

Chapter 9

Translanguaging in English-Medium Instruction: Teacher Practices at a Vietnamese University



Ha-Anh Thi Nguyen, Alice Chik, and Stuart Woodcock

Abstract This chapter investigates teachers' translanguaging practice in English-medium instruction classrooms at a Vietnamese university, drawing together teacher beliefs and practices in teaching English as an academic subject. Data collection comprised interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interview, the participants being two English teachers in classes of non-English-major students. The teachers' beliefs about the benefits of translanguaging were usually, but not always, consistent with their teaching practice, as observation indicated that the teachers used translanguaging for more functions than they previously thought. In particular, the teachers frequently and strategically translanguaged for content teaching, classroom management, and affective purposes. The teachers did not see English and Vietnamese as in opposition or even as requiring separation; on the contrary, they saw the flexible use of both languages as supportive for the teaching and learning process. This suggests that the promotion of English-only instruction schemes is not suitable in such an English as a foreign language (EFL) context. Additionally, there is a necessity for raising teachers' and policy makers' awareness of the advantages of translanguaging in EFL classrooms. As such, strategic translanguaging should be included in teacher training programs so that teachers will be able to make the most of this practice as a learning aid and a way of moving forward pedagogically with EMI.

H.-A. T. Nguyen (✉) · A. Chik
School of Education, Macquarie University, 29 Wally's Walk, Balaclava Road, Sydney, NSW
2109, Australia
e-mail: nguyenthihaanh@hpu2.edu.vn

A. Chik
e-mail: alice.chik@mq.edu.au

H.-A. T. Nguyen
Hanoi Pedagogical University 2, Vinh Phuc, Vietnam

S. Woodcock
School of Education and Professional Studies, Griffith University, Mt Gravatt Campus, Building
M09, Brisbane, QLD 4122, Australia
e-mail: s.woodcock@griffith.edu.au

Keywords English-medium instruction · Vietnam · Higher education · Translanguaging · Pedagogy

9.1 Introduction

The boundaries between the two concepts English-Medium Instruction (EMI) and English-Only Instruction (EOI) are vague, and they have often been used interchangeably in political documents and in the media (British Council, 2013). However, EMI is a broader term involving ‘educational programmes in which an academic subject is taught through English in non-Anglophone contexts’ (Aizawa & Rose, 2019, p. 1126), such as using English to teach science subjects and mathematics. In contrast, EOI refers only to the use of English as an instructional methodology in EFL classrooms (Lee & Macaro, 2013; McMillan & Rivers, 2011; Tian & Hennebry, 2016), also referred to as ‘monolingual teaching’ (Hall & Cook, 2012), ‘teaching English in English’ (Freeman et al., 2015), and ‘teaching English through English’ (Richards, 2017). In Vietnamese higher education, the study of English occurs both as a discipline and a subject (Hoang, 2010). It is a discipline for English-major students who are training to be English teachers and/or interpreters and translators, while it is an academic subject for non-English-major students who study English just as one component of their degree curriculum. In such contexts where English is seen both as medium and content, EOI is considered as ‘an integral part of EMI’ (Moore, 2017, p. 302). Consequently, in this chapter, the two concepts EMI and EOI are both relevant, as the research context is English as a medium of instruction for teaching English as an academic subject for non-English majors at a Vietnamese university. In this institution, there has been no official instructional policy. However, as in many other Vietnamese universities, the EMI approach has recently been promoted as a result of the National Foreign Language Project 2020 for internationalisation and integration with the global context (Nguyen et al., 2017).

Teachers’ enactment of EMI policy has attracted considerable scholarly attention as an educational phenomenon in various contexts where English is not the first language (L1) (Aizawa & Rose, 2019). However, in Vietnam the policy has been dominated by macro-level perspectives as its adoption has been more top-down than bottom-up, and with insufficient attention to the implementation process and the flexible use of students’ L1 and target language (TL) as teaching and learning mediators (Tri & Moskovsky, 2021). There exists a seeming paradox between EMI political acts to maximise TL use and the growing body of literature recognising bilingualist ideologies in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms (Fang & Liu, 2020). Such ideologies suggest the value of translanguaging as a way of moving forward pedagogically with EMI; however, there have been few empirical studies of translanguaging practice in EMI educational contexts (Fallas Escobar, 2019; Fang & Liu, 2020; Grant & Nguyen, 2017; Le & Hamied, 2014). Therefore, this qualitative study reports on the beliefs and practices of two teachers of English to students

of non-English-majors, regarding the extent of translanguaging in their Vietnamese EMI university classrooms.

9.2 Language Use in EMI

In foreign language teaching, maximum use of TL was driven by the Direct Method, Natural Approach, and Communicative Language Teaching as a replacement for the Grammar-Translation Approach (Barnard & McLellan, 2014; Liu et al., 2004). These methods emphasise the great importance of valuable TL input and exposure in order to trigger language acquisition and intercultural competence (Turnbull, 2001). On this basis, the exclusive use of TL dominated English language teaching and learning in the last century and entailed the disparagement of students' L1 in language classrooms (Barnard & McLellan, 2014). Indeed, the English-only position has been widely promoted in many contexts to strive for maximum TL use, especially in polities where teachers are the sole or main source of TL exposure (Hall & Cook, 2012). Consequently, EMI and EOI have been widely endorsed in many Asian educational contexts including China (Fang & Liu, 2020), Korea (Lee & Macaro, 2013), and Japan (Aizawa & Rose, 2019). In Vietnam, there has been no mandatory instructional policy; however, EMI is favoured in some universities through cooperative programs with overseas partners (Nguyen et al., 2017).

The practice of alternating and mixing languages, either spontaneously or pedagogically, both inside and outside classroom contexts has been referred to as both code-switching and/or translanguaging (Barnard & McLellan, 2014; Goodman & Tastanbek, 2020). The distinctions lie in that code-switching conceptualises bilingualism as involving two separate language ideologies, while the translanguaging lens views bilingualism as the 'holistic' and 'hybrid nature of language use' to facilitate 'meaning making and identity formation' (Goodman & Tastanbek, 2020, p. 11).

Recently, language classroom pedagogy has moved from a monolingual approach towards a multilingual one with the recognition that translanguaging empowers both the learners and the teachers to use their full linguistic repertoires for communication (García, 2011; Liu & Fang, 2020; Wang, 2019). Many studies have argued that monolingual norms in EFL classroom are not popular and realistic because students' L1 is an essential linguistic resource for teaching and learning a new language (Cahyani et al., 2018; Goodman & Tastanbek, 2020; Littlewood & Yu, 2011; McMillan & Rivers, 2011; Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010). In particular, the flexible use of instructional language in foreign language teaching is beneficial for teaching academic concepts, facilitating managerial tasks, building rapport, and improving the classroom atmosphere (Barnard & McLellan, 2014; Fang, 2018; Kim & Elder, 2008; Wang, 2019). For example, Wang (2019) investigated students' and teachers' attitudes towards translanguaging practice in Chinese university foreign language classrooms. Employing a mixed-method approach, the study found that although both teacher and student participants had ambivalent opinions about translanguaging,

observations showed that they translanguaged frequently for meaning negotiation. In particular, translanguaging was used naturally and spontaneously for the pedagogical functions of explanation (e.g., elaborating grammar and vocabulary learning, translating concepts and cultural differences), management (e.g., giving instructions, giving feedback, checking comprehension), and interpersonal strategies (e.g., interacting with each other). Similarly, Fallas Escobar (2019) investigated how students translanguaged in EFL classrooms at a Costa Rican university in which the monolingual EOI approach had been widely promoted. To understand the translanguaging practice, the author presented his students with some pictures of graffiti in the community and allowed them to use their entire linguistic repertoire to discuss the pictures. Taking a discourse analytical approach, the study indicated that students flexibly translanguaged between English and Spanish for a variety of purposes including referencing key content, offering explanations, giving opinions and comments, and expressing emotions. This finding aligns with what was found in Wang's (2019) study.

In Vietnam, research on the use of languages in EFL university classrooms using EMI has been increasingly showing that the students' L1 is an important teaching tool to facilitate TL learning (Grant & Nguyen, 2017). For instance, Le and Hamied (2014) studied the code-switching practice of one Vietnamese university teacher using classroom observations, stimulated recall interviews and teacher reflection as the research tools. The qualitative case study indicated the complexity of L1 use for some major functions such as classroom management, teaching grammar, vocabulary, enhancing students' motivation, and checking their understanding. The code-switching practice, however, was affected by the teacher's mistaken beliefs about the students' English capacity with 'many inappropriate and unnecessary switches to Vietnamese' (Le & Hamied, 2014, p. 130). Recently, Grant and Nguyen (2017) investigated the code-switching practice of 12 EFL teachers at a Vietnamese university and their awareness of this phenomenon. Results from classroom observation, interview, and field notes revealed that L1 use was for both pedagogical and affective purposes. However, some teachers were not fully aware that they engaged in this practice.

Scholars have pointed out that research on the dynamic use of languages in EFL classrooms using EMI is still under exploration both internationally (Fallas Escobar, 2019; Liu et al., 2004) and in the Vietnamese educational context specifically (Grant & Nguyen, 2017; Kieu, 2012; Le & Hamied, 2014; Tri & Moskovsky, 2021). Additionally, little evidence of the relationships between teachers' beliefs about language use and their actual instructional practice has been provided thus far in the literature (Fang & Liu, 2020; Meij & Zhao, 2010). Therefore, this chapter is an attempt to add new insights into how teachers utilise their entire linguistic repertoire to facilitate TL teaching and learning. It examines two university teachers' perceptions about translanguaging as well as how they translated their beliefs in the classrooms.

9.3 Research Context and Design

The study was conducted to address two overarching questions:

- a. *What do these Vietnamese university EFL teachers think about translanguaging as part of EMI?*
- b. *What are the teachers' practices regarding translanguaging in their EFL classrooms?*

Two female English teachers Hoa and Thanh (pseudonyms) participated: both were under 30 years old and had been teaching non-English majors at the university for up to five years. They both held Bachelor's degrees and at the time of investigation were studying Master's courses in TESOL at a national university.

Hoa taught the English course 1 (Level A2) for Year 1 students, who came from different majors such as Biology, Chemistry, Primary Education, etc. There were 42 students in Hoa's class. As described in the curriculum, the students took four consecutive periods of English per week, each of which lasted 45 min with a 5-min break between periods. This meant students became quite tired by the end of the fourth period of EMI. Thanh taught the intensive English course (Level B2) for 30 Advanced Mathematics students. This English course prepares students for an EMI program in the discipline of their choice. In this intensive English program, the students had 12 periods (approximately nine hours) of English lessons spread across each week.

The data collection tools comprised individual interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interview. For the data collection procedure, the participants were first interviewed to elicit their perceptions about translanguaging. After that, each teacher was observed for two 45-min lessons, all of which were in the middle of the afternoon. The observations were recorded and transcribed verbatim to identify the episodes of translanguaging used in the lessons, which were then the focus of stimulated recall interviews. For the data analysis, the thematic analysis method (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was employed to explore the teachers' beliefs about translanguaging and their language practice in class. The findings from the three sources of data were then triangulated for better insights into the phenomena as presented in the next section.

9.4 Translanguaging Practices in Two EFL Classrooms

The data from teacher interviews, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interviews in this study showed that the teachers viewed translanguaging as a practical process to teach a new language in which their entire linguistic repertoire was utilised to facilitate meaning-making and understanding. In particular, translanguaging involved the flexible use of L1 and TL for discursive pedagogical functions encompassing teaching the content, providing operational instructions as part of

classroom management, and humanising the classroom environment as an affective function. These overarching categories of the teachers' translanguaging practice are detailed and illustrated in what follows.

9.4.1 Content Teaching

In EFL education, the subject content refers to linguistic knowledge such as grammar and vocabulary, and also TL countries, histories, and cultures. In the interview before the classroom observation sessions, both teachers reported that they used translanguaging for explaining difficult concepts to facilitate students' understanding of such content. The results from the observations and stimulated recall interviews, however, indicated that their language practices for content teaching were more complicated than that. In addition to explaining difficult concepts, translanguaging was used to emphasise important content and compare and contrast between TL and L1.

For these two teachers, explaining difficult concepts included teaching complicated and abstract ideas, explaining lexical use, and elaborating grammar rules. Among those functions, translanguaging for making abstract ideas/notions/concepts explicit for students was reported the most frequently. In the following extract, Thanh flexibly used different languages to scaffold students' understanding of the word 'tight' in its functions as both a noun and an adjective.

Teacher: Okay, this 'tight' is different. Hai từ này khác nhau nha cả lớp (*The two words are different*), because this one is a noun. Refers to a type of clothes... It is a noun, nó là danh từ (*It is a noun*), và để chỉ một loại quần tất bó sát. (*and it refers to tights as clothing*). Cái từ các bạn nhìn thấy ở trong sách, (*the word you see in the book*), yes, it's an adjective. (Thanh, Classroom observation)

In this excerpt, Thanh used English and Vietnamese alternately to differentiate the meanings corresponding to the different usage of 'tight'. This alternating mechanism was repeated several times, starting with an explanation in English, followed by an instantaneous translation into Vietnamese. She emphasised the distinctions by referring to 'tight' as a noun meaning a type of clothing for women, while as an adjective, it means the feeling of wearing a piece of clothing. According to Thanh, explaining this only in English was hard for students to understand, and would take too long. This practice reflects her belief in the previous interview:

I usually use Vietnamese to explain difficult concepts so that it is easier for the students to understand. Like, after using English, I have a mechanism to translate it again into Vietnamese, so students do not get confused. (Thanh, Interview)

For Thanh, resorting to L1 was clearly not a result of limited language competency or knowledge about the teaching content. On the contrary, she translanguaged strategically to ensure students' understanding.

Another translanguaging pedagogy noted during classroom observation was emphasising important content to highlight the foci of the lesson that students need to pay special attention to.

Teacher: The man is wearing a T-shirt. Correct or not?

Student: A shirt.

Teacher: A shirt, not T-shirt, yes. *Vậy là các bạn đã biết phân biệt shirt và T-shirt rồi đúng không? (Now you know how to distinguish between shirt and T-shirt, don't you?). (Thanh, Classroom observation)*

Even though the student gave the right answer, and the teacher confirmed it, she switched into Vietnamese to reconfirm and emphasise the distinction. In the stimulated recall interview, Thanh explained that she wanted to attract the students' attention to the important language point, believing that they would forget the knowledge soon if she had used English only.

If I had only spoken in English, it would have been forgotten easier. A lot of students mistook between shirt and T-shirt. Therefore, I spoke in Vietnamese. It helps them to remember better. Vietnamese will be easier to remember than English. (Thanh, Stimulated recall interview)

In Thanh's view, for emphasis or driving students' attention to the specific language content, translanguaging was more effective than using English only.

Teachers also used translanguaging for comparison and contrast between TL and L1 to clarify or illustrate the similarities and differences between the languages. In the following extract, Hoa used L1 and TL alternately to point out the dissimilarities in using 'comma' and 'point' in the decimal number '1.2' in English.

Teacher: How do you say it? One, one... Yes? Louder.

Students in chorus: One point two.

Teacher: Okay. One point two. *Một phẩy hai (one point two)*. Tuy nhiên là dấu chấm và dấu phẩy của mình và tiếng Anh là khác nhau. Nếu tiếng Anh là dấu chấm, thì tiếng Việt sẽ là một phẩy, được chưa? *(However, the use of point and comma between Vietnamese and English is different. A point in English means a comma in Vietnamese, okay?) (Hoa, Classroom observation)*

The teacher elicited the pronunciation of the number '1.2' from the class and they responded to her in a chorus chanting 'one point two'. In Vietnamese culture, students are more responsive to teachers' elicitations for group answers rather than individual ones. However, this did not guarantee that every student who joined the chanting equally understood the point. Therefore, the teacher repeated the answer in English and then translated it into Vietnamese as 'một phẩy hai'. Then she used Vietnamese to make a comparison between TL and L1 ways of using 'comma' and 'point' for decimal numbers. In the interview before the observation sessions, Hoa said that she normally translanguaged to teach grammar conventions because grammatical issues were too difficult for the students to learn monolingually.

Some grammatical points in Vietnamese and English are different. The students still have difficulties understanding grammatical teaching in Vietnamese. Therefore, teaching grammar in English only is not workable. (Hoa, Interview)

When teachers were dealing with discrepancies between the TL and the L1, translanguaging pedagogy was reported to be convenient in two ways: (1) it provided scaffolding for the teachers to make examples clear to the students (2) it helped students to avoid any misconceptions such as the application of L1 conventions into L2 tasks.

9.4.2 Classroom Management

In the interview before the classroom observation sessions, the teachers reported that they used Vietnamese instead of English for some classroom management functions, including giving instructions or comments, managing discipline, and time management. These beliefs were consistent with the observation data.

Giving instructions or comments was to provide activity instructions, set up tasks or give procedures or comments on students' performance of tasks. It also included asking questions to guide or instruct students in the right direction to complete certain tasks. For example, Hoa said that she usually translanguaged to give instructions because some students did not understand what to do next if she used English only. She reported that:

Most of the time I use Vietnamese to instruct students to do tasks. Or else, they don't know what to do. Many students don't really understand properly if I use English for giving instructions. (Hoa, Interview)

This report was echoed in her observed lesson when she translanguaged to give task instructions to assist students to complete a 'memory challenge activity'.

Teacher: Okay. Take turns to write all the words. Mỗi người lên viết một từ, cố lên, viết hết đáp án đi, viết nhanh vào. (*Each student writes one word, come on, write them all, quickly*). (Hoa, Classroom observation)

Here Hoa was organising a vocabulary game by showing the new words on the screen and giving students one minute to remember all the words. Then the students from each side were required to take turns to write the words they memorised from their side of the board. Hoa utilised her bilingual language repertoire by using English first, and then clarifying in Vietnamese both to manage the activity and encourage the students' performance.

Managing discipline includes teachers' translanguaging for administrative issues such as managing and commenting on students' behaviour and checking attendance. At this university, regular class attendance is considered important and is counted one-tenth (10%) in the total subject scores together with the mid-term test score (20%), and final term exam score (70%). Hoa reported regularly translanguaging for checking students' attendance at the beginning of each lesson.

Teacher: Hôm nay một bạn sẽ điếm danh cho cô nhá, lớp trưởng không đến đúng không? (Today, can anyone help me to check the attendance? The monitor is absent, isn't she?)

Students: Trang ghi đi. (Trang, can you help?)

Teacher: Okay. (Hoa, Classroom observation)

In this situation, L1 use was not preceded by or translated into an equivalence in English. The students reciprocated in Vietnamese and the communication purpose was achieved quickly.

By contrast, in the following situation, Hoa translanguaged for commenting on students' behaviours, starting with English for appointing one student to answer her question, and then resorting to Vietnamese when the appointed student failed to understand her message. The teacher's language use clearly illustrated that Vietnamese was used to facilitate better understanding and to keep the class communicative.

Teacher: The one in yellow...Hey girl, the one in yellow.

Students: The one in yellow.

Teacher: bạn này hình như buổi đầu đúng không. Nên không biết cách cô gọi. (*Are you attending the lesson for the first time? So, you don't know how I appoint students.*) (Hoa, Classroom observation)

While the whole class understood the teacher, the nominated student was unresponsive because she did not understand that she had been appointed. The teacher then translanguaged, assuming that the student had missed classes for weeks and was not accustomed to her habit of calling on students by mentioning the colours they were wearing. In the stimulated recall interview, Hoa stated that her strategy was a reaction to the student's lack of response. Additionally, she thought that TL use for commenting on students' behaviour was unnecessary and ineffective because it neither involved the teaching content nor were the students familiar with those expressions in English.

Time management refers to the teachers' translanguaging to deal with time constraint issues. The flexible use of instructional languages for saving time was reported by the teachers in the initial interviews and was also observed in their teaching. Hoa admitted that using Vietnamese was expedient because it helped to clearly convey the information to the students in a way that was easier for them to receive and understand compared to using English. It included using translation techniques to convert the preceding utterance in English into Vietnamese to avoid delayed understanding from the students. The excerpt below relates to a reading exercise:

Teacher: Any new words? If my mind serves me right, I have asked you to look up all new words. Cô đã bảo chuẩn bị và tra tất cả từ mới đúng không? (*Have I asked you to look up all new words?*) Are there any new words? Có từ mới nào không. (*Are there any new words?*) Yes or no?

Students: Yes.

Teacher: Yes, okay. Which line? (Hoa, Classroom observation)

In the stimulated recall interview, Hoa said she noticed in class that the students could not comprehend the text, which meant they had not looked up the new words at home as they had been told. Now, to make sure they understood 'look up new words',

she had to translate her questions into Vietnamese to ‘save time for other leftover activities’. Thus, even though translanguaging was to compensate for the students’ lack of English competency, the teacher’s priority concern was for time management. She translanguaged because using L1 consumed less time than conveying the same message in TL. It was likely that her methodology was effective because right after the translation, the students responded ‘yes’ to the teacher’s question.

9.4.3 *Affective Functions*

This category refers to the teachers’ use of L1 to create a friendlier classroom environment and to release an intense atmosphere due to long lesson duration. Thanh explained that using Vietnamese acts efficiently to release a heavy atmosphere and shorten the psychological distance between teacher and students.

I think that Vietnamese expressions help students perceive knowledge in a more comfortable way. Vietnamese also humanises the classroom atmosphere and the distance between teacher and students is closer and friendlier. Students love jokes and humorous teachers. (Thanh, Interview)

Thanh’s statement was mirrored in her teaching practice because she repeatedly used Vietnamese to create a friendly environment and a closer relationship with her students.

Teacher: I also agree with you that the girl is wearing a jacket, a black jacket, thank you. *Cô đồng ý với bạn ý nhà, đó là (I agree with you, it is) black jacket.* Okay, continue. You. Picture five?

Student: Denim.

Teacher: Denim, yes. *Từ này thì quen thuộc với mình quá rồi đúng không nào. (This word is familiar to us, isn’t it?).* (Thanh, Classroom observation)

Thanh later explained that the sentences ‘I agree with you’ and ‘This word is familiar with us, isn’t it?’ were very simple and the students absolutely could understand them in English. However, she chose to switch to Vietnamese to reduce the stress in the class and cater to the students’ tiredness, given the fact that they were being exposed to TL over four consecutive periods. Thanh translanguaged regularly in her lessons for tension relief and believed that such simple expressions brought positive changes in the classroom atmosphere and improved teacher and student interaction. It is noticeable that the use of Vietnamese did not affect or reduce students’ exposure to the English language central to the courses nor distort or affect the quality of the previous sentence regarding the black jacket, because it was the translation of the English. Thanh stressed that:

It was very simple to use Vietnamese to create the closeness between me and the students. They had been studying for quite a long time for a few periods already; that was in the fourth period. It was horribly long and sometimes, the atmosphere was heavy because the students were tired. You can imagine that they had four periods, 45 minutes one period, nearly 200

minutes in total. So, I needed to be able to communicate with them in a comfortable way. (Thanh, Stimulated recall interview)

In this instance, the selection of translanguaging pedagogy was not to compensate for the lack of English command from the students; it was because Vietnamese was more effective than English to build rapport with students.

For non-content questions, such as: 'How do you feel today?', 'Is that difficult?' or 'Did you do your homework?' I just use Vietnamese. Although I can use English, I want to use Vietnamese to communicate with students to show my empathy. (Thanh, Interview)

It can be concluded that the teachers actively and strategically resorted to Vietnamese to warm up the classroom environment and to reduce stress and tension caused by long lessons. Translanguaging was also used by the teachers for asking marginal questions, greeting, and rapport building to establish interpersonal relationships with the students. The teachers believed that this practice was advantageous for such circumstances and helped to motivate students to learn and raise their mood, therefore it positively impacted on learning outcomes.

9.5 Conclusion and Implications for Moving Forward with EMI

This study investigated teachers' translanguaging practices in two Vietnamese university EFL classrooms, drawing together teacher beliefs and practices in using EMI to teach English as an academic subject. The findings have confirmed the role of translanguaging as both a natural and strategic condition in bilingual EFL classrooms being taught through EMI. That is, the teachers did not see English and Vietnamese as in opposition or separation but saw the flexible use of both languages as supportive for the learning process. The teachers' perceptions about translanguaging were usually consistent with their teaching practice, although observation indicated that the teachers used Vietnamese for more functions than they had previously thought. The teachers frequently translanguaged for three main purposes: content teaching (explanation of language features, emphasising important content, and comparing and contrasting L1 and TL usage), classroom management (giving instructions, managing discipline, and time management), and affective functions such as humanising the classroom atmosphere. These findings mirror those found in other studies (Bhooth et al., 2014; Cahyani et al., 2018; Fallas Escobar, 2019; Joe & Lee, 2013; Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Tian & Macaro, 2012; Wang, 2019).

Unusually, neither teacher reported nor was observed to use Vietnamese for interpersonal interaction with their students, which has previously been reported in the findings of other studies (Grant & Nguyen, 2017; Wang, 2019). The crowded classroom and heavy curriculum may explain this discrepancy, as both teachers reported that their students became really tired when English lessons continued over long periods. This situation was likely responsible for the absence of interpersonal Vietnamese language communications between students and teachers.

Importantly, translanguaging strategies were utilised by the teachers pedagogically, strategically, and intentionally to facilitate the teaching and learning of TL. Such consistent occurrence of these three features was not present in studies by Le and Hamied (2014), Grant and Nguyen (2017), and Wang (2019) where translanguaging was sometimes done spontaneously and unconsciously. This suggests that the translanguaging practice happens differently for individual teachers in varying tertiary contexts due to their beliefs about the practice and their responsiveness to contextual factors such as student tiredness. On this basis, some implications can be drawn for policy planners and teacher professional development and training in relation to moving forward pedagogically with EMI.

First, in the Vietnamese tertiary context and similar educational polities where the students have limited English command, the promotion of a monolingual approach is unreasonable and ineffective (Le & Hamied, 2014; Littlewood & Yu, 2011). In this regard, it should also be recognised that the English levels of Vietnamese university students are not the same in different geographical areas, being notably lower in rural areas versus big cities (Tien, 2012). However, all students are expected to reach the same level of English competency prior to graduation (i.e., B1 level for non-English majors) within a quite similar number of credits for the English subject. As such, the design and application of EMI policies should take contextual dissimilarities into consideration.

Second, given that translanguaging has been shown to facilitate TL teaching and learning through a variety of functions, there is a necessity for raising teachers' awareness of the advantages of translanguaging in EMI classrooms in all disciplines, as well as the role of L1 in EFL classrooms more specifically (Grant & Nguyen, 2017). Overall, it has been found that EMI teachers do not have clear strategies for optimal use of L1 as a teaching tool to facilitate learning (Macaro, 2001). Therefore, training in strategic translanguaging should also be included in professional development activities and teacher training programs, so that teachers will be able to make the most of this practice as a learning aid.

The third implication of this study is that EMI policies in universities should make clear that translanguaging is considered a valuable tool within EMI programs. The two teachers, like many other teachers, do not feel comfortable in revealing their use of L1 because they feel 'guilty' about not using enough TL (Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Chapter 8 this volume) and afraid of being judged as not being competent enough in English. This accords with the interviews with the teacher participants in this study. If translanguaging strategies are pedagogically valued in both policy and teacher training, classroom teachers will surpass the negative psychological impact and use L1 strategically to facilitate students' meaning-making process and build up successful EMI classes.

References

- Aizawa, I., & Rose, H. (2019). An analysis of Japan's English as medium of instruction initiatives within higher education: The gap between meso-level policy and micro-level practice. *Higher Education*, 77(6), 1125–1142. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-018-0323-5>
- Barnard, R., & McLellan, J. (2014). *Codeswitching in university English-medium classes: Asian perspectives*. Multilingual Matters.
- Bhoonth, A., Azman, H., & Ismail, K. (2014). The role of the L1 as a scaffolding tool in the EFL reading classroom. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 118, 76–84. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.02.011>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- British Council. (2013). *British Council regional policy dialogue 2: The role of English in higher education: Issues, policy and practice*. https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/bc_regional_policy_dialogues.pdf
- Cahyani, H., de Courcy, M., & Barnett, J. (2018). Teachers' code-switching in bilingual classrooms: Exploring pedagogical and sociocultural functions. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 21(4), 465–479. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2016.1189509>
- Fallas Escobar, C. (2019). Translanguaging by design in EFL classrooms. *Classroom Discourse*, 10(3–4), 290–305. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19463014.2019.1628789>
- Fang, F. (2018). Review of English as a medium of instruction in Chinese universities today: Current trends and future directions: New language policies to promote multilingualism and language support for EMI will be needed in Chinese tertiary contexts. *English Today*, 34(1), 32–37. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078417000360>
- Fang, F., & Liu, Y. (2020). 'Using all English is not always meaningful': Stakeholders' perspectives on the use of and attitudes towards translanguaging at a Chinese university. *Lingua*, 247, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2020.102959>
- Freeman, D., Katz, A., Garcia Gomez, P., & Burns, A. (2015). English-for-teaching: Rethinking teacher proficiency in the classroom. *ELT Journal*, 69(2), 129–139. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccu074>
- García, O. (2011). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Basil/Blackwell.
- Goodman, B., & Tastanbek, S. (2020). Making the shift from a codeswitching to a translanguaging lens in English language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.571>
- Grant, L. E., & Nguyen, T. H. (2017). Code-switching in Vietnamese university EFL teachers' classroom instruction: A pedagogical focus. *Language Awareness*, 26(3), 244–259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2017.1402915>
- Hall, G., & Cook, G. (2012). Own-language use in language teaching and learning. *Language Teaching*, 45(3), 271–308. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444812000067>
- Hoang, V. V. (2010). The current situation and issues of the teaching of English in Vietnam. *Ritsumeikan Languages and Cultures*, 11(1), 1–18.
- Joe, Y., & Lee, H.-K. (2013). Does English-medium instruction benefit students in EFL contexts? A case study of medical students in Korea. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 22(2), 201–207.
- Kieu, H. K. A. (2012). Use of Vietnamese in English language teaching in Vietnam: Attitudes of Vietnamese university teachers. *English Language Teaching*, 3(2), 119–128. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-012-0003-7>
- Kim, S. H. O., & Elder, C. (2008). Target language use in foreign language classrooms: Practices and perceptions of two native speaker teachers in New Zealand. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 21(2), 167–185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908310802287574>
- Le, V. C., & Hamied, F. A. (2014). Codeswitching in universities in Vietnam and Indonesia. In R. Barnard & J. McLellan (Eds.), *Codeswitching in university English-medium classes: Asian perspectives* (1st ed., pp. 118–131). Multilingual Matters.

- Lee, J. H., & Macaro, E. (2013). Investigating age in the use of L1 or English-only instruction: Vocabulary acquisition by Korean EFL learners. *The Modern Language Journal*, 97(4), 887–901. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2013.12044.x>
- Littlewood, W., & Yu, B. (2011). First language and target language in the foreign language classroom. *Language Teaching*, 44(1), 64–77. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444809990310>
- Liu, D., Ahn, G.-S., Baek, K.-S., Han, N.-O., Dilin, L., Gil-Soon, A., Kyung-Suk, B., Nan-Ok, H. (2004). South Korean high school English teachers' code switching: Questions and challenges in the drive for maximal use of English in teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 38(4), 605–638. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588282>
- Liu, Y., & Fang, F. (2020). Translanguaging theory and practice: How stakeholders perceive translanguaging as a practical theory of language. *RELC Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688220939222>
- Macaro, E. (2001). Analysing student teachers' codeswitching in foreign language classrooms: Theories and decision making. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85(4), 531–548.
- McMillan, B. A., & Rivers, D. J. (2011). The practice of policy: Teacher attitudes toward 'English only.' *System*, 39(2), 251–263. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2011.04.011>
- Moore, P. J. (2017). Unwritten rules: Code choice in task-based learner discourse in an EMI context in Japan. In B. Fenton-Smith, P. Humphreys, & I. Walkinshaw (Eds.), *English medium instruction in higher education in Asia-Pacific: From Policy to Pedagogy* (pp. 299–320). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-51976-0_16
- Nguyen, H. T., Walkinshaw, I., & Pham, H. H. (2017). EMI programs in a Vietnamese university: Language, pedagogy and policy issues. In B. Fenton-Smith, P. Humphreys, & I. Walkinshaw (Eds.), *English medium instruction in higher education in Asia-Pacific: From Policy to Pedagogy* (pp. 37–52). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-51976-0_3
- Richards, J. C. (2017). Teaching English through English: Proficiency, pedagogy and performance. *RELJ Journal*, 48(1), 7–30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688217690059>
- Tian, L., & Macaro, E. (2012). Comparing the effect of teacher codeswitching with English-only explanations on the vocabulary acquisition of Chinese university students: A lexical focus-on-form study. *Language Teaching Research*, 16(3), 367–391. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168812436909>
- Tian, L., & Henneby, M. (2016). Chinese learners' perceptions towards teachers' language use in lexical explanations: A comparison between Chinese-only and English-only instructions. *System*, 63, 77–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.SYSTEM.2016.08.005>
- Tien, N. Q. (2012). English-Vietnamese code-switching in tertiary educational context in Vietnam. *Asian Englishes*, 15(2), 4–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2012.10801328>
- Tri, D., & Moskovsky, C. (2021). *Language use in English-medium instruction programs in Vietnamese higher education: From policy to practice*. *Asian Englishes*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2021.1891513>
- Turnbull, M. (2001). There is a role for the L1 in second and foreign language teaching, but... *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57(4), 531–540.
- Van Der Meij, H., & Zhao, X. (2010). Codeswitching in English courses in Chinese universities. *The Modern Language Journal*, 94(3), 396–411. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2010.01090.x>
- Wang, D. (2019). Translanguaging in Chinese foreign language classrooms: Students and teachers' attitudes and practices. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 22(2), 138–149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2016.1231773>

Ha-Anh Thi Nguyen has a Ph.D. from the School of Education, Macquarie University, Australia. She works as an English teacher at the Faculty of English, Hanoi Pedagogical University 2, Vietnam. Her research interests include English-medium instruction, translanguaging, informal language learning, language learning ecology, learning and technologies.

Alice Chik is an Associate Professor in the School of Education, Macquarie University and Associate Director, Multilingualism Research Centre. Her research interests include multilingualism in urban settings, narrative inquiry in language learning and teaching and informal language learning in digital environments.

Stuart Woodcock is an Associate Professor in the School of Education and Professional Studies, Griffith University. Dr. Woodcock's current role is as Director of special educational needs and inclusive education. His main research interests are around inclusion and diversity, teacher self-efficacy, and differentiated practice.