, agreements, policy documents, and action plans.

The effective development of English language skills throughout the ASEAN countries is then crucial. Accordingly, English teacher professional education needs to be seriously designed and continuously enhanced so that it will be able to produce professional English teachers who meet the required standards. National policies regarding English language teacher education in Indonesia that are specifically designed to respond to the approaching ASEAN 2015 might not be present yet. However, as discussed earlier, the Indonesian government has been moving towards a quality-oriented paradigm in preparing teachers, including English language teachers, as demonstrated by the implementation of the PPG. Improving the quality of education, teachers, and teacher education clearly contributes to the successful implementation of ASEAN 2015. The one-year PPG for English Teachers program in Indonesia is in line with the urgent need for quality English teacher professional education and the vision and missions of ASEAN 2015. The next section of this chapter is devoted to a description of the program.

English Language Teacher Professional Education (PPG)

In 2010, the Indonesian government mandated the carrying out of English Language Teacher Professional Education (PPG), a one-year teacher professional education program in Indonesia. The regulation reflects a more serious effort to improve teacher quality, in line with the perspective that teaching is professional work, as suggested by Indonesian Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System and No. 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers. The PPG is the only teacher certification program for pre-service teachers, so the outcomes of the program will largely determine the quality of future teachers and the success of school instruction.

The PPG is an intensive one-year (two-semester) program involving workshop-based courses that run five days a week, eight hours a day. Program completion requires 36-40 credits.

The PPG is open to bachelor degree holders of relevant fields who pass the selection test administered by the institutions that conduct PPG. However, based on the mandate given by the government through the Directorate of Higher Education, for English and some other subjects, the PPG in 2013 and 2014 have been specifically meant for graduates who have completed the SM-3T program, that is, a one-year program for selected graduates to teach in remote areas (the 3T areas) in Indonesia. The program is, thus, titled PPG Post SM-3T. In addition, the universities conducting the program, including UM, did not administer a selection test as the participants were assigned directly by the government.

In 2013, PPG Post SM-3T programs at the ten universities were attended by 275 participants. The English Department of UM was assigned to take 32 participants in two groups. The students, according to *Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan* (2013a), are supposed to have had experience in teaching a certain level of school based on their expertise and the communities' needs, promoting innovation in school instruction through various activities, supervising extracurricular activities, giving assistance related to their schools' management of education, conducting community empowerment to support the educational development programs in the remote areas, and performing social and community tasks. The PPG Post SM-3T students are therefore expected to have strong characters and integrity as a result of those positive experiences.

The 2014 PPG is currently underway, so this chapter will focus more on the 2013 PPG that has been completed. The following section describes the PPG at UM. The description covers the program goal, management, and the curriculum and its implementation.

Program Goal

The goal of the program is to develop professional English teachers for secondary school level who have four types of competencies: pedagogical, professional (subject matter), social, and personality.

Pedagogical competencies include the knowledge and skills in (1) planning, implementing, and assessing instruction by using relevant pedagogical principles of English teaching and learning and by considering the types of English learners; and (2) following up the assessment results by providing necessary guidance and training for the students. The instruction covers materials on various types of texts in the 2006 and 2013 English Curricula: interpersonal and transactional conversations, and short and long functional texts. Professional competencies comprise the knowledge and skills of (1) the English language, encompassing the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) especially related to mastery of the English instructional materials taught at secondary school level, and (2) conducting research and continuous professional development. Social competencies involve the ability to establish good rapport with other teachers and staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders by having good interaction and communication and respecting differences. Personality competencies refer to the ability to conform to accepted standards of conduct and to become a role model of good morality, especially for their students.

Additionally, the program equips the participants with the knowledge and skills in doing classroom-based research, which aims to develop reflective teaching practice. Learning how to perform such research will enable the participants to explore how to work in their own environments, with their own students, on problems that will directly affect them. Upon graduating from the program, the participants will hold a certificate that legitimates them as professional teachers in a particular level of formal education, that is, elementary or secondary schools (junior or senior high schools).

Program Management

PPG for English Teachers has been held nationwide at ten universities since 2013. It is meant to be a regular program managed like other university study programs. The ten universities were appointed by the government on the basis of meeting the required standards to conduct the program, including running an accredited undergraduate program of English Language Education with a good track record, having human resources with the required qualifications, and having adequate facilities and resources.

Similar to other universities, PPG for English Teachers at UM is managed by the English Department, in particular, the English Language Education Study Program. A team of lecturers is appointed by the head of the department as the PPG coordinators. The university also appoints lecturers from other faculties at UM to coordinate the carrying out of the program by different study programs at UM.

Facilitators of the program are tenured faculty members who hold at least a Master's degree and who specialize in English language and / or English pedagogy. All facilitators also have to hold a certificate as a professional lecturer, issued by the government. Other facilitators in the program are teachers from schools that have a partnership agreement with the teacher training institutions. These teachers have been certified as professional teachers, hold a bachelor's degree in English Language Education (preferably a Master's degree), and have a minimum of 10 years of teaching experience at secondary schools. The involvement of these teachers is expected to support the development of the participants as professional teachers.

Curriculum and Its Implementation

The main contents of the curriculum of the PPG include: (1) subject-specific pedagogy (SSP) workshops on designing lesson plans, instructional materials and media, assessment procedure, and proposals for classroom action research; (2) micro-teaching and / or peer teaching, (3) subject matter and / or pedagogical knowledge enrichment programs, and (4) teaching internships and action research. The first three are done in the first semester and the internships are carried out at selected secondary schools in the second semester. The curriculum is further elaborated below.

SSP workshops. The SSP workshops start with an orientation program that covers an introduction to the campus, staff, and learning facilities, an overview of the SSP workshop system and group dynamics, and a review of relevant pedagogical principles on curriculum, instructional strategies, assessments, and classroom action research. The orientation is held approximately two days.

After the orientation, the participants attend a series of intensive SSP workshops for about three months with the guidance and supervision of two facilitators. In every workshop, the students go through the process of developing lesson plans, i.e., formulating indicators and learning objectives, developing instructional materials and media, designing learning strategies and classroom management strategies, designing an assessment procedure and rubric, presenting and discussing lesson plan drafts, and peer teaching. The participants should make innovations in their lesson planning and integrate

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as well as student character building.

The lesson plans, instructional materials and media, and assessment procedure cover the competencies and the materials contained within the English curriculum for secondary schools. By working on the materials they are supposed to deliver when they are in the field, i.e., at schools, the participants are expected to develop complete mastery of their instructional materials and are better prepared for teaching.

Following the SSP workshops on lesson planning, the participants then participate in workshops on designing proposals for and writing reports on action research. The workshops include an overview of action research, writing the research background, method, and findings and discussion, and presenting and finalizing the proposal draft. At the beginning of the workshops, the participants are given the opportunity to do a preliminary study at schools to help them identify instructional problems in the English classroom to be addressed in their proposals. The schools where they conduct the preliminary study are where they will do their teaching internships and carry out the action research in the second semester.

Throughout the SSP workshops, the participants can access learning resources in the form of textbooks, reference materials, journals, audiovisual materials, authentic materials, and Internet resources available at the English Self Access Center (ESAC) of UM.

Micro-teaching and / or peer teaching. At the end of every week, students conduct peer teaching, supervised and evaluated by one lecturer and one teacher from a school where they will do their internships in the second semester. Students carry out their lesson plan for approximately 25 minutes and receive feedback from the facilitators on their lesson plan and teaching performance.

The points evaluated in the lesson plan include: (1) formulation of the instructional objectives (clear, not ambiguous, and reflecting expected observable behavior); (2) selection and development of instructional materials (relevant to the objectives and learners' characteristics); (3) organization of the instructional materials (systematic, coherent, and suitable to time allocation); (4) selection and development of instructional media (relevant to the objectives, materials, and learners' characteristics); (5) teaching and learning activities (clear and detailed, consisting of three stages: opening, main, and closing activities, including explanation on strategies used in each step as well as time allocation, and relevant to the instructional objectives); (6) assessment procedure (clear and including complete instruments: tests, answer key and scoring guidelines)

The teaching performance is evaluated on the following aspects: (1) checking the students' readiness; (2) activating the students' background knowledge; (3) contextualizing materials; (4) conducting a lesson relevant to the competence to be developed; (5) conducting a systematic lesson; (6) mastering the instructional materials; (7) managing the class well; (8) making use of time allocation effectively; (9) utilizing media effectively and efficiently; (10) encouraging students' participation in learning; (11) promoting fun and active learning; (12) giving reinforcement; (13) monitoring the students' progress in learning; (14) assessing the students in line with the targeted competence; (15) using good and effective language to communicate with the students; and (16) involving students in reflecting on the lesson.

Subject matter and / or pedagogical knowledge enrichment programs. The PPG students are assumed to have some good background knowledge on their subject matters and the relevant pedagogical concepts. Therefore, the subject matter and / or pedagogical knowledge enrichment program in PPG for English Teachers is aimed more at reviewing and enriching those two types of content relevant to the needs of the PPG students, i.e., the areas where they are weak. In general, the subject matter knowledge emphasized includes mastery of the theories concerning the text types covered in the curriculum of secondary schools (communicative purpose, rhetorical structure, and language features) and knowledge of the language itself (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation). Pedagogical knowledge enrichment involves understanding the concepts of learner characteristics, teaching and learning approaches, instructional materials and media, assessment procedure, and lesson planning related to English as a subject.

Teaching internships and action research. The students' four-month teaching internships are carried out in the second semester of the program. The students are assigned to secondary schools which are partnered with the university. Throughout the internships, these student teachers are supervised by their PPG lecturers and teachers at the schools where they are doing the internships. Their tasks include mainly: (1) teaching certain classes for a certain number of hours (preceded by observation of the classroom teaching and learning process, managed by the teachers), (2) conducting lesson study in some of the classes they are in charge of, (3) designing and writing lesson plans, (4) writing daily journals on their teaching, (5) writing reports on lesson study implementation, (6) conducting an action research, and (7) writing the report of the action research.

The lecturers and teachers collaborate in guiding and supervising the students on their teaching and conducting and writing a report of

their classroom action research. The student teachers also carry out lesson study activities guided, observed, and evaluated by the lecturers and teachers. Lesson study refers to teachers' working in a team to plan, observe, and evaluate or reflect on a lesson. In a lesson study activity, there is one model teacher who implements the lesson plan designed collaboratively, and there are a number of observers who are part of the team. By the end of the program, the students submit a set of reports consisting of lesson plan documents approved by the cooperating teachers and the school principals, lesson study reports, daily journals, and action research reports.

Teaching and Learning in PPG

The teaching and learning process in PPG is conducted based on the following learning principles, which refer to the Guidelines of PPG Post SM-3T (*Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, 2014).

Learning by doing. Learners develop knowledge, skills and attitude by experiencing things, doing tasks, and solving problems. Therefore, the main strategy used in the teaching and learning process is workshops to develop a syllabus, lesson plans, instructional materials and media, instruments for assessment (student worksheets, tests, and scoring rubric), and other types of learning support.

Active student learning through various learning strategies. The teaching and learning process in PPG is learner-centered where the students are given opportunities to express their ideas, find information from various sources, and apply their knowledge and skills in completing their tasks. Different learning strategies are discussed and the PPG students are given models on how to use the strategies, so that they would be encouraged to implement them in their own classrooms.

Higher order thinking. All the learning activities are oriented toward supporting the development of the students' higher order thinking skills, comprising critical, creative, logical, and reflective thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and decision-making skills.

Nurturant effects. In addition to achieving the instructional objectives, the learning environment and the academic atmosphere in PPG is aimed to support the development of a good attitude and soft skills needed to become a professional teacher, such as teamwork, leadership, independence, and respect for one another.

Regular feedback mechanism. Assessment is conducted regularly through assignments, written tests, performance tests, and others, and feedback is given on the students' performance on the tasks and tests.

ICT integration. The use of multimedia and ICT is encouraged throughout the teaching and learning process for the students to

develop their knowledge and skills and to use the ICT as instructional media.

Contextual learning. PPG students learn through materials and activities that are contextualized, reflecting the conditions they will find in the field as teachers. To support contextual learning, PPG also involves teachers from schools to supervise peer teaching and gives the students the chance to visit schools and conduct internships.

Challenges and Lessons Learned From PPG for English Teachers

PPG for English Teachers was carried out for the first time in 2013. At State University of Malang, a prominent teacher training institution in Indonesia, challenges in and lessons learnt from the implementation of the program in 2013, particularly during the workshops in the first semester, have been identified. The data on this were obtained from coordination meetings of the lecturers of the program, discussion with the participants that were conducted throughout the program, and the reflective journals that the participants wrote at the end of the program. The reflective journals describe the kinds of improvement the participants thought they had made, the areas they still found problematic, and the areas that they would like to learn more about to improve their teaching skills. The challenges and the lessons learned from the implementation of PPG, in terms of program management and the curriculum and its implementation, including how the points might be viewed within the perspective of ASEAN 2015, are discussed.

Program Management

Many of the participants of PPG for English Teachers at UM in 2013 demonstrated a positive attitude toward learning, but many also, unfortunately, did not have adequate English language proficiency and knowledge of pedagogical concepts as expected. When the SM-3T program was first launched, there did not seem to be many graduates who were willing to teach in remote areas; thus, the selection of the SM-3T participants might not have been that strict. However, after the first cohort of SM-3T participants were given an opportunity to enroll in PPG in 2013, more potential graduates were interested in being part of the program, partly due to the PPG 'reward.' The quality of the SM-3T participants has been increasing, resulting in positive effects on the SM-3T program, which aims at improving access to quality education in remote areas in Indonesia. In turn, it seems to also result in participants with better language proficiency for PPG SM-3T, as shown by the 2014 cohort.

The SM-3T and the PPG Post SM-3T programs are thus in line with one of the education actions in the 5-year WPE to establish the ASEAN

Socio-Cultural Community, that is, to “support wider access of rural communities to quality education by establishing an ASEAN community-based programme for young volunteers to support the learning centers in rural areas and for indigenous people in Member States” (ASEAN Secretariat, 2012, p. 7). These programs help foster understanding and respect for different cultures, languages and religions as graduates from different origins and different universities are sent to remote areas with cultures that are likely to be unfamiliar to them. After one year of extensive learning and experience with different cultures of fellow participants and the local people in the areas where they teach, these new teachers, located in different regions in Indonesia, are gathered in one learning forum called PPG, collaborating with one another to pursue their common goal to become professional teachers. With the geographical spread and diversity of ethnicities, cultures, languages, and religions in the country, enhancing understanding and respect among fellow Indonesians should be one important step towards establishing, in a broader context, “solidarity and unity among the nations and peoples of ASEAN by forging a common identity and building a caring and sharing society which is inclusive and harmonious where the well-being, livelihood, and welfare of the peoples are enhanced,” which is one important characteristic of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009, p. 67).

With regard to the facilitators, most are experienced enough in training teachers and teacher candidates through their involvement in professional development activities carried out by the government, schools, or the association of subject teachers. It was expected that the PPG students would benefit from the facilitators’ experiences and their rich and varied input. The students stated that they did benefit from this. Nevertheless, on some occasions, they were confused by the different input given by the lecturers, which may sometimes seem contradictory. For example, facilitators might have different requirements on how instructional objectives are formulated. Some require the students to formulate objectives that contain the elements of ABCD (Audience, Behavior, Condition, and Degree); some are satisfied when the students manage to describe the expected behavior in the lesson objectives. Facilitators’ different preferences might also lead to different expectations of how the teaching and learning process is carried out. Though not on fundamental matters, these differences were somewhat an issue for the participants who were not used to dealing with different input. The management of PPG addressed this issue by having coordination meetings every month, laying some ground rules on certain principal matters, and improving the

participants' understanding that the varied perspectives given by the lecturers were meant to broaden their knowledge on what constitutes good teaching and were supposed to complement instead of contradict one another.

In 2010, when the government started to develop the policies for the PPG for English Teachers Program, the representatives from the ten government-appointed universities gathered in one forum to discuss the curriculum and syllabus. However, this kind of meeting has not taken place again. It is necessary for the universities to gather to evaluate and reflect on the implementation of the program, share best practices and obstacles, and give recommendations for improvements for the government's PPG-related policies. What actually happens in the field should be a crucial factor in formulating policies, and policies should be bottom-up as well as top-down.

Furthermore, as ASEAN integration nears and with the significant contribution English language teacher education can give toward the successful implementation of ASEAN 2015, the PPG management from the universities, facilitated by the government, should have started discussing approaches and content to be incorporated in the program to develop the students' awareness of and capacity in collaborating and competing with people from the other ASEAN countries. Opportunities to conduct joint research, exchange experts, and share best practices among Member States with the establishment of the ASEAN Community should be used to help improve policies in English teacher education, so that PPG for English Teachers will be more outward looking, particularly with more orientation toward the ASEAN Community. The potential of having visiting lecturers and guest workshops from different institutions not just in Indonesia but in the region of ASEAN should also be something of consideration for the betterment of the program. As the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook (ASEAN, 2012, p. 1) states, Member States of ASEAN need to help "ensure that their young citizens in the classrooms learn about the interconnectedness among cultures, peoples, economies, governments, and ecosystems, and how these are linked to their own lives." This should be translated into the curriculum of PPG so that future professional teachers are well aware and informed of these needs and able to help with the awareness-raising of ASEAN identity and ASEAN integration among their future students in secondary schools.

Curriculum and Its Implementation

The PPG curriculum includes: (1) Subject-Specific Pedagogy (SSP) workshops (2) micro-teaching and / or peer teaching, (3) subject matter and / or pedagogical knowledge enrichment programs, and (4) teaching internships and action research.

It was found that the contents of the curriculum need to be more specifically adjusted to the student abilities so that the program could fulfill the students' needs, and this was quite a challenge. The students apparently still needed to improve their subject matter knowledge, whereas the time allocation did not allow sufficient work on that. A number of the students pointed out that they expected to have extensive practice of their language skills while the goal of the program was more pedagogically oriented. Similarly, in contrast with the assumption, the students did not have adequate knowledge on pedagogical concepts related to English teaching and learning. More materials on this had to be inserted in the workshops while the time allocation was limited. There needs to be evaluation on the structure of the curriculum, the types of content, and the proportion of each type and how it should best be adjusted to the needs and knowledge and skill levels of the participants attending PPG Post SM-3T. This evaluation needs to be carried out nationwide involving the universities that conduct PPG Post SM-3T.

Concerning the workshops on lesson planning, developing instructional media and designing an assessment procedure, some challenges were identified. First of all, the students expected that they would get one model only of a lesson plan they could use as an example. They said they were confused with the different formats of lesson plans they had in the workshop materials as well as the varied input they received from the lecturers regarding lesson plan designing. It was sometimes difficult to achieve common agreement among lecturers on certain aspects of a lesson plan, such as formulating indicators of competencies and developing scoring rubric. With the availability of various concepts and theories concerning lesson planning, teaching and learning strategies and assessment procedure, it seemed to be natural that the lecturers had rather varied perspectives on certain aspects. However, as discussed previously, the variations and differences, to a certain extent, confused the participants. Therefore, coordination meetings, workshops, and discussion among the lecturers to synchronize perception and reach agreements on certain principal matters will need to be continually done, as well as improving the students' understanding that differences are not necessarily contradictory; rather, they might just result from emphasis given to different aspects.

Apart from the lesson plans, the students suggested that they would benefit from special sessions on media development as they felt that media, particularly the non-electronic ones were very useful especially in relation to their previous teaching experience at remote areas. In terms of developing assessment procedure, many of the

students revealed that they still had difficulties in constructing questions, test items, and a scoring rubric, which, therefore, were the areas they wanted to work on more. The program management responded by providing additional sessions on developing non-electronic and ICT-based media, and on designing procedures for assessment.

Character building is one of the core elements to be integrated in the teaching of any subject in the curriculum of Indonesian secondary schools. The recent curriculum, i.e., Curriculum 2013, has explicitly included spiritual and moral competencies as target competencies to be developed in the teaching and learning of all subjects in primary and secondary education. In line with that, the Minister of Education and Culture states in Regulation No. 65 (*Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, 2013b) that the teaching and learning process at schools needs to comply with several guidelines including: (1) providing a nurturing environment that supports learners toward becoming life-long learners; (2) implementing good values in the teaching and learning process by providing role models, developing will, and enhancing learners' creativity; (3) developing understanding that learning can take place at home, at schools, in the communities, where anyone can be a teacher, anyone can be a student, and any place can be a class to learn; and (5) recognizing learners' individual and cultural differences. Despite the importance of these character-building principles, it seems that they had not been given enough emphasis during the workshops on lesson planning. The workshops ought to discuss these principles more elaborately to help the PPG students' skills develop to better translate these principles into the teaching and learning process in their classrooms.

The content of PPG for English Teachers and the principles of learning that embody the teaching and learning process in PPG are in line with the spirit of improving the quality of education and teacher education of the ASEAN WPE and roadmap for the ASEAN Community. However, there is still much more that PPG can do within the framework of welcoming the ASEAN 2015 integration. In terms of the PPG curriculum and its implementation, there needs to be more explicit integration of the ASEAN curriculum, so that the PPG students have adequate knowledge and skills on how to educate their future students about ASEAN identity and ASEAN integration through their English classes. The ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook (ASEAN, 2012) should be used as one of the main references for PPG. The following are the five themes of the sourcebook that need to be incorporated into the curriculum of teacher education programs.

Knowing ASEAN: Learning about ASEAN (its structure, membership, purpose, and approach) and exploring ASEAN's significance, accomplishments, and future challenges.

Valuing Identity and Diversity: Exploring the complex connections and influences that shape culture and beliefs, and recognizing and appreciating the strengths embodied in the commonalities of people (whether individuals or groups) as well as in their distinctive characteristics.

Connecting Global and Local: Investigating how local issues are shaped by global developments and trends, and how local events in ASEAN influence global realities.

Promoting Equity and Justice: Fostering principles of fairness and equality, and providing learners with tools and references (scientific and political, as well as philosophical) for analyzing complex situations and responding appropriately.

Working Together for a Sustainable Future: Recognizing the pressures brought on by limited resources and growing populations, and the implications for sustainability, while inspiring learners to work together within their communities and beyond so they might build a prosperous, peaceful, and sustainable future for ASEAN.

(ASEAN, 2012, p. 5)

The ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook has also provided a number of sample lesson plans for seven subject areas, i.e., History and Social Studies; Science and Mathematics; Civic and Moral Education; Languages and Literature; the Arts; Health and Physical Education; and Technology Education, which aim to facilitate students' learning of the essential concepts in those five themes. With theme-based instruction and the secondary school curriculum that is organized around text types, English teaching has great potential to go across subject areas by using texts of various topics. The chart in the appendix illustrates an overview of a number of sample lesson plans extracted from curriculum framework chart in the sourcebook (ASEAN, 2012) that can be integrated into English teacher education programs like PPG as learning resources the students can use to develop lesson plans for their future classrooms. The lesson plan ideas can also be implemented by the facilitators in some of the PPG classes to improve the PPG students'

language skills through theme-based instruction as well as to enhance their knowledge and understanding of ASEAN.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The one-year PPG Post SM-3T for English Teachers that has been conducted since 2013 at ten universities in Indonesia is one concrete movement toward improving the quality of English language teacher education and English language instruction in the country, and supports the successful establishment of an ASEAN Community in 2015. Based on observations and the study of documents during the implementation of PPG Post SM-3T at State University of Malang (UM), it was found that the program has benefited the participants in terms of their developing more hands-on skills in designing lesson plans, instructional materials and media, and assessment procedures in accordance with the curriculum of secondary schools.

Still, challenges were identified and lessons were obtained in the program management and the PPG curriculum and its implementation. The challenges and lessons learned suggest it is necessary to (1) adjust the PPG curriculum to suit the students from the SM-3T program, (2) have better coordination among lecturers who facilitate the workshops, (3) give more emphasis on certain learning principles that ought to underlie teacher education programs, and (4) conduct evaluation of the program at the national level in terms of the policies and implementation by involving all the English study programs that run PPG, so that the policies can be bottom-up as well as top down. Furthermore, it is necessary to reframe the program by referring more to the ASEAN standard of teacher education programs, considering the potential to have collaboration, for example, in the forms of sharing best practices and experts among Member States, and by incorporating ASEAN content into the curriculum of the program. This ASEAN content will improve the prospective professional teachers' knowledge and understanding of as well as the skills to integrate in their future classrooms the essential concepts in the five ASEAN themes that should embody the school curricula in all Member States of ASEAN, namely knowing ASEAN; valuing identity and diversity; connecting local and global issues, trends, and development; promoting equity and justice; and working together for a sustainable future. As this chapter can be considered an initial discussion on English teacher professional education in Indonesia with connections to the ASEAN 2015 integration, further research and discussion are recommended to consider in more depth the different aspects on how PPG for English Teachers can be geared toward meeting the demands and needs of ASEAN 2015.

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Appendix
Overview of Sample Lesson Plans on ASEAN to Be Integrated into
PPG for English Teachers
 (Extracted from ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook [ASEAN, 2012])

Knowing ASEAN

Student Level / Subject Area	Learning Outcomes	Thematic Pathways and Essential Questions (People, Places, Materials, and Ideas)	Suggested Teaching and Learning Activities
Upper Primary Technology Education	Technology helps people of ASEAN communicate and collaborate with one another.	How does technology help people of ASEAN work together? (Materials, Ideas)	Research different technologies that are available across ASEAN and create a visual exhibition of them, describing a situation where each would be useful in promoting communication and cooperation.
Lower Secondary History and Social Studies	10 Southeast Asian nations joined ASEAN to realize mutual goals.	Why did nations form and join the ASEAN and what goals do member nations share? (Places, People, Ideas)	Students read newspaper articles as well as interviews of historical actors to explore motivations for the formation of ASEAN, and different nations' reasons for joining ASEAN. They will compare multiple perspectives and begin to connect the needs in their community to the ASEAN Declaration Seven Aims and Purposes. The lesson will culminate with students' creations of photo narratives that, ideally, will be shared on a dedicated ASEAN Youth website.

<p>Lower Secondary History and Social Studies</p>	<p>ASEAN is working towards a 2009-2015 Blueprint.</p>	<p>How can member nations of ASEAN more easily realize their goals together than separately? (Ideas, Places)</p>	<p>Student teams choose a goal from the 2009-2015 Blueprint and learn how their community has changed or is changing as a result of ASEAN's efforts.</p>
<p>Upper Secondary The Arts</p>	<p>The arts can expand people's frames of identity.</p>	<p>Why do people connect with film, music, dance, theater, and visual art and how does this help shape a shared ASEAN identity? (People, Ideas, materials)</p>	<p>Listen to three popular ASEAN songs from different nations. Students first analyze the songs stylistically, and then look at lyrics (in translation) and write an essay or create a visual project expressing what they learned that was new; and what reaffirmed something in their own life or viewpoint. (Teaching strategy may be adapted to films as well.)</p>

Valuing Identity and Diversity

Upper Primary Civic and Moral Education	All cultures have distinct customs and ways of interacting.	What is the purpose of manners and local customs? (People, Ideas)	Learn about what constitutes good manners and what is a faux pas in different ASEAN cultures. Look in local media for ways in which the exchange of goods (cell phones, fashion, transportation) are changing traditional values and customs and make a collage or video.
Lower Secondary Health and Physical Education	The human body benefits from a wide variety of physical activities.	How do different activities promote physical health? (People, Places)	Practice various forms of exercise that are pursued in different parts of the ASEAN region (martial arts, dance, and physical games). After, discuss how each promoted strength, endurance, flexibility, or mental focus in a different way. As a class, devise an ideal two-week exercise program that incorporates various practices for maximum health.
Upper Secondary Civic and Moral Education	When people with diverse perspectives and cultures work together, they exchange ideas, which in turn can help people solve problems.	How can understanding identity (one's own and the identities of others) help people resolve conflicts and meet challenges? (People, Ideas)	Research a conflict between two groups (ethnic, religious, national, generational) and report on the two stories from the different sides. List the points of commonality and contention, and also alternative viewpoints that could be more fully considered. Propose inventive ways to mediate, highlighting how expanding each group's understanding of the other's perspective may accelerate a resolution.

Connecting Global and Local

Upper Primary Civic and Moral Education	People can be citizens of their community, their country, and their region.	What are different ways in which people can be connected to one another? (Ideas, People, Places)	Students sketch Venn diagrams with various aspects of their identity ranging from local to global. Use art supplies or magazine clippings to overlay the diagram with a collage.
Lower Secondary Languages and Literature	Memoirs give a personal voice to history.	What is the role of memoir in understanding global events? (People, Ideas)	Reading memoirs of immigrants/migrants exposes students to the ideas of cultural diversity and common history among ASEAN nations. This lesson will give students a human connection to historical events, teach students about the conflicts faced by their nations.
Upper Secondary Science and Mathematics	Natural systems are linked around the world and transcend national and political boundaries.	Why can the "ripple effects" of human actions on the environment be unexpected and severe? (People, Places, Materials)	By learning how climate change can impact their local community, students can begin to examine ways to reduce their carbon footprint and develop ways to ameliorate the problems. Students will understand that local CO2 emissions not only affect their local community, but will have more global consequences affecting all the ASEAN nations.

Promoting Equity and Justice

<p>Upper Primary Technology Education</p>	<p>Technology provides opportunities to individuals and communities.</p>	<p>How can technology promote equity and justice for an individual and a community? (People, Materials)</p>	<p>List technologies (electricity, Internet, mobile phone, television, refrigerator, car, tractor) and discuss how an individual's life or a community's prospects can change through access to technology. Look for case studies / short stories / news reports of the introduction of technology into a community and the effect on local lives.</p>
<p>Lower Secondary Civic and Moral Education</p>	<p>How governments make and enforce laws dramatically influences people's lives.</p>	<p>How do laws affect people's daily lives? (People, Ideas)</p>	<p>Compare ways that laws are made and enforced in ASEAN countries and compare with case studies to see effects for individuals and the larger society.</p>
<p>Upper Secondary History and Social Studies</p>	<p>Everyone plays a role in promoting justice and equity.</p>	<p>How can ASEAN's youth promote equity and justice across the region? (People, Ideas)</p>	<p>Using case studies to understand how cultural values and beliefs have influenced how equity and justice are defined and practiced by different groups at different times, students will begin to see and appreciate the complex intricacies involved in promoting and maintaining a just society. They will also learn how they can play an active role in helping to overcome societal injustices within their own communities and countries, thereby helping to build regional sustainability and interdependence.</p>

Working Together for a Sustainable Future

<p>Upper Primary Civic and Moral Education</p>	<p>People can improve their community by practicing kindness.</p>	<p>How can an individual become an "agent of change" by acting with integrity, compassion, and broad-mindedness? (People, Ideas)</p>	<p>Each student makes a Plan for Kindness, pledging to do a kind act to better the community for a week. Students hold a class discussion to share their experiences and the differences they may have made in their community, in their own lives, and in the behavior or experiences of others.</p>
<p>Lower Secondary Languages and Literature</p>	<p>Providing young people with second language instruction can strengthen a nation.</p>	<p>How does having a population versed in more than one language make a nation resilient? (People, Ideas)</p>	<p>On a world or ASEAN map, draw lines of different colors showing economic, political, and cultural connections between your country and others in the ASEAN region/world. What languages are spoken in these countries or areas? Based on this, what languages do you think students in your country should learn?</p>
<p>Upper Secondary Civic and Moral Education</p>	<p>Countries and regions can set goals with regards to economic growth, education, work, health care, the economic or political participation of women and the well-being of children.</p>	<p>How does setting targets enable a country to allocate resources and enact change? (People, Materials)</p>	<p>Look at historic and contemporary ASEAN examples of goals in public policy. Who made these, what did they hope to achieve, and how did setting the goal help bring about change? Set a goal for your country and create an action plan for implementation.</p>

A Past Before a Blueprint: Malaysia's Challenges in English Language Teaching

Stephen J. Hall
Sunway University, Malaysia

Malaysia has invested heavily to develop education and language competencies for national and transnational needs, including English for international communication. Any attempt to meet English language needs of ASEAN partners could benefit from lessons from the past and a focus on productive multilingualism, especially in a linguistically diverse nation. There is a history of addressing the urban and rural divide with various projects to build English language skills for a knowledge-based economy, yet there may not always be synthesis from these initiatives when policies change. The most recent aspirations in the form of eleven shifts in the Malaysian 2013-2025 Education Blueprint are presented as transformation and they address many possibilities. Challenges in moving Malaysia up from its PISA ratings for literacy and reading skills are also made complex with a multilingual educational system and questioning of the position of English vis-a-vis the national language. This chapter will argue that capacity building for ASEAN integration, through developing English for effective international communication, depends on long-term strategies built on recognizing linguistic complexity in classrooms. An in-service teacher education project will be used as a case study of the challenges in aligning top-down planning with classroom-based development.

The impact of ASEAN 2015 integration will be felt within the educational and linguistic complexities of the Member States. Those nations with a history of multilingual education, such as Malaysia, face many challenges in balancing the need for English as an international medium of communication with the advocacy and support for the national language, which in Malaysia is Bahasa Malaysia (Asmah, 1987). The linguistic landscape of this multicultural country is complex, as the national language is not the only medium of instruction used in primary and secondary schooling. A description of this complexity

provides the backdrop for the position of English language education and its place in national development.

Primary, secondary, and tertiary schooling vary in linguistic complexities. Public primary schools are divided into two categories based on the medium of instruction. The majority of primary and secondary schools are Malay-medium National Schools (*Sekolah Kebangsaan*, SK). Non-Malay-medium national-type schools (*Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan*, SJK), are known as “vernacular schools” and they are often supported by community associations, as in the case of National-type Schools (Chinese) (*Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan [Cina]*, SJK[C]) (Malakolunthu & Rengasamy, 2012). These are Mandarin-medium schools which use the simplified Chinese script. Community support also sustains National-type Schools (Tamil) (*Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan [Tamil]*, SJK[T]) with Tamil as the medium of instruction. Students are admitted on a race and language blind basis. National schools are required to teach Chinese or Tamil. If parents of a minimum of 15 students in a school ask for an indigenous language to be taught, schools must also do so when practical.

Malay and English languages are required subjects in public primary schools. The syllabus is the same at all schools for non-language subjects, regardless of the language of instruction. From 2003, all students learned science and mathematics in English and an additional language. SJK(C), for example, taught science and mathematics in English and Chinese. However, the national policy of teaching these two subjects in English was reversed in July 2009. Beginning in 2012, the languages formerly used for instruction are being gradually reinstated. There continues to be public dissent about this reversal (Asmah, 2012, p. 170; Goh, 2013).

At the public National Secondary Schools (*Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan*, SMK), Malay is the main medium of instruction, and English is a required subject. There are a smaller number of religious schools, science-based boarding schools, and sports schools. As in primary schools, National Secondary Schools must teach Chinese and Tamil; there is also the same requirement for the teaching of indigenous languages. Instruction in foreign languages (e.g., Arabic or Japanese) is provided at select schools. The primary and secondary schooling systems therefore involve a complex mix of language use with the main area of contestation remaining the role of the national language vis-à-vis English and the other languages which form part of the everyday communicative setting of Malaysia (Rajadurai, 2004).

The Chinese community has been assertive in supporting the role of Mandarin, resulting in the largest parallel system to the government-funded national secondary system with Chinese independent secondary schools (Soong, 2012). While Mandarin may be dominant,

many students also speak a differing Chinese language such as Cantonese, Hakka, or Hokkien in their home environment along with Malay and English in other settings (Puah & Ting, 2013).

There are also a growing number of English-medium International secondary schools, reflecting a desire among the affluent for the English medium of instruction and internationally recognised qualifications such as the increasingly popular International Baccalaureate (Monitor ICEF, 2014).

Tertiary education in Malaysia is provided by community colleges, polytechnic education, colleges, and public and private universities (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2014). Students undergo a major transition in the medium of instruction as they move from high school to tertiary study. There is little research into language usage within community colleges and polytechnics in which English is the espoused medium. English is foregrounded and more fully described as the medium of instruction for both public and private universities (Ali, 2013). There has been a growth in tertiary education choices as there are currently 37 private universities, 20 private university colleges, seven foreign university branch campuses, and 414 private colleges (Maierbrugger, 2013). All of these institutions use English, a choice linked to the recruitment of international students and supported by government quality assurance agencies so as to build the international ranking of Malaysian universities (MOE, 2012).

The linguistic landscape of Malaysian everyday usage is even more diverse than the educational system, with complexities beyond dialectal differences in Malay and Chinese (Lee, 2003). Code-switching is common in social settings, classrooms, and in the workplace, as described in research by Hashim and Tan (2012). There are also enclaves of Thai speakers in northern states, Hokkien speakers in Penang and Sarawak (Puah & Ting, 2013), Cantonese speakers in the Klang Valley, Baba Malay speakers in Malacca, and Javanese speakers in Johor, to name but a few. Community languages in use range from unique indigenous languages such as Iban, Melanu, Kadazan, and Semai to the comparatively recent arrival of Punjabi and Foochow. Any macro-planning for English for international communication then needs to be contextualised in this complex linguistic setting.

The complexity of English language teaching and learning will be historically outlined before being related to a case study of implementation challenges for in-service English language teaching. This chapter will therefore argue that before developing further to meet ASEAN needs, there is a need to understand aspects of linking macro-planning with Malaysia's linguistic complexity and implementation in English language teachers' capacity building.

History

Educational capacity building and relating English language teaching and learning to economic needs has been and continues to be a government priority (Ho & Wong, 2004; MOE, 2012). English language development has often been linked to two factors: the role of English language vis-a-vis the national language Bahasa Malaysia and the implementation of change as seen in policy decisions and implementation (Selvaraj, 2010). Language teaching and learning has been affected by swings in policy, such as the use of English as the medium of instruction for Maths and Science at the primary and secondary level from 2002 until its reversal in 2009 (Asmah, 2012). Such changes often reflect varied visions and political views of how language policy is critical to nation building, especially in the contested area of national language status vis-à-vis English language (Ridge, 2004). Pandian (2002) describes English language education as a very diverse range of developments, syllabi, and projects which have laid the foundation for today's complexities and concerns. In order to understand the alignment of regional aspirations, it may be useful to consider national intricacies and the implementation challenges of capacity building within Malaysia.

Nation Building and Language Policy Changes

Until 1970, Malaysia had two school systems, one in Malay and one in English, with a predominantly English-medium tertiary system within which many teachers continued methods and traditions based on United Kingdom practices. The British colonial policy had been one of educating Malays to be better farmers, artisans, fishermen, and labourers while fostering a tiny number of elite schools for the children of Malay rulers. It was clearly recognised, even then, that English for international communication opened up broader perspectives and created social and economic advantages. Since the Razak Report (Government of Malaya, 1956) and Independence, language planners have sought to balance English for international communication with national concerns in a multilingual, multicultural nation (Asmah, 1993; Jeannet, 2013). This chapter will suggest that some of the links to the "source" of the English language and nationally determined policies remain a strong influence, even while ASEAN develops and aims to foster an international framework for English as a shared medium of communication.

Malaysia's primary level system (for students aged 6-12 years old) in the 1970s reflected the cultural complexity that continues to today with strong support for national-type primary schools which use Tamil and Mandarin as the medium of instruction. From 1970 until 1976, the majority of national schools, as opposed to vernacular national-type

schools, changed in stages to use Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction, while English was classified as a second language. English language instruction was provided a few hours a week in the national syllabus with a smaller allocation in the Tamil- and Chinese-medium national-type schools, a situation which remains in place today (Rajaretnam & Nalliah, 1999). English is therefore a subject and not a medium of instruction, beginning at Year 1 in the six-year national primary schools and at Year 3 in Tamil- and Chinese-medium schools.

Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction was and is still a major influence in how the English language is perceived, developed, and implemented in the highly centralised education system. The role of the national language has strong roots in assertions and advocacy of nationhood through a common national language and is widely used across many sociocultural groups (Asmah, 1987; Ridge, 2004). Translation and the development of the national language have played a significant role as the integration focal point for a bilingual or trilingual approach. This continues with an ongoing 2012 Bahasa Malaysia literacy and numeracy initiative (Kang, 2012) which aims to develop basic literacy skills in Bahasa Malaysia.

The initiative is, however, linked to English language teaching, as literacy skills have been a crucial and much needed foundation for Malaysian educational planning, present and past (Musa, Lie, & Azman, 2012). With a generation of students passing through the system of the Malay medium of instruction, concerns about English language literacy and speaking levels have heightened as Malaysia deals with urban-rural differences and moves towards a knowledge-based economy.

Public perception and concerns that standards of English language have declined may seem to be recent expressions as regional and transnational flows of labour, capital, and expertise have developed. Yet this complexity has deeper roots as national education policy aims to address socio-economic divides and urban-rural differences. Addressing socio-economic differences is central to the current macro-planning in the highly publicised Malaysia Education 2013-2025 Blueprint (MOE, 2012). The first of the “Eleven Shifts to Transform the System” is expressed as “equal access to quality education of an international standard,” and the second shift aims to “ensure every child is proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and English Language” (MOE, 2012, p. E19, emphasis added). These aims are not new (Asmah, 2012) and this chapter will argue that educators can learn from the past by examining how these aims were prescribed with nationwide detailed directives and then implemented through classroom delivery.

Concerns about the poor state of English language competencies were highlighted by the then Prime Minister Mahathir in 1991 (Pillay, 1998, p. 2) after earlier advocacy of the nation-building role of Bahasa Malaysia. Widening achievement gaps between rural and urban learners and the affluent and less affluent with proficiency have been linked to limited exposure to English. It has been suggested that since “English has been relegated to the status of a subject in the school curriculum one must expect the level of competence to drop” (Pillay, 1998, p. 3).

A substantive change and investment in placing English language in a foregrounded role began in 2002 with the change in the medium for maths and science instruction from the national language to English. This change was announced by the then Prime Minister Mahathir in May 2002 and implemented as a new policy in the national education system in 2003 in stages. The purpose of English for Teaching Mathematics and Science (ETMS) was to enable students to acquire proficiency in English while learning the content. The linguistic climate with this change in 2003 appeared to be supportive of English language development in primary and secondary schools with this ETMS initiative and it was at this time that supporting projects were launched.

Projects and Practices

Numerous English language teaching projects have proliferated in Malaysian public educational development in the last two decades (Pandian, 2002). There has been considerable public expenditure in infrastructure and materials from self-access learning centres introduced in 1990 to class reader programmes (Mukundan, Ting, & Ali Abdul Ghani, 1998) and laptop-based English for Maths and Science modules. The investment to develop teachers' pedagogy and proficiency has led to government partnerships with varied providers.

One such partnership in which the government has invested is focused on in-service education. Challenges and strategies drawn from in-service English language teacher experience and research will be related to the ASEAN Economic Community goals for education.

Malaysia has a long history of teacher education and, unlike much of ASEAN with the exception of Singapore, still has strong links with the United Kingdom (Jeannet, 2013). In early 2002, the Centre for British Teachers (CfBT), an international educational trust with headquarters in Reading, United Kingdom, was asked by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) of the Malaysian Ministry of Education (MOE) to provide English Language Coordinators (ELCs), or teacher educators, for selected rural districts throughout Malaysia. In working with CfBT, which has over three decades of Malaysian

experience, as well as with the British Council, the MOE continued a legacy of links to British providers, an approach which is still occurring on a scale larger than with any other ASEAN nation.

The in-service project which will be the focus of this case study may suggest approaches which could be applicable in similar ASEAN settings in which centralised planning attempts to drive classroom change. The C/BT project began in May 2002, which was when Prime Minister Mahathir announced the medium of instruction for mathematics and science would change from Bahasa Malaysia to English. The Malaysian Schools English Language Project (MSELP) aimed to improve the country's standard of English through in-service English language teacher training, with a focus on rural areas. A needs analysis informed the pedagogy of the project components (Hall, 2009, p. 13). The project concluded in December 2007 with 22,000 teachers involved in over 30 of the 84 educational districts. It also involved principals and local administrators as it did not take long to realise that involving all stakeholders is vital in a hierarchical, centralised system. A subsequent in-service project involving English for Maths and Science involved administrators even further. After a hiatus, in which there was little continuity to support earlier materials distribution and teacher education, tenders were called for another in-service project in September 2009.

The English Language Teacher Development Project (ELTDP) (British Council, 2013) apportioned nationwide to three providers, began in January 2010 for a three-year period. This project is based on small clusters of five schools per one "native speaker" teacher educator / mentor; the project has 300 mentors. It has been renewed for another two years, beginning January 2014. The ELTDP's reflective approach is central to the intensive mentoring mode. The key performance indicators for 2010-2013 included numbers of teachers trained and observed who completed courses, as well as shared evidence of changes in techniques. In all projects, a quantifiable assessment is requested by the MOE for the qualitative interactions of classroom change - a real challenge. Considerable public investment in an earlier larger scale project is now focused on in-depth development of a smaller group of teachers with arguably more intensive learning and a smaller scale transfer of expertise. Transferable skills in terms of replication are not part of this project, a point which is seen as contentious by some.

The Current English Language In-Service Teacher Development Situation

As English is no longer the medium for maths and science in primary and secondary schools, the focus for English language teacher

development is now part of a wider strategy as seen in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (MOE, 2012). The 2009 reversal of English for Maths and Science to return the medium of instruction to Bahasa Malaysia is coincidentally the same year as the Programme for International Assessment (PISA) results were derived from a survey of a broad range of 5,000 15-year-old students. The Malaysia Education Blueprint (MOE, 2012, p. 26) stated that Malaysia was ranked 55 in the 2009 ranking of 74 countries for reading. In the 2012 PISA assessment, Malaysia was ranked 59 in reading out of 65 OECD countries (Sedghi, Arnett, & Chalabi, 2013). Clearly, literacy in English poses considerable challenges with such results for the national language reading levels.

Investment continues in English language in-service teacher training. However, there is a tendency for changes and initiatives to depend on top-down planning on a project-by-project basis, which can create a lack of continuity and gaps in implementation. There are many smaller private / public partnerships contributing to development as well, but the intricacy of these localised yet often successful initiatives is beyond the scope of this article. The key to these and larger initiatives lies in implementation, developing teacher confidence, and commitment to continuity. The teaching and learning of English for maths and science policy, for example, has also been critiqued not for what it was but for the problems with implementation (Goh, 2013; Ramachandran, 2013). After policy is decreed at the national or ASEAN level, the implementation stage is very dependent on teachers. Teachers may perceive another change of direction decreed from a centralised system as not being situated in an understanding of rural multilingual complexities. An example of this is the reversal of the English for maths and science policy remaining a contentious issue as ex-Prime Minister Mahathir and others have called for its reinstatement (Darwis, 2013; Tan, 2012). While the politics of English language, especially vis-a-vis the national language and multilingualism, continue to be complex in multicultural Malaysia, the government continues to invest in English language teacher development.

The fourth shift of the eleven shifts in the Malaysia Educational Blueprint (2012, p. E14) states that the MOE aims to “transform teaching into the profession of choice”; included are plans to raise the entry bar for admitting teachers as well as “competency and performance-based career progression by 2016.” Language proficiency is currently the focus of considerable investment in a new raft of in-service projects. Generally in the past decade, most in-service approaches have fostered proficiency through integration with transferable pedagogy, an approach requested by teachers in an earlier needs analysis (Hall & Dodson, 2004). The development of teachers' confidence is recognised as critical to English language usage and

learning in the classroom, yet the current approach is to assess teachers and develop teachers' language so that students can also improve proficiency. Kabilan (2007) notes that

in a non-native English language teaching and learning environment, the teacher is responsible for espousing effective teaching practices. But when the teacher's own linguistic competency and proficiency are limited, it undermines the teacher's efforts to improve learners' achievement in English language learning. (p. 681)

He goes on to state that the issue goes beyond teachers to planning and financial issues as "students with excellent English capabilities and achievements tend to move into other, higher paying professions" (Kabilan, 2007, p. 682). This then suggests that change needs to begin with making the profession itself attractive, while at the same time enhancing the professional life of those already involved in teaching. The larger scale initiatives planned to build national and ASEAN capacity then need to focus on teacher classroom development by building teacher confidence as a profession working in effective bilingual or multilingual interactive classrooms. The challenge will again depend on implementation and teacher engagement in a system driven by national examinations.

Examinations and the status of English language have been an area of contestation as experienced teachers have seen many changes to the status of English. A recent national examination status change is the latest change in multilingual policies, as at the time of writing in 2014. The Minister of Education during 2014 announced that improving students' English proficiency will be a priority, since students must pass the English portion of the Malaysian Certificate of Education (*Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* [SPM]) in 2016 (Kulasagaran, 2014). This is an important secondary school examination for 15-16 year old students. He also announced a focus on teachers' proficiency development with an upskilling programme. Subsequent to the language proficiency assessment of 61,000 teachers, 9,000 teachers are undergoing training (Kulasagaran, 2013). Implicit in this program is a two-pronged approach assuming that proficiency is the dominant factor when teachers aspire to provide engaging pedagogy. It could be suggested that there is a further built-in assumption that once teacher proficiency has improved, student learning will improve as well.

While one cannot deny the role of teachers' proficiency, one hopes that fostering effective bilingual and multilingual English language pedagogy does not get misplaced in the pendulum swings that so often

impact on effective in-service teacher education (Malachi, 2011). In any macro planning and capacity building, there is always the fact that a teacher can close the classroom door and work with his or her own approach to English language development.

A Case Study of Implementing In-Service English Language Teacher Education

The lessons and challenges derived from research and experience within the earlier Malaysian Schools English Language Project (MSELP) will draw on doctoral research into the early phases of teacher educator and teacher interaction (Hall, 2009). Data from the findings will be used to suggest approaches to linking wider national aims to classroom acceptance of interactive English language teaching techniques and the development of more effective bilingualism or multilingualism in rural Malaysia

The Ministry of Education opined that rural teachers engaged in excessive teacher-fronted delivery of content through grammar-translation at the start of the in-service project. The ministry wanted to develop more interactive teaching while teachers experienced interactive in-service learning (Hall, 2009, p. 63). Some of the MOE's needs and concerns may be similar in other parts of ASEAN with other initiatives to build international standards for ASEAN-wide English language development. These could include building change from the ground up, deconstructing reliance on non-ASEAN expertise, and fostering continuity in capacity building.

To foster change, the MOE expected the MSELP to model the processes that teachers would use in their own classrooms. Yet MOE officials were also concerned about the effect of cultural differences on how the "imported" teacher educators might be seen by the teachers. If the teacher educators were seen as all-knowing experts, achieving interactivity, a key aim of the project, would be a challenge. Although the use of foreign experts may have given the project status, these experts could also have been seen as having insufficient knowledge of what would succeed in rural Malaysian classrooms (Hall, 2007). Compounding the situation were issues of how so-called "native speaker" (Timmis, 2004) teacher educators were perceived when working in a rural, generally non-English-speaking setting with speakers of other languages.

The research focused on the early phase interaction when first impressions count, and understanding what teacher trainers, hereafter referred to as teacher educators (TEs), do and say to create positive perceptions of their techniques (Hall, 2009, p. 113) with practicing teachers. The wider implications of acceptance of change being applied within classrooms was based on the assumption that "human learning

is emergent through social interactions” (Singh & Richards, 2006, p. 151). All broader macro aims of educational development are also enabled in classroom change or blocked by the lack of it. Not learning from this aspect is one of the reasons macro planning may remain at the rhetorical level.

The Project Needs Analysis of Teachers’ Perceptions

The in-service teacher training initiative began with a needs analysis, Surveying Progressive English Language Teaching (SPELT), in a non-urban Malaysian district, where the English Language Coordinators (ELCs), henceforth called teacher educators, worked (Hall & Dodson, 2004). Responses from 168 English language primary and secondary teachers representing 86% of such teachers within the district and interviews with 50 teachers were collected. The data on the rural English teachers’ perceptions, approaches, techniques, and needs were analyzed. Perhaps there are implications in the data for developing effective English language teaching in other ASEAN rural settings.

Findings and Implications from the Needs Analysis

The survey showed that a large amount of teacher talk dominated teacher-student interaction, which was often in the national language. Unsurprisingly, the amount of Bahasa Malaysia used correlated with students’ English language proficiency levels. Importance was placed on producing evidence of success, such as accurate and neatly written work. Teachers reported having students practice model examination tasks. Closed tasks and copying from the blackboard followed. In addition, teachers preferred lessons based on textbook input, with many using reading comprehension exercises, copying from the board, and worksheets (Hall, 2009). Despite responding that they practiced aspects of language teaching in the syllabus such as promoting the use of English in as well as outside the classroom, their responses to check questions revealed this was rare in practice. Primary and secondary teachers indicated a need for training in pedagogical methods and techniques and English language skills. Teachers also wanted the training program to help them build confidence.

Recent Malaysian research aligns with the claim that “real experience in the classroom” is critical to teacher education being meaningful (Malachi, 2011, p. 100). As such, MSELP used a “loop input” approach (Woodward, 2003) so that teachers would learn and be able to readily apply task-based learning in more basic or extended forms in their contexts.

It was evident that cascade training approaches previously implemented had been without the expected classroom changes. Although a needs analysis had been done, stipulations of the MOE's Curriculum Development Division included that TEs live in the district to learn the teachers' contexts and that the model involve experiential learning. Previous training may have been TE-fronted and not as interactive, which made implementing the loop input approach more challenging. The MSELP TEs worked to increase the interactivity of English language education in the district. Present in-service projects continue with this objective. Research into the early phases of native speaker TE and Malaysian rural teacher interaction will be described to show the challenges in meeting ASEAN objectives at the chalk face.

Teacher educators and the national language. The use of the national language was viewed as beneficial by the teacher educators in this case study. They described the social cohesion arising from the use of the national language, as well as the benefits if used selectively in the classroom (Hall, 2009). The name of one course, "Teaching English Through English," was soon changed to "Teaching English Mainly Through English" (TEMTE). However, the TEs also challenged the use of Bahasa Malaysia when linked to the grammar-translation method. New sections on contrastive analysis teaching techniques in TEMTE addressed the reality in rural classrooms, where English is more a foreign than second language.

Teachers still remember a MOE memo requiring schools to use only English. It had been issued by the Minister of Education, who was bilingual. However, Teacher Educator A (TE A) advocated using the national language selectively, such as when displaying a vocabulary item was not possible or when explaining abstract concepts; this elicited positive responses from teachers, particularly from the early primary level. TE B had asked teachers for Malay translations to use for comparative grammar and used Bahasa Malaysia for largely social purposes. TE C, who spoke basic Bahasa Malaysia, sometimes used it to enliven interaction (Hall, 2009). These usages of the national language in English language educational contexts show increased support and confidence in the use of both languages. The TEs used the national language as a way to connect teacher training and the needs of bilingual or multilingual rural classroom settings. To extrapolate further, any development of English language needs to be contextualised with the use of the national language and a clear understanding of the roles of each. When language change is being implemented, recognition of the complexity of local identity and the multilingual nature of communities appears to aid acceptance (Lee, 2003). Aligned with recognition of the existing linguistic complexity

comes a need to fulfil teachers' everyday needs and the importance of learning transferable tasks.

Teacher educators and teachers perceiving links to classrooms. Teachers expected to learn techniques useful in their classrooms. Everyday classroom needs were their main concern, a view supported by reflective research into Malaysian pre-service teachers' expectations (Kabilan, 2007). TEs therefore provided practical techniques for primary and secondary level needs. The TEs explained the benefits of the techniques for students and the reasons the techniques would succeed. The approach reflected Clandinin and Connelly's (1987, p. 362) concept of the "personal practical knowledge" of teachers, in this case, the teacher educators, arising from their experiences. In TE A's experience, rural teachers desired practical "plug and play" techniques (Hall, 2009, p. 150). Thus, although the literature on professional development frequently advocates the need to transform the thinking of teachers and then to have those teachers express those changes in beliefs about teaching (Richards & Farrell, 2005), from the perspective of rural teachers, techniques which would motivate students and meet everyday classroom needs were of immediate concern.

The TEs therefore used techniques (e.g., group work and chain stories) with the aim of lessening the use of worksheets and copying from the board in the teachers' classrooms. The transferable tasks in this early phase of interaction were well received by the teachers. The TEs soon turned to classroom-related tasks to show the connection to classroom needs. They employed short tasks and positive reinforcement to build teacher confidence. During supportive, non-evaluative class visits, a new approach for many of the teachers, TEs gave direct feedback that further engendered teacher confidence.

The learning culture. Nationally espoused values or visions of ASEAN aims may be publicised, but the cultural context of rural Malaysian in-service interaction derives from more pressing needs with the immediacy of classroom lessons. The complexity of the multilingual situation in Malaysia is very obvious in rural Malaysia, where there can be a gap between plans made in an urban context and language use diversity. The rural classroom culture may therefore be one in which English is as much a foreign language as a second language so that TEs may need to approach teachers' classroom culture recognising the influences of the local and national languages. A more contextual view may be that the TEs developed a "learning culture" (Cortazzi, 2000; Cortazzi & Jin, 2002) absent from previous professional development programs. While national policies underpin the syllabus, consideration of local contexts in observable settings, such as the rural teachers' classrooms, is more realistic.

The project marked the first time for native speaker TEs to be stationed for a longer term in rural communities. While the TEs were very experienced in life and work abroad, cultural differences occurred. According to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, culture is how “a group of people solves problems and reconciles dilemmas” (1998, p. 6). Culture continuously changes and is related to behaviours. Focusing on actions, tension is apparent between national educational values, particularly hierarchical values and the interaction in large-scale teacher education, and smaller scale interaction where TEs may aim to deconstruct hierarchical values (Hall, 2009). Therefore, within the boundaries of this research setting, it is suggested that a “small culture” (Holliday, 2011) of situated learning develops: successive interactions or behaviours which do not confirm or deny the teachers and TEs’ different nationally-based views.

During early phase teacher education, a local learning culture may develop through interactions as tasks and aims are communicated between the TEs and teachers. Costelloe (2006) in her Malaysian research suggests that interactions may override statements or generalizations made on a national level for both teachers and teacher educators. It may be surmised that, as Littlewood (1999) describes in the East Asian context, there is “a powerful role of the learning context” (p. 83). It is possible that in-service courses may not align with nationally prescribed beliefs as the local learning culture is constructed.

Other researchers such as Hofstede (1997) have also found that context may at times override a national model. Gieve and Clark (2005) raised important questions about the role of contextual factors for students from China studying in a situation which differed from earlier learning situations. They argued that “apparently stable, culturally determined approaches to learning are far more flexible to contextual variation than we might expect and that student responses to particular contexts are not stably predicted by macro-scale characterizations of nation scale ‘cultures’” (Gieve & Clark, 2005, p. 263). Gieve and Clark proposed that “an ethnically based notion of culture may be less powerful than commonly assumed compared to local, situationally-based cultures of learning” (2005, p. 274). In the Malaysian context, the district-based MESELP courses, with the TEs’ emphasis on cultivating an interactive learning culture, were a distinct departure from other professional development courses the teachers had experienced (Hall, 2009). Teachers noted the difference between the small culture of the local learning context and their previous in-service teacher education experiences. Being positive about the changes and supportive of the use of the national language in classrooms were critical to acceptance of changes.

In summary, any major planning to build English language capacity will depend on the teaching and learning interactions. Research suggests that an English-only approach is not as effective as recognition of the bilingual or multilingual nature of students and teachers' lives. Modelling and applying pedagogy can be effective if teachers perceive the applicability of techniques and gain confidence through an experiential approach. Such an approach needs to balance imported expertise with the culture of learning within classrooms in which English may be more a foreign language than a second language. The effectiveness of English language capacity building may increase if changes are grounded in existing local classroom situations.

Conclusion

The in-service teacher education initiative described in this chapter is but one of many developments which the Malaysian MOE has put into place to upgrade English language teaching in the public sector of education. Numerous current initiatives are aiming to improve teachers' proficiency and pedagogy with many stakeholders offering a range of approaches. These initiatives recognise that capacity building starts in the classroom, especially when one wants to address the urban-rural income gap which affects this and many other nations. It could be argued that there are lessons to be learnt from past investments and it has been suggested that English language initiatives need to take into account the complex multilingual nature of Malaysia and to address the learning culture and pedagogy of classrooms as well as teachers' proficiency and wider national and ASEAN aims. While internationally imported expertise may have much to offer, incorporating effective bilingualism or multilingualism with situated learning may be beneficial to all. It has been suggested that this approach has been effective during in-service teacher interaction. Incorporating the complexities of situated learning in which teacher educators recognise the complexities of a multilingual and multicultural nation may benefit capacity building for English as an international language.

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The language learning and teaching context in the Asian region is as varied and complex as the countries encompassed in this part of the world. Each context is defined by the history and culture of each specific country and the region as a whole and the language policies and languages involved, including a myriad of local, indigenous, colonial, and “global” languages.

In response to the ever-changing and challenging linguistic landscape in this area, in 2010, IDP Education (Cambodia) established the fully peer-reviewed online journal *Language Education in Asia* as a forum to highlight and exchange research and insights into language education in this dynamic region.

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