BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN VIETNAM
SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

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Outline

Bilingual Education in Vietnam
Successes
Challenges – on the school side
Challenges – on the student side
Challenges – on the teacher side
Teacher Training at NSETC
Future Directions
Traditionally, schools in Vietnam (from elementary school to graduate school) use Vietnamese. English is an obligatory subject since grade 6.

Since the 2000s, some universities started using English as major language in their courses. English is an obligatory subject since grade 3.

Recently, some high schools started teaching subjects in English as supplement to regular classes.
Proficiency in English is becoming a must for the young generation of Vietnam

More and more students study for international exams (TOEFL, TOEIC, SAT, GRE, GMAT, …)

More and more students want to prepare themselves for studying abroad
Challenges – on the school side

- Selecting a curriculum
  - Which textbook to use?
  - Which qualifications to follow?

- Finding qualified teachers
  - Subject teachers are usually not good at English
  - English teachers cannot teach science subjects

- Policy for teachers
  - in training
  - in teaching
Challenges – on the student side

- **Vietnamese curriculum**
  - Students have to fulfill the Vietnamese curriculum besides their bilingual classes

- **Insufficient English proficiency**
  - Studying a subject in Vietnamese is itself difficult, studying it in English is even more challenging

- **Lack of information**
  - Most students do not know much about standardized exams so do not have specific goals for their bilingual study
Challenges – on the teacher side

- **Regular school work**
  - Teachers have to fulfill their regular school works

- **Lack of official training**
  - No professional development or official training courses for subject teachers to teach in English

- **Lack of desire for change**
  - Studying a foreign language is a real challenge
  - Most subject teachers do not think English is necessary for their job
Teacher Training at NSETC

- **Goals**
  - Train pre-service and in-service subject teachers to teach their subjects in English
  - Improve English proficiency of teachers and scientists

- **Courses available**
  - English for Mathematics Teachers
  - English for Physics Teachers
  - English for Chemistry Teachers
  - English for Biology Teachers
Teacher Training at NSETC

- Curricula and Textbooks: by NSETC teachers

ENGLISH FOR PHYSICS TEACHERS
LEVEL A
NGUYEN DONG HAI
2012

ENGLISH FOR PHYSICS TEACHERS
LEVEL B
NGUYEN DONG HAI
2013
Teacher Training at NSETC

- **Approach**
  - Learn English through the medium of subjects
- **Length of courses**
  - 9 months, 6 hours/week (total 216 hours of class work)
- **Teaching staff**
  - Vietnamese content specialists (M.S., PhD.) graduating from foreign countries
  - Native English teachers and content specialists
Course content
- subject-specific vocabulary
- reading and listening comprehension
- lesson plan preparation
- classroom language
- teaching methodology
- practice teaching
- teaching for IGCSE, A-level, and SAT exams
Future Directions

- Policy must go ahead of any change
- Develop intensive courses and/or professional development workshops led by content specialists to train teachers to teach their subjects in English
- Students should be more aware of the paths in bilingual education that best fit their ability and desire
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THANK YOU for your attention