

## Bi-Lingual Teaching and Learning: Effectiveness and Challenges in Postgraduate Studies

Lee Kar Ling\*

Registry Office, INTI International College, Penang, Malaysia

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**Abstract :** The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of the use of bilingual teaching and learning methodology for Vietnamese postgraduate students from 2011-2012. Overall, the findings indicated relatively positive outcomes in most of the spectrum evaluated or assessed. These findings were then compared with previous researches and to ascertain the applicability to fundamental theories underpinning bilingual education to determine the correlation between theory and practice. This research provided an in-depth contextual based research that contributed to an extensive understanding of the effectiveness of the adoption of bilingual teaching and learning at postgraduate level within ASEAN countries. The research will also provide a platform for development nations to gain accesses to the required knowledge, skills, capabilities, and competencies that have thus far eluded them due to language barrier, thereby providing these nations with the impetus to grow and develop further as a nation via the effective development of the country's human capital.

**Keywords:** Bi-lingual teaching and learning, teaching and learning methodology effectiveness, postgraduate studies

### Overview

Bilingual teaching and learning has been taking place in both the Western (Coelho, 1998; Reyes, 2012; Reyes & Vallone, 2007) and Eastern World (Hoang, 2013; Jia & Fuse, 2007; Irby, Tong, & Lara-Alecio, 2011) as countries around the world recognize the importance of teaching and learning using a bilingual mode, especially for migrant children or minority groups within a country. When bilingual teaching and learning methodologies are being used, the extent of understanding and integration will be enhanced, thereby allowing for a greater level of learning, as well as societal integration in some cases (Coelho, 1998; Gao, 2010; Reyes & Vallone, 2007).

Based on the literature analyzed thus far, the focus had been on bilingual teaching and learning within either a primary or elementary school context for the purpose of minority group integration or for the diverse multi-cultural learners (Carger, 2012; Gildersleeve-Neumann & Wright, 2010; Hoang, 2013), or from a multi-cultural societal context in general without any key focus on specific age-groups (Coelho, 1998; Erby, Irby et. al, 2011; Jia & Fuse, 2007). But, there

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\* Corresponding author (Karling.lee@newinti.edu.my)

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does not seem to be any significant literature that focused solely on bilingual teaching and learning from a postgraduate perspective to enhance a learner's ability of learning; it is to say, not only required academic content, but also to acquire a second language in the process.

### **Rationale for the Research**

Based on the overview provided above, it is clear that the research on bilingual teaching and learning had been more focused on either a cultural context (Carger, 2012; Lotherington, 2004); the teaching of English to non-native speakers (Choi, 2003; Gao, 2010); or to develop language competencies from a young age by educating elementary school students using the bilingual teaching and learning methodology (Gildersleeve-Neumann & Wright, 2010; Jia & Fuse, 2007; Neugebauer & Currie-Rubin, 2009).

In all of the above, research could not be found with regards to bilingual teaching and learning within a postgraduate context. Apart from that, many of these researches tended to focus on the use of bilingual methodology to teach languages. Although various researchers (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Pang, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002) did mention the methods and rationale to use the learners' own language and English as a language of instruction, the focus was still limited to the elementary school or, at best, up to secondary school level. Again, a literature review did not reveal any key research that focused on the use of a bilingual teaching and learning methodology to teach specific business related content in order to help postgraduate students from mono-lingual countries acquire, not only the proficiencies required for language learning, but also learning specific, advanced content using their own mother-tongue. Irby et al. (2011) did stipulated that the bilingual teaching and learning methodology could be used for the delivery of academic content in dual languages, but the emphasis was still on the younger learners, and not on the postgraduate learners. Research on bilingualism at postgraduate level is still relatively scarce, especially within the Asian context. However, such research would definitely provide inputs and data for key education policy makers to consider in order to grow and advance the economy of the country.

### **Significance of the Research**

The significance of this research is two-fold:

1. It provides a basic exploratory research platform for future researchers to delve deeper into the effectiveness of using bilingual methodologies to teach business related content, or from other disciplines, to students from mono-lingual countries that would otherwise have been disadvantaged from learning advanced, new, and best practices due to the limitation in the command of a global language such as English, French, Spanish, or Mandarin.
2. It allows educators to explore new ways and methodologies to teach adult learners within a postgraduate environment via the use of bilingual methodologies to help mono-lingual learners of less developed countries to learn more effectiveness and acquire the knowledge, skills, and aptitude needed for the promotion and growth of their country.

## Literature Review

### Importance of Bilingual Education

Fundamentally, access to a bilingual education system is deemed as a basic human right. Rojas and Reagan (2003) claimed that the question of linguistic human rights should form part of a country's language policy, and should reflect the underlying assumptions about the nature of language as well as the question of power, equality, and access within a society. Therefore, it can be seen that for learners who are in any way disadvantaged or under-represented, access to a nation's national language is of importance to help the migrants or minority groups to advanced socially, economically, as well as to improve their employment opportunities (Valdez, 2001). This was supported by Hoang (2013) in that the inclusion of a bilingual education system is more effective in integration of minority groups as opposed to the use of cosmetic strategies, such as ethnic based festivals and the like.

The importance of including bilingual education to the education of minority groups cannot be denied. However, most of the studies (Choi, 2003; Gao, 2010) thus far have been focused on the use of bilingual teaching and learning for empowering minorities within cultural societies in order to provide an avenue for the non-native speakers to be more included within a multi-cultural society. Apart from the above, other studies (Reyes, 2007; Shi, 2011) focused on the use of bilingual teaching and learning methodologies and processes for the teaching and learning of English for specific groups of non-native English speakers. Generally, too, the studies (Hall, 1976) tended to focus on the elementary school students as it has been found that elementary school students are more likely to learn a new language via effective bilingual teaching and learning vis-à-vis the older group of learners (Reyes & Vallone, 2007).

According to Giovanni (2010), bilingual education programs can help minority groups gain access to employment and better job development opportunities. This was affirmed by Truong Van Mon, as cited in Hoang (2013), in that "[l]anguage is important because it influences everything". The above is definitely appropriate and true for minority groups that wish to integrate into the mainstream society (Coelho, 1998), through which the minority groups are required to acquire the national language of the country in order to make it easier for them to find jobs, secure loans (Hoang, 2013), as well as to ensure upward mobility economically (Valdez, 2001). Thomas and Collier (2002) also affirmed that when a dual language bilingual teaching and learning methodology is used, the minority students experience greater long-term education gains than those immersed in English as a second language program.

### Bilingual Education and Multiculturalism

According to Burdick-Will and Gomez (2006), bilingual education and multicultural education are inter-linked and cannot be effectively separated. Therefore, for a culturally diverse country to integrate more effectively its migrant workforce and populace (Carger, 2012; Choi, 2003), a multicultural education system should be put into place. Pai, Adler, and Shadiow (2006) defined multicultural education as a process by which students are able to develop a critical understanding of their own culture while simultaneously appreciating the different cultures in order to help them become better decision makers in the future. Irby et al. (2011) further affirmed that bilingual education and multicultural education generally share a common purpose of education, which includes the cultivation of a multicultural populace in preparation for multicultural

democracy. This was supported by Gao (2010) in that the introduction of bilingual teaching and learning to minority groups could help in empowering them to integrate more effectively into the mainstream society.

Giovanni (2010), in studying the use of bilingual education, found that a bilingual teller program conducted during a declining economy not only helped to expand the business base to an untapped ethnic based market, but also helped organizations to act in a more socially responsible manner to assist in the job development of minority groups. This helps to promote multiculturalism in a country with a diverse populace, such as America in the West, and Vietnam, China, or Malaysia in the East.

### **Use of Bilingual Teaching and Learning Methodology**

Research conducted by Reyes and Vallone (2007) found that the use of bilingual collaborative teaching and learning methodology at elementary school level could help culturally diverse students learn a second language more effectively. This was supported by Shi (2011), in that the use of bilingual methodology could help enhance the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning. According to Busch (2011), most of the bilingual teaching and learning methodologies tended to focus on employing a psycholinguistic thread, which can be effective, but Budach, Erfurt, and Kunkel (2008) preferred to shift to the use of sociolinguistic methodology for bilingual teaching and learning. However, all of the above research still emphasized the use of bilingual education for the teaching of languages as a second language or as part of the methodology for the teaching and learning of a foreign language. The literature is still lacking in many areas regarding the use of bilingual teaching and learning for postgraduate studies.

### **Dual Language Education as the Foundation of bilingual Teaching and Learning**

As Lindholm-Leary (2005) examined, there are two types of dual language programs:

1. One-way dual language program – in which there is only a one-language group being educated via the use of two different languages (the mother tongue as well as a second language, which is often English).
2. Two-way dual language program – in which there are two groups of language learners being taught together in which the learners possess about 50% competency in each of the language used as a medium of instruction.

Alanis and Rodriguez (2008), on the other hand, explained that in dual language education programs, two languages are used in the classroom for instruction and learning. There was no mention of whether the dual language program was to be conducted using a one-way or two-way delivery system. Generally, however, a two-way dual language program is to be promoted vis-à-vis to the one-way dual language program (Thomas & Collier, 2002; Tong, Lara-Alecio, Irby, & Kwok, 2008). This is because a two-day dual language program would provide more opportunities for the learners to interact with learners of different cultures, thereby allowing for the promotion of improved cultural understanding (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Duarte, 2011; Gorter & Cenoz, 2011; Ziegler, 2011).

However, in order for such a program to be effective, it needs careful and in-depth planning and conviction by administrators and teachers respectively during implementation (Irby et al., 2011). This is because a majority of learners tend to mirror the language of instruction of the

teacher, which in most cases is English, which helps learners to grasp specific key concepts in a non-native tongue in a more effective manner (Lara-Alecio, Tong, Irby, & Mathes, 2009). Irby et al. (2011) further emphasized that two languages (native or mother tongue as well as English) should be used as the medium of instruction in order to be more effective. Martinez (2011) supported the use of English as one of the medium of instruction as it was found that English unites, and although specific countries may be nationalistic about their respective language and culture, it is still of value to learn English. The recommended distribution is as follows:

1. At Elementary level – 90% use of the mother tongue; 10% use of English
2. Upper elementary level – 50% use of the mother tongue; 50% use of English
3. Beyond third (3<sup>rd</sup>) grade – sustain 50% use of the mother tongue; 50% use of English

The above was further strengthened by Pang (2011) in that it is important to establish a caring centered and reflective classroom environment in which students and teachers share each other's experiences, interests, and academic knowledge so that the students, especially those from migrant families or under-represented communities (minority groups) could achieve academic excellence more effectively. Banks (2010) emphasized too that teachers also benefit from the bilingual teaching and learning experience in that the teachers will be better able to reconstruct the knowledge to be delivered to suit different cultures, as well as to be more critically conscious about the meaningful contribution of bilingual education. The evaluation of the benefits accorded to teachers in a dual language program will be carried out in this research to ascertain the validity of the above statement.

According to Alanis and Rodriguez (2008), the opportunity for a learner to become more effective as a bilingual communicator is via the use of the dual language bilingual approach. This is because such a study environment provides students an opportunity to learn about another culture without sacrificing their own identities, thereby ensuring that the dual language program is responsive to the needs of children, school, and the community. Irby et al. (2011) further affirmed that the use of a two-way dual language program provides better instructional opportunities for all the students to develop proficiency in at least two languages, as well as a better understanding and appreciation of two different cultures (Alkenhead, 2001). This is aligned to Busch's (2011) contention that there is now a shift from the focus of identities and membership as a pre-requisite of bilingual teaching and learning to a more learner focused acquisition of multi-linguistic repertoire and capability. Therefore, the use of the dual language program will definitely help to achieve such repertoire and capabilities.

Dual language programs have been found to be beneficial in many ways as shown in the table below:

Table 1. *Support for Dual Language (DL) Programs*

<b>Support Findings</b>	<b>Relevant Studies</b>
1. English speakers achieve well in a two-way DL program	Lindholm-Leary (2005); Thomas & Collier (2002)
2. Students' cross cultural understanding improves	Alkenhead (2001); Lara-Alecio, Bass & Irby (2001)
3. Students benefit from learning in their native language as well as English	Thomas & Collier (2002); Tong, Lara-Alecio, Irby, & Kwok (2008)
4. Students' academic progress in math and language proficiency is accelerated or enhanced	Senesac (2002)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 5. Language minority students experience better long-term educational benefits than students in other bi-lingual program or an English as a second language program | Thomas & Collier (2002); Tong et al. (2008) |
| 6. Students' self-esteem is enhanced or strengthened  | Irby et al. (2011)                          |

Note. Adapted from Irby et al. (2011).

## Focus of the Current Research

The focal point of the current research is based on the use of a dual language program as provided by Lindholm-Leary (2005). The teaching and learning strategy used is basically a one-way dual language program at the Master's level, and to then progress to the use of the two-way dual language system for the Doctorate postgraduate study level.

The dual language program studied in this research was between Vietnamese and English. According to Lotherington (2004), English as a language is seen as a highly prestigious foreign language, and thus the ability to master the English language will certainly ensure that the possessor of the English language competency will go far in his or her career, work opportunities, and economic status. This was further affirmed by Martinez (2011) in that English is a universal language that unites people from different cultures. This is especially important for a fast growing country like Vietnam. Many Vietnamese are eager to acquire knowledge, embrace the latest technologies, and advance in their career and life. However, the lack of command of language hinders their progression to acquire an internationally recognized postgraduate qualification. The availability of a dual language postgraduate program that is conducted in both English and Vietnamese is one which will assist the less advantaged group of Vietnamese to acquire the required knowledge from a postgraduate study while simultaneously learning English to enhance their promotional opportunities.

As mentioned by Banks (2010), teachers too benefit from such bilingual programs; therefore, in this research, interviews with the dual language program's teachers or facilitators were conducted to determine the extent of benefits obtained.

## Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework provides a graphical representation of the variables to be studied within a specific research (Zikmund, 2010). Based on the literature review, the following theoretical framework was established, together with the key research questions and the hypotheses for the study. A figure depicting the theoretical framework for this research is found below.

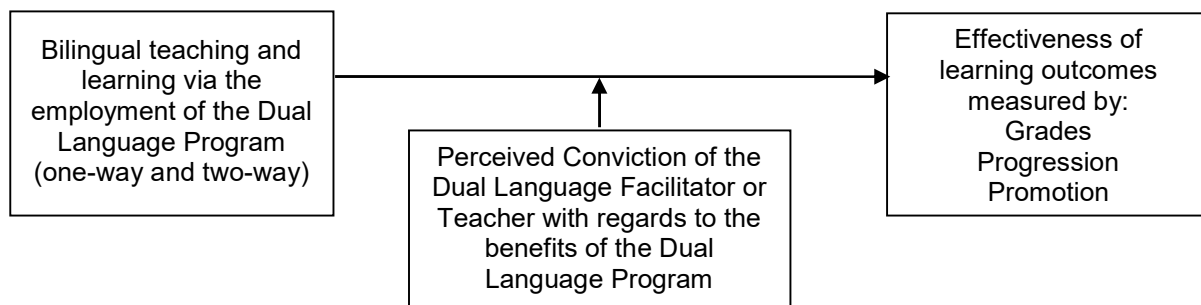


Figure 1. Theoretical framework.

As this research is fundamentally exploratory in nature, the theoretical framework serves merely as a guide to the collection of data and information with regards to the learners, and is not designed to test the correlation or the relationship between the variables. The above theoretical framework could also be used to guide subsequent empirical studies to validate and affirm the correlation and relationship between the key variables as provided.

### **Dual Language Program Methodology for This Research**

From 2010-2012, a total of 161 Vietnamese students were involved in the dual language Master's program conducted in Vietnam, Philippines, and Malaysia. In a typical dual language program classroom, there are two facilitators or teachers, one of which will conduct in English while the other translates into Vietnamese instantaneously. At times, the translator facilitator or teacher will explain the concepts in more detail in Vietnamese to ensure that the students are able to understand the intricacies of the concepts within the subject matter. This is possible because usually, prior to the class session, the translator facilitator will spend time with the main facilitator to have a deeper understanding of the subject matter before commencing the class.

The dual language program Master's students will then be required to complete one individual assignment either in English or Vietnamese. The students with some working knowledge of English are encouraged to complete the assignment in English. The main facilitator will then mark the assignment and return to the students for adjustments. In the process, the Vietnamese students learn that English needs to be written in a specific manner that fits into the academic requirements, while simultaneously providing the inputs required for the understanding of English words and specified subject matter concepts. This indirectly enhances the students' capability and competencies in the grasp of the English language.

For those Vietnamese students in the dual language program who write in Vietnamese, the Vietnamese translator facilitator or teacher will guide the students on how to write in Vietnamese, but request the students to read relevant materials written in English. Whenever the Vietnamese students face a problem in understanding the English materials, the Vietnamese facilitator will assist to support and guide using Vietnamese as the main medium of explanation, but referring constantly to the English materials.

Apart from the above, the students are also required to sit for a simple 2-hour exam that is set in English. Dictionaries are allowed into the exam venue to assist the students to have a better understanding of the questions. Upon completion of the module, the students' understanding of the subject matter, as well as the command of English, will be enhanced.

### **Methodology**

According to Zikmund (2010), different methodologies are used for conducting different types of research, which includes, but is not exhaustive of, exploratory research, applied research, descriptive research, causal research, and so forth. The current research was based primarily on secondary data analyses based on the postgraduate students' academic results, as well as their classroom work and participation, their progression semester to semester, progression from Master's to Doctorate, together with their subsequent promotion at the workplace, and other key data. The research could thus be considered to be of a descriptive nature and is deemed to be exploratory, as there is not detailed empirical data to support the correlations or the relationship between the variables.

Once the secondary data was collected, cross tabulation of the data was executed to ascertain the effectiveness of the bilingual dual language program. Further confirmatory analyses via in-depth interview with both the postgraduate students and faculty members provided verification and validation on the extent of effectiveness of the Vietnamese bilingual dual language postgraduate program conducted.

Subsequent focused group interviews with the postgraduate students provided additional inputs with regards to the challenges posed by the adoption of the bilingual teaching and learning methodology at postgraduate level. Suggestions were also provided by the focus group participants on how some of these challenges could be minimized or resolved within the teaching and learning environment.

### **Key Research Questions**

The key research questions relevant and appropriate to this research are:

1. Whether the one-way dual language program had helped learners to learn effectively key management concepts that could be effectively applied to the workplace
2. Whether the graduates of the dual language Master's program gained sufficient English proficiency to move to the Doctorate level, where the use of the dual language is the use of a two-way dual language methodology
3. Whether the one-way dual language program provided sufficient confidence to the learners to complete the program within the stipulated time-frame for the Master's program
4. Whether the two-way dual language program helped learners to enhance their academic as well as their English language competencies or proficiencies to a level that is adequate for upward mobility in their careers
5. Whether both the dual language program provided an opportunity for the Vietnamese candidates to have access to an internationally recognized program that would otherwise not be made accessible to them
6. Whether the facilitators or teachers too benefited from the dual language program as there is now a greater consciousness with regards to the understanding of different cultures

The secondary data source was pulled from a total of 161 Vietnamese students who had undergone the dual language Master's program in Vietnam, Philippines, and Malaysia between 2010 and 2012. All 161 Vietnamese Master's students are working adult learners holding key positions either in government departments or agencies in Vietnam, or in private multinational or local enterprises located in Vietnam. Some of these candidates had commenced the program without any working knowledge of the English language.

### **Findings and Discussion**

Based on the secondary data obtained from the 161 Vietnamese students, the demographic information is contained below:



Table 2. *Demographic Information*

Demographic Information	Numbers
Male	89 (55%)
Female	72 (45%)
Government sector	52 (32.3%)
Private sector	109 (67.7%)
No working knowledge of English	94 (58.4%)
Basic working knowledge of English	67 (41.6%)

Basic working knowledge of English in this research context refers to an understanding of fundamental conversational English that covers self-introduction, common greetings, and an understanding of functional English that others could understand the speaker's needs, such as restroom, food outlets, transport, shopping centers, and so forth.

### Effectiveness of One-way Dual Language Program

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the one-way dual language program, the following criteria were used:

1. Students' grades in assignments and exams over three semesters
2. Students' timeliness in completion of assignments

Additional assessments will be based on post-studies, such as:

1. Students' timeliness in graduating from the dual language Master's program
2. Students' promotion within 6-months upon completion of the program
3. Students' progression into the Doctorate program

The following two tables provide a summary of the information as detailed above to evaluate the effectiveness of the one-way dual language program.

Table 3. *Students' Grades and Timeliness Data (Average)*

Criteria	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
1. Assignment Grades (English)	D	C	B
2. Assignment Grades (Vietnamese)	B	B	A
3. Exam Grades	D	D	C
4. Timeliness in assignment submission	Slightly late	Extension	Extension

The grading of the assignment is based on the marks received, as follows:

- A: 91 - 100
- B: 81 - 90
- C: 70 - 80
- D: Below 70 (considered as failed)

Based on the secondary data collected with regards to the students' average grades and timeliness of submission of assignment, it can be seen that the assignment grades for students writing the assignments in English improved semester by semester, as the grasp and command

of the English language was enhanced. But, on the other hand, the students writing in Vietnamese tended to be quite average in their grades, with minimum improvement within the first two semesters. It was only in the final semesters that there was a marked improvement for some. However, for the vast majority, the grades remained consistent.

As the Vietnamese students got more exposure in the dual language classroom, especially in terms of the use of the English language, the confidence level increased and the writing style for assignments also improved. The data and finding is thus aligned with the contention of Alanis and Rodriguez (2008) in that dual language immersion, if effectively applied, will lead to an improvement in academic achievement and learning, as well as enhancement in confidence level and self-esteem (Irby et al., 2011).

However, although unconsciously the grasp of the English language was enhanced, there was not any improvement in terms of the mother tongue. Therefore, even though the knowledge expansion with regards to the subject matter had occurred, the expansion of the mother tongue was not happening, as the materials read were in English. This is probably the reason why the assignment grades for the students writing in Vietnamese were not increasing exponentially as fast as those writing in English.

Alternatively, as the exams were conducted in English, and under more pressured conditions, the students still struggled for the first two semesters, and generally did not do as well as expected. However, by the last semester, there were some improvements as the command of the English language had been strengthened over more than one-year of studies. There were, however, a fair number of students that still remained within the low grades level even after one year of extensive exposure to the English language. Even during class sessions, students were encouraged to present in English, but there was still a fair number that lacked the confidence to do so. These were normally the students that did not do as well during the final exam due to their perceived inadequacies with regards to their language proficiencies.

With regards to the timeliness in the submission of assignments, generally, a majority of the students would be slightly late in submission or would require an extension. However, upon further probing and questioning, this showed that the delay was not due to a lack of command of the language or a lack of understanding of the subject matter, but rather that, as they were working adult students, it was difficult for them to juggle work and study in a balanced way.

A deeper conversational exchange with the students indicated too there was a lack of support from the main facilitator or the translator facilitator with regards to assignment support. The main objection about the main facilitator was the inability to communicate effectively to convey the right message to get help from the main facilitator. Consequently, the majority preferred to go to the translator facilitator, which lead to the translator facilitator being too bogged down with support, and thus, being unable to provide effective support to every student. What is happening within the researched dual language program is aligned with the contention of Thomas and Collier (2002) in that non-native English speakers benefit more when the mother tongue is also used in the delivery of the learning materials, as learning is enhanced with clearer and more in-depth understanding via the use of dual languages.

Table 4. *Students' Graduation, Promotion, and Progression*

Criteria	On time Gradation	Within 6 Months	Within 1 Year
1. Graduating on time	>73%	About 20%+	<2%
2. Promotion or career advancement upon graduation	N/A	>17%	>31%
3. Progression to Doctorate	N/A	N/A	9.32%

From the data in Table 4, it can be seen that, generally, the majority of the Master's students were able to complete the dual language program postgraduate on time, with only a handful that needed to extend their studies. Interviews with the Vietnamese students indicated that those that were unable to complete on time had work exigencies, rather than due to the program itself. However, the majority of the graduates of the dual language program found that promotion and better career opportunities came easily upon graduation, as existing employers found that their command of English had been enhanced, and there was also an enhancement of management and leadership concepts that helped them to perform more effectively.

Apart from that, as non-native English speakers, these graduates have now acquired an adequate command of the English language that helped to boost their confidence level as well. This is in line with Irby et al. (2011) in that the self-esteem of dual language program participants will generally be enhanced upon completion of the program. With improved knowledge, enhanced communications in English, these Master's graduates should keep moving up in their career ladder. If such a program was unavailable, these Vietnamese students, handicapped by their lack of command of the English language, would not have had the opportunity to have an international exposure that they could feel comfortable with, as the native tongue was being used in teaching and learning. According to Lindholm-Leary (2005), students learn more in dual language programs as they are more comfortable when the mother tongue is also present in the classroom.

### Feedback from Main Facilitator

The main facilitator is the teacher or facilitator who conducts the program in English. He or she will explain the key concepts in English and helps to encourage group participation, as well as to promote the use of English language during presentation. The main facilitator plays a key role, not only in facilitating the learning of a subject matter content, but also in injecting cross cultural understanding and appreciation during the classroom session, especially for the Doctorate program in which the teaching and learning in dual language was done on a 50-50 basis. Generally, though, the main facilitator faces less challenges in the Doctorate dual language program vis-à-vis the Master's program, as the students in the Doctorate program had a better grasp of the English language. However, there are still common challenges that the main facilitator faces during the delivery of the dual language as provided for by the main facilitators via in-depth interviews with the main facilitators involved in the dual language Master's and Doctorate programs. Below is a list of the key challenges faced:

1. The overall syllabus for both the Master's and Doctorate program had to be slightly scaled back as the use of dual language takes up teaching and learning time within the classroom and, thus, the main facilitator could only focus on key areas within a specified subject

matter. This means that one normal Master's or Doctorate module would need to be split into two separate modules to ensure effective coverage of the subject matter. Consequently, some modules had to be left out from the overall program. On the other hand, although the scope is spread out, the depth of knowledge was never compromised.

2. Inability of the main facilitator to understand the language spoken by the students during discussion, thereby having to consistently rely on the translator facilitator. This, at times, caused some frustration as the main facilitator was not able to effectively guide and facilitate the group discussions. The main facilitator was unable to understand the students' mother tongue because of the uncertainty of whether the translator facilitator was translating the concepts and the meanings of explanation effectively. Although the main facilitator and the translator facilitator would discuss and plan ahead the classroom session together, the nagging thought would at times remain with some of the main facilitators.
3. Due to the huge disparity of English language proficiencies among the students, the main facilitator found it difficult to set appropriate final exam questions that would better cater to the common understanding of the majority of the students. This is probably why the students' overall final exam performances did not meet the required expectation.

### **Feedback from the Translator Facilitator**

As the program under research was based on the use of dual language as the medium of delivery, the translator facilitator was under pressure to ensure that the presentation and explanation provided by the main facilitator was effectively translated into the students' mother tongue. Apart from that, the translator facilitator was also required to translate the students' presentation and discussion to the main facilitator, who normally did not have a strong command of the students' mother tongue.

The key challenges faced by the translator facilitator are as follows:

1. The need to embark and engage in extensive reading and research on a specified subject matter that may not be the area of expertise for the translator facilitator. For example, the translator facilitator may be a subject matter expert in the field of hospitality management in general, but is called on to be the translator facilitator in a strategic management module within a broader context. Even though the fundamentals do not differ drastically, there are still variations that the translator facilitator needs to read up and research on.
2. Challenge in following the pace of the main facilitator as some of the main facilitators speak very fast, or speak long sentences that make it difficult for the translator facilitator to follow effectively, and to translate all the explanation in detail. At times, the translator facilitator had to stop the main facilitator to ensure that the explanation of theories and concepts were effectively translated into the students' mother tongue. Such a practice however could be disruptive to the class sessions, and frustrates the students at times.

3. The need to support the majority of the students in guiding their assignments writing and helping them to learn from reading English journals and materials. This takes time and effort and, many times, the translator facilitator also has other local students to support within the University, and thus, finds it too time consuming to be involved in the dual language program. This then resulted in a problem of finding sufficient translator facilitators for the program, that then lead back to the first challenge of facilitating outside of the person's field of expertise.

Therefore, based on the data and information obtained from the 161 dual language program students, it can be found that the following research questions have been answered:

1. Whether the one-way dual language program had helped learners to learn effectively key management concepts that could be effectively applied to the workplace: This is definitely true as the graduates were promoted within six months to a year upon graduation, due to their knowledge and language competencies' enhancement.
2. Whether the graduates of the dual language Master's program will have gained sufficient English proficiency to move to the Doctorate level, where the use of the dual language is the use of a two-way dual language methodology: Generally, the progression of the English proficiency was definitely seen from the improved grades obtained progressively throughout the three semesters. However, actual progression to the Doctorate level to date is less than 10%. Therefore, although the assumption is that the acquisition of the language would be enhanced, many of the graduates still did not find the courage and confidence to continue or proceed to the Doctorate level.
3. Whether the one-way dual language program provided sufficient confidence to the learners to complete the program within the stipulated time-frame for the Master's program: With regards to this research question, the confidence level of the majority of the graduates did improve upon completion of the dual language program, as proven by their promotion and career advancement records.
4. Whether the two-way dual language program helped the learners to enhance their academic as well as their English language competencies or proficiencies to a level that is adequate for upward mobility in their careers: For the two-way dual language Doctorate program, out of the 15 students who had progressed from the Master's program, so far only one had completed within the stipulated time-frame. The other 14 doctoral students were still working on the dissertation; although, they had completed all the required study modules (mixed mode) for the Doctorate program.
5. Whether both the dual language program provided an opportunity for the Vietnamese candidates to have access to an internationally recognized program that would otherwise not be made accessible to them: As found from all the data, it is clear that the Vietnamese students were able to obtain an internationally recognized postgraduate program in a more effective manner, as they had a better understanding of the course content due to the use of both English and the mother tongue. If such a dual language program was not available, access to upward mobility and economic advancement would not have happened (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008; Lindholm-Leary, 2005).

6. Whether the facilitators or teachers too benefited from the dual language program as there is now a greater consciousness with regards to the understanding of different cultures: This research question has been found to be valid in that the main facilitator, as well as the translator facilitator, have found the dual language postgraduate programs to be of value to the students as well as to them as facilitators. Through the dual language programs, the facilitators had learnt to understand different cultures, the subtle nuances inherent within the culture, as well as the learning styles and habits of students within that specific culture. This helped the facilitators to better understand and appreciate the differences between the cultures and provide an international flavor to the programs, as well as helping non-native English speakers to enhance their command and grasp of the English language.

Taken as a whole, from the contextual, descriptive secondary data obtained via data analyses, conversations, and interviews with the Vietnamese students, as well as the main and translator facilitators, it has been found that the bilingual education module based on one-way, as well as two-way, dual language programs can be effective. This is not only in imparting appropriate subject content knowledge to non-native English speakers, but also simultaneously helping these disadvantaged group of students to gain confidence in themselves and the command and grasp of the English language which, according to Lotherington (2004), is seen as a prestigious language that will open doors to many opportunities.

### **Implication of the Study**

From the secondary data, conversations, and interviews conducted, it has been found that, regardless of the method of dual language program used, either one-way or two-way, the outcomes of the programs are still effectively achieved. Apart from that, such dual language postgraduate programs allow disadvantaged non-native English speakers to gain access to internationally recognized postgraduate qualifications that also provide exposure to them from an international perspective.

This is because, for both the Master's and Doctorate programs, the programs' classroom sessions are conducted in a total of four different countries, and supported by facilitators from at least three (3) different nationalities. Such a unique dual language program not only allows students to be internationalized, and to learn and appreciate different cultures, but also to have the opportunity to improve their self-efficacy in terms of the grasp of the English language. A dual language program provides opportunities for the non-native English speaking postgraduate students to listen to English while simultaneously, via the translation, to understand what it means in their mother tongue. Such an endeavor helps students to associate English words to specific concepts, thereby strengthening their English learning experiences as opposed to merely studying English as a second language.

For fast developing mono-lingual countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, and other neighboring ASEAN countries, the dual language postgraduate program will provide more opportunities for non-native English speakers not only to acquire an international language, but also to advance their studies and knowledge in specific fields, especially in the sphere of management and its related studies. The graduates of such dual language programs will then be better able to contribute more effectively to the country's economic growth, thereby enhancing the populace's living standards and economic mobility.

## Conclusion

From the above, it can be seen that, for the mono-lingual developing nations, one way for integrating into a more globalized world is to be involved in bilingual education, especially via the use of the dual language program. According to Alanis and Rodriguez (2008), such a language program is beneficial and effective in helping non-native English speakers learn, provided specific criteria for success are identified and catered for. This was supported by Collier and Thomas (2004).

## Limitations of the Study

As this was an exploratory study that focused on the use of secondary data, there are many limitations since correlations or relationships between the key variables could not be determined.

However, the preliminary data and information provided could serve as a platform for future researchers to work on and take the study to a more empirical based level in order to ascertain, not only the correlations and relationships among the key variables, but also the potential influences of facilitators in ensuring the effectiveness of the outcomes of dual language programs at postgraduate level. This will then provide a higher level of contribution to the study of bilingual education at postgraduate level, which at the moment is still somewhat lacking.

Current bilingual education mainly focuses on the school level, with very minimal research at the higher education level, and much less at the postgraduate level. Therefore, the gap is clearly evident, since further research on the employment of bilingual teaching and learning methodologies at the postgraduate level will enhance the body of knowledge inherent within the sphere of bilingual education and bilingualism.

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