

**VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

NGUYỄN THỊ THU HÀ

**LECTURERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ENGLISH
MEDIUM INSTRUCTION CLASSROOM INTERACTION
PRACTICES IN A VIETNAMESE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY**

**(Nhận thức của giảng viên và sinh viên về tương tác trong lớp học chuyên
ngành bằng tiếng Anh tại một trường đại học kỹ thuật ở Việt Nam)**

Major: English Teaching Methodology

Code: 9140231.01

SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS

HANOI– 2023

The study was conducted at
University of Languages and International Studies, VNU

Supervisor 1. Prof. NGUYỄN HÒA
2. Dr. HUỖNH ANH TUẤN

Reviewer 1:.....

Reviewer 2:.....

Reviewer 3:

Luận án sẽ được bảo vệ trước Hội đồng chấm luận án tiến sĩ họp tại:
Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ, Đại học quốc gia Hà Nội .
vào hồi giờ ngày tháng năm 2023

Có thể tìm hiểu luận án tại:

Thư viện Quốc gia Việt Nam

Trung tâm Thông tin – Thư viện, Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of seven parts including the rationale, research context, aims and significance of the study, definition of key terms and overall structure of the thesis.

1.1. Rationale of the study

As regards to Vietnamese higher education contexts, there have been conflicting views on how EMI is conducted from the macro to micro levels, from the policy makers to the EMI practitioners, how EMI lecturers convey the content knowledge to the students via the medium of English language and how they interact with each other to ensure the students' comprehension of disciplinary knowledge. The current study is an effort made to fill the gaps in the extant literature and give ways for solving these conflicts in the implementation of EMI policy in particular HEI settings in Vietnam. It describes the real EMI classroom interaction practices as well as the lecturers' and students' diverse opinions on how these interactions take place and the extent to which the interaction affect students' content learning and English competence, finally leading to giving recommendations for better EMI practices in the future.

1.2. Research context of the study

The EMI program in the institution under study which has been carried out for 14 years with 9 graduated courses, has encountered several challenges in its implementation in terms of curriculum development, teaching methodology, financial and human resources. Particularly, questions have been raised about how EMI lecturers and students interact in their classrooms to ensure the comprehension of subject content in English, how they perceive and evaluate the impacts of the interaction on students' content learning and their English proficiency.

1.3. Aims of the study

This grounded theory study aims to explore EMI lecturers' and students' diverse and situated perceptions of their classroom interaction practices and the impacts of the interaction on the students' content learning and English proficiency in a Vietnamese technical university. There are four main objectives established as follows:

1. To examine the EMI lecturers' and students' perceptions of general EMI teaching and practices at the institution, which serves as the foundations for understanding the nature of EMI classroom interaction;
2. To investigate the classroom interaction between lecturers and students in the observed EMI classes;
3. To explore the EMI lecturers' and students' reasons for their classroom interaction practices.
4. To identify how these classroom interaction practices facilitate or inhibit students' content learning and language proficiency as perceived by EMI lecturers and students.

In order to achieve the main aim, the study sets out the following overarching research question:

What are the perceptions of EMI lecturers and students regarding the EMI classroom interaction practices and the impacts of the interaction on students' content learning and English proficiency in a Vietnamese technical university?

Based on the above overarching question, the following sub-questions are addressed:

- 1) What are the lecturers' and students' perceptions of the general EMI teaching and learning practices at the institution under study?

- 2) What are the lecturer and student interaction practices in the observed EMI classes?
- 3) Why do these interaction practices take place as explained by EMI lecturers and students?
- 4) How do the classroom interaction practices facilitate or inhibit students' content learning and language proficiency as perceived by EMI lecturers and students?

1.4. Scope of the study

This research examined EMI practices but not CLIL or CBI because in the university under study, EMI policy but not CLIL or CBI approaches have been implemented. The study explored not only the interaction practices in EMI classes, but also EMI lecturers' and students' perceptions of EMI practices and classroom interaction practices. Since the study was conducted in a Vietnamese public higher education institution, its findings are applicable to public HEIs only, due to several differences between public and private ones including class size, facilities and resources, teaching staff qualifications, and the autonomy of teachers and students in teaching and learning.

1.5. Significance of the study

The present study has potential contributions to the literature with a description of EMI classroom interaction practices as well as EMI lecturers' and students' situated perceptions on these practices in a particular Vietnamese higher education context, conducting an in-depth analysis of the observed lectures, reflections and experiences of these actual stakeholders.

1.6. Definition of key terms

This part provides the definitions of key terms including classroom interaction, Content Based Instruction, Content and Language Integrated Learning, content knowledge, Constructivist Grounded Theory, English Medium Instruction, English as Foreign Language, higher education, Perception.

1.7. Overall structure of the thesis

The thesis consists of eight following chapters: Chapter 1 is Introduction, chapter 2 is the Literature Review, chapter 3 is Methodology, chapter 4, 5 and 6 present the findings of the study, chapter 7 summarizes the findings and gives the discussion, finally chapter 8 is the Conclusion.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews previous studies on English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in higher education institutions. It then reviews theories related to classroom interactions in second language acquisition, and discusses empirical research on EMI interaction practices conducted in varied contexts.

2.1. Overview of EMI

2.1.1. EMI origins and definitions

After considering all the differences in terminologies, Macaro et al. (2018) chooses to use the label 'English medium instruction' and define this as: "The use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language of the majority of the population is not English" (Macaro et al., 2018: 37).

2.1.2. Differentiating EMI, CLIL and CBI approaches

In CBI, content is a vehicle for language learning and the goal is language learning and students are assessed on language performance. In EMI courses, the central focus is on

students' content and language proficiency is only a by product. Between these two extremes, CLIL is an integrated approach with a dual focus on language and content learning.

2.1.3. EMI growth in higher education institutions worldwide

Among the studies that have been conducted in terms of EMI implementation, Macaro et al., (2018) is the most comprehensive to date as they have made a lot of effort to review nearly all previous studies on EMI across the continents to provide the overall picture of this phenomenon. Their global study has reported a rapid expansion of EMI provision in 54 countries with much more development identified at tertiary level than at secondary level. This is due to the fact that higher education institutions worldwide have been increasingly internationalized, particularly the number of private universities (90%) have exceeded that of public ones (78.2%) in providing EMI programs and courses.

2.1.4. A brief overview of studies on EMI practices in HEIs

2.1.4.1. Reasons for EMI growth in HEIs

Galloway et al. (2017) listed the reasons why an HEI may decide to deliver content in English as follows: getting access to cutting edge knowledge and improving global competitiveness to raise the international profile; enhancing income (and compensating for shortage at the domestic level); improving student and lecturer mobility that can help attract talented students; enhancing the employability of graduates in both domestic and international markets and foster intercultural competences; improving English proficiency; reflecting the developments in English language teaching; using English as a neutral English in multilingual environments such as East and Southern Africa; offering EMI for altruistic motives to contribute to the improvement of the developing world by providing high-level education for students.

2.1.4.2. Benefits of EMI

Galloway et al (2017: 6) mentions four major benefits that EMI can bring to HEIs: a) English proficiency in addition to content knowledge; b) intercultural understanding and global awareness/citizenship; c) enhanced career opportunities; and d) staff employment.

2.1.4.3. Challenges facing EMI practices worldwide

The actual practices have revealed some negative impacts listed as “language-related issues (English proficiency and the impact on native languages; cultural issues (Westernization); social issues (inequality); management, administration and resources (staffing, support for international students, management and faculty culture” (Galloway, 2017:6).

2.1.4.4. Impacts of EMI on students' content learning and English proficiency

Research on impacts of EMI on students' content learning and their English competence has produced various even contradictory findings which required further examination into this area. Concerning the disciplinary content, most studies have confirmed that EMI negatively affects students' mastery of subject knowledge while only a few ones have given opposite results. The reasons listed in the studies for these findings involve lecturers' and students' limited English competence, unsuitable teaching methodologies, lack of support and resources. As regards to the effects EMI has on students' proficiency, the opinions differ significantly. Whereas several researchers conclude that EMI improves students' English ability, many others claim that it does not help increase students' English competence. This contradiction may be due to the different contexts of EMI practices in HEIs worldwide.

2.1.4.5. Issues in need of considerations in future research on EMI

Macaro et al., (2018) also pointed out some remaining main issues that need to be clarified in future studies on EMI, including the labels given to teaching content in the English language, variables such as gender, private versus public, different academic subjects and different year levels in their investigations, concept of ‘proficiency needed to teach through EMI, a lack of research on EMI classroom interaction in HEIs and how EMI lecturers and students perceive the impact of these interactions on the students’ mastery of subject content. The findings of the previous studies have provided are only “a fragmented picture” that cannot reflect what is really happening in EMI classes (Macaro et al :2018).

2.1.5. Overview of EMI policies and practices in Vietnamese HEIs

According to Nguyen et al., (2017), EMI programs offered in Vietnamese HEIs can be generally divided into two main types, namely foreign and domestic programs. Overall, it can be seen that EMI has been accelerating its speed of growth in Vietnam over the last few decades. However, this development does not mean success as it has revealed numerous problems in its implementation.

2.1.6. EMI research in Vietnamese HEIs

The problems in EMI practices have been tracked from the macro to the micro levels involving the lack of detailed guidelines from the government for an effective implementation of this language policy in HEIs, the challenging delivery of imported curricular to students, inappropriate English entry requirements for students, the limited English proficiency of both EMI lecturers and students, EMI pedagogy and shortage of support resources and materials. Several solutions have been suggested but little research has been done to examine whether they may work well for the existing problems.

2.2. Theory on classroom interaction in second language acquisition

2.2.1. Social interaction from cognitive perspectives

The interaction hypothesis by Long (1983, 1996) and the noticing hypothesis by Schmit (1990, 2001) have emerged as dominant in the field and they have been used in several studies in exploring the nature of classroom interactions.

2.2.2. Social interaction from social cultural perspectives

Interaction is a key concept in Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory because of its importance in knowledge acquisition.

2.2.3. Classroom interaction in second language acquisition

Celce- Murcia (1989:25) defined classroom interaction as “a system of giving and receiving information”.

2.2.4. Review on classroom interaction research

For nearly three decades, the focus of classroom interaction research including teacher or student talk was on what is observable in class, however, more recently, researchers have begun to question analyses of classroom processes based only on the observable. It was believed that “the ‘unobservable’ in the classroom such as teachers’ and learners’ psychological states including beliefs, attitudes, motivations, self-perception and anxiety, learning styles and cultural norms play an important role in shaping classroom interaction” (Tsui, 2001: 121).

2.2.4.1. Observable interaction

Research on the observable aspects of classroom interaction relates to three major ones: Input, interaction and output. Input refers to the language used by the teacher, output

means the language used by learners and interaction regards the interrelationship between input and output with no assumption of a linear cause and effect relationship between the two (Van Lier, 1996).

2.2.4.2. Unobservable dimensions of classroom interaction

Observable interaction could be affected by a number of factors such as individual learning styles, learners' psychological state, and cultural norms.

2.3. EMI classroom interaction research

2.3.1. EMI classroom interaction in higher education

There has been little research on EMI classroom interaction and the perceptions of lecturers and students on the interaction at higher education level, and the findings of these previous studies have provided are "only a fragmented picture" (Macaro et al., 2017).

2.3.2. Lecturers and students' perceptions on EMI practices

Research has shown diverse findings in terms of motivations towards EMI practice, benefits and challenges that EMI has brought to both EMI lecturers and students as perceived by these major stakeholders.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes a constructivist grounded theory (CGT) methodology.

3.1. Philosophical assumptions and methodological approach for the study

The aim of the study is to explore the perceptions of EMI lecturers and students on classroom interaction in a particular technical university context in Vietnam. As human perceptions are diverse and situated in specific settings, I believe no other choice of research methodology is better than constructivism with qualitative methodologies. The reasons for adopting Grounded Theory among five qualitative approaches were as follows. As stated by Creswell (2013), grounded theory is considered "a good design to use when a theory is not available to explain or understand a process. The literature may have models available but they were developed or tested on samples and populations other than those of interest to the qualitative researcher" (Creswell, 2013:88). Concerning the current study, despite a considerable amount of research on EMI practices at higher education level worldwide, classroom interaction between lecturers and students in EMI classes has not yet been given sufficient attention to. Research on EMI classroom interaction has mainly centred on the observable aspects of classroom interaction but very little on the unobservable angles of this complicated process. Tsui (2001) emphasizes that it is these mental processes that take place in learners' and teacher' mind during classroom interaction need to be explored as they shape the actual interaction. Johnson (1998) regards teachers and learners' perception of classroom events as an important part of understanding classroom events.

3.2. Overview of grounded theory

3.2.1. Definitions of grounded theory

Charmaz (2006) who bases her grounded theory on social constructivism, defines it as "methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves".

3.2.2. Types of grounded theory

Until now, there have been three major types of grounded theory (GT), including Classic GT by Glaser and Strauss (1967), Systematic GT or also called interpretive GT by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Constructivist GT by Charmaz (2006).

3.2.2.1. Classic Grounded theory

The first approach of grounded theory, the classic grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss in 1967. This grounded theory type requires the researcher to delay the process of literature review until the data analysis has been completed and a theory has been established.

3.2.2.2. Systematic Grounded theory (Interpretive GT):

This type of grounded theory design is broadly applied in educational research. A typical systematic design in grounded theory is composed of three stages of coding, namely open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Creswell, 2012).

3.2.2.3. Constructivist Grounded theory (CGT)

Constructivist grounded theory is developed by Kathy Charmaz (2006). The design advocator, Charmaz (2008a) states that the constructivist design has advantages in addressing why questions and preserving the complexity of social life. Constructivist design emphasizes the values and beliefs of the researchers. Thus, constructivist design gives a new interaction between researchers and participants and this on-going interaction will continue contributing to data construction (Hallberg, 2006).

3.2.3. Comparison of three grounded theory types

3.2.3.1. Similarities of grounded theory types

According to Santos et al. (2017), the three main methodological approaches of GT have four characteristics in common: (1) theoretical sampling; (2) constant comparative analysis of data; (3) elaboration of memos; and (4) differences between substantive theory and formal theory. These aspects can be considered inherent principles to the GT methods.

3.2.3.2. Differences of grounded theory types

The major differences among three types of GT lie in the types of paradigms including views about: (1) research objectivity, (2) use of literature and (3) rigidity versus flexibility in the analysis process.

I have decided to employ Constructivist Grounded Theory by Charmaz (2006) as the methodology for my study because of the following reasons. Firstly, I recognize that there are multiple interpretations of EMI classroom interaction given by different stakeholders, i.e. EMI lecturers and students, and Constructivist GT by Charmaz (2014) assists the researcher to consider multiple perspectives and co-construct knowledge with participants involved in the study. Secondly, unlike Classic GT and Systematics GT, Constructivist GT allows researchers to conduct literature review at the beginning of the research process, during data collection and after data analysis. It helps researchers to identify the gaps in the literature, then locate, evaluate and defend their opinion and findings. I believe that no researcher comes to research with a blank state or blank mind, he should conduct a review of literature so that he can explore new findings in comparison with previous studies. Finally, Constructivist GT allows researchers both flexibility and rigor while engaging in rich, in-depth description of experiences and phenomena (Charmaz, 2014), which I believe can help me to explore the diverse and situated experiences of participants in the particular context of the study.

3.2.4. Assumptions and strategies of constructivist grounded theory

According to Charmaz (2006), the constructivist approach to grounded theory makes the following assumptions: (1) Reality is multiple, processual, and constructed - but constructed under particular conditions; (2) the research process emerges from interaction; (3) it takes into account the researcher's positionality, as well as that of the

research participants; (4) the researcher and researched co-construct the data - data are a product of the research process, not simply observed objects of it. The grounded theory methods comprise the following main steps: *coding, memo writing, theoretical sampling* and *theoretical saturation* (Charmaz, 2006).

3.3. Research design

This qualitative study adopted the constructivist grounded theory design by Charmaz (2006) which included classroom observations to explore the common interaction practices in EMI classes (to answer the second research question – RQ2) and follow-up intensive interviews to explore the EMI teachers and students’ perspectives on general EMI teaching and learning practices (to answer the first research question-RQ1) and the classroom interaction practices (the third research question -RQ3) and finally their evaluation on the impact of these practices on students’ content learning and their English proficiency (to answer the fourth research question – RQ4).

3.3.1. Context of the study

The study is conducted in a technical university in Vietnam, which mainly specializes in technical majors. English as a medium of instruction is taught in the programmes under the Faculty of International Education with two programmes namely the Advanced and High Quality programmes. The Advanced Programme (AP) specializing in civil engineering was first introduced in 2008 with the approval of the Ministry of Education and Training on selecting the university as one of 27 higher institutions conducting the APs in different majors. The AP is divided into two phases with the first year delivering some basic subjects as stipulated by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) such as philosophy, physical education, military education in Vietnamese and an intensive English course aiming at the 5.5 IELTS target (equivalent to B2 CEFR level) at the end of the first academic year. Students are requested to achieve 6.0 IELTS at the end of the second year, which is also the graduation requirement for English proficiency. In the second year, the students start to study the specialized subjects in English and all their tests and exams are conducted in English. Finally, after four and a half year of the training program, they have to defend their graduation projects in English.

3.3.2. Participants of the study

Participants for this grounded theory were selected based on purposive sampling. For the current study, two groups of participants including two AP third year classes with 35 AP third year students and 6 EMI content lecturers were selected as the participants of the study. The first AP class (AP 59) consisted of 21 students and the second one (AP 60) had 14 students. By the time of the study, the AP students had already undertaken 4 semesters of English preparation courses and 2 semesters of EMI study. They had been required to pass an in-house IELTS screening test in order to ensure that they met the English requirement for EMI study (stipulated as B2 CEFR level at the university). The second group of participants were 06 EMI lecturers who taught these two AP classes, of them, lecturer 01, 02 and 03 taught the AP 59 class, and lecturer 04, 05 and 06 taught the AP 60 class. Most of them obtained Doctor degrees (05 lecturers with Doctor degrees, one had MA degree) in English taught engineering programs in a foreign country (England, Germany, France and Singapore) and had experience of teaching EMI for at least 3 years.

3.3.3. Data collection methods

3.3.3.1. Classroom observation (Creswell, 2013)

To deal with the research question which focuses on the classroom interaction between EMI lecturers and students, the classroom observation method is adopted with the use of a recorder and an observation protocol proposed by Creswell (2013)

3.3.3.2. *Intensive interviews (Charmaz, 2006)*

To answer the questions on the EMI lecturers' and students' perceptions of EMI teaching and learning practices in general and their classroom interaction in particular, the method of intensive interviews with EMI teachers and students was employed. The interview questions for this study are based on the interview question outline for grounded study design recommended by Charmaz (2006) and guided by the classroom observation conducted before the interview.

3.3.4. *Data collection procedures*

The data collection procedures were divided into two phases including the classroom observations and the post observation intensive interviews. The classroom observation phase commenced in the first semester of the academic year 2020-2021 in September 2020 and scheduled to last until the end of the academic year in May 2021. Due to the covid 19 pandemic, the classroom observations could only be conducted in the first semester of 2020-2021, then resumed in the second semester of the academic year of 2021-2022, in March 2022. The classroom observations were carried out with two third year ATP classes involving 35 third year ATP students and 6 EMI lecturers in 6 EMI courses. The observations were audio-recorded with the consents of both EMI lecturers and students beforehand. The classroom interaction practices were noted down in the observation protocols. All the data collection procedures were scheduled to finish before the end of the academic year in May 2022.

3.3.5. *Data analysis procedures*

The current study employed the data analysis procedures of Constructivist Grounded Theory proposed by Charmaz (2006). This process consists of coding processes and memo writing. The various coding strategies and the memos written during the analysis phases are essential for identifying concepts and categories as well as for developing theory subsequently (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). MAXQDA Qualitative Analysis Software version 2020 was employed to do the analysis work, which was very useful for the qualitative researcher to handle such huge amount of qualitative data from observation and interview recordings.

3.3.5.1. *Data coding*

After the data from classroom observation protocols, observation recordings and interview recordings were collected and transcribed, they were entered in MAXQDA version 2020 qualitative data analysis software for open coding and focused coding, then developed into the theoretical coding or main categories that form a substantive theory explaining the classroom interactions of EMI lecturers and students.

3.3.5.2. *Memo writing*

Memo writing is an important step in the conceptualization of data in grounded theory studies. Memo writing allows concepts to emerge and identify the core categories starting from the early stage of the research process.

3.3.5.3. *Theoretical saturation*

The next step of grounded theory research is theoretical saturation, which is achieved when the core categories that have emerged from the research process are saturated (developed) with adequate data to the extent that the incorporation of new data provides

no additional insight. For the current study, the classroom observation were repeated several times throughout 3 months (approximately 4-5 lessons per one lecturer) to identify the core categories in classroom interaction behaviours of lecturers and students in the EMI classes. After that, intensive interviews with EMI lecturers and students were conducted to investigate their perceptions on these common interactions. When there was something vague in their answers, the researcher contacted with them again to ask for clarification and collect more data to reach saturation until no more new categories emerged.

3.3.5.4. Data reporting

The current study is in a form of PhD thesis which reports the findings of the study.

3.3.6. Ethical issues

For the current study, before the data collection, the researcher contacted with the EMI lecturers and students and explained to them the purposes of the study. Then, consent forms were sent to both lecturers and students to get their agreement on participating in the study. After that, the researcher discussed with the lecturers about the timetable of observation and got their approval on this timetable. All the names of the participants were not identified in the thesis but they were labelled with numbers, i.e. EMI lecturer 01, EMI lecturer 02, or EMI student 01, EMI student 02 etc. The researcher also explained to the participants that all their personal information was not disclosed to anyone or presented in any documents.

3.3.7. Trustworthiness of the study

Guba (1981) developed four criteria for determining the trustworthiness of qualitative research that are more appropriate than traditional positivist measures of quality: credibility (in preference to internal validity), transferability (in preference to external validity/generalisability), dependability (in preference to reliability), and confirmability (in preference to objectivity). In this study, the collected data from classroom observation and interviews with EMI lecturers and students reflected the reality of EMI classroom practices in a Vietnamese technical university. The findings from the study are applicable and transferable to other studies with similar conditions and contexts, i.e. EMI lecturers and students in another technical university in Vietnam. The data of the study were collected repeatedly in several EMI lessons can represent the changing conditions of the EMI interaction. Finally, the researcher tried to remain objective during data collection and data analysis which can help other researchers to confirm the findings from the same data. Therefore, the current study has tried to ensure the credibility, the transferability, dependability and confirmability of a qualitative study.

CHAPTER 4: EMI LECTURERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF GENERAL EMI PRACTICES

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of data related to EMI lecturers' and students' perceptions of general EMI practices in their institution.

4.1. EMI lecturers' perceptions of general EMI practices

4.1.1. Necessary qualifications for teaching EMI

The analysis of interview data with EMI lecturers showed that the necessary qualifications required by the institution were lecturers with Doctor or Master degrees in EMI programmes in a foreign country or those with Doctor or Master degrees in Vietnam but having international certificates in English language like IELTS 6.5 or equivalent. They said they met the requirement of the institution for EMI lecturers.

4.1.2. Reasons for teaching EMI

There were two main reasons for teaching EMI as explained by EMI lecturers, *institutional requirements* and *lecturer motivation*.

4.1.3. Training for teaching EMI

All of the EMI lecturers said that there was *no official training* for EMI teaching methodology but there was an *English improvement course* for EMI lecturers. The aim of the course was to provide English knowledge and skills so that the EMI lecturers could get 6.5 IELTS at the end of the course.

4.1.4. Problems and solutions in teaching EMI

4.1.4.1. Problems

There were 6 major problems reported by EMI lecturers when they first started teaching EMI in terms of the lecturers themselves and the students. The problems included *teaching methodologies*, *lecturers' workload*, *curriculum framework*, *EMI terminology*, *students' mixed abilities* and *limited English proficiency*, and *students' limited interaction* while learning EMI.

4.1.4.2. Solutions

Solutions can be categorized into *Self-determination* and *Negotiation*. *Self-determination* includes solution decided by themselves and *Negotiation* involves exchanging with colleagues and educational managers.

4.1.5. Comparison of teaching methodology for EMI and VMI

The lecturers compared the differences between teaching in English and Vietnamese, which could be categorized as *similarities* in curriculum requirements for content knowledge but *differences* in teaching methodology.

4.1.6. EMI materials and resources

The EMI lecturers' views on the teaching materials and resources used for EMI classes could be categorized as *diversifying and sufficient*.

4.1.7. Students' English proficiency and content learning

4.1.7.1. Students' English proficiency

All EMI lecturers commented that EMI students had *mixed English abilities*. Several students were good at English while others did not have sufficient English competence for EMI study.

4.1.7.2. Students' content learning

All EMI lecturers commented that EMI classes often had students of *mixed abilities* and therefore led to *mixed results*.

4.1.8. EMI policy

4.1.8.1. Benefits and problems of EMI

The lecturers mentioned several benefits of EMI not only for the students but also for the lecturers including improving *students' English proficiency*, *enhancing international integration for both EMI lecturers and students*, *job opportunities*.

4.1.8.2. EMI implementation at the institution

EMI lecturers mentioned several issues in terms of EMI implementation such as *social demands for EMI programmes*, *their development and expansion*, *quality improvement* and *challenges for this policy*.

4.1.8.3. Conditions for successful EMI programmes

When mentioning the conditions for successful EMI programmes, the EMI lecturers listed several aspects in terms of *the curriculum*, *the enrollment requirements*, *students'*

English proficiency, lecturer quality, teaching and learning facilities and support for syllabus design and preparations.

4.2. EMI students' perceptions of general EMI practices

4.2.1. Reasons for choosing EMI courses

The analysis of data show that the EMI students had a variety of reasons for their decision on choosing EMI courses. The reasons range from *English proficiency improvement, job opportunities, the quality of the EMI courses and lecturers, chances for further study abroad, professional improvement, preferences for civil engineering, relatives' recommendations, university staff' recommendations.*

4.2.2. Benefits of EMI study

EMI students mentioned several benefits when they studied EMI at the institution including the *improvement of their English proficiency and professional knowledge, their job opportunities, access to international teaching methodologies and culture, chances for further study, a great variety of materials, favourable conditions provided by the EMI lecturers.*

4.2.3. Problems and solutions in EMI study

4.2.3.1. Problems

In the interviews, the EMI students mentioned several difficulties including *learning EMI vocabulary, listening to EMI lessons, translating EMI texts, methods to study EMI and finding Vietnamese equivalent EMI materials.*

4.2.3.2. Solutions

As analyzed in the previous part, it is clear that MI students faced a lot of challenges in learning EMI. When being asked about how to solve these problems, their answers were divided into two main subcategories: *Solving the problems by themselves* and *seeking the assistance from lecturers.*

4.2.4. Self-evaluation of English proficiency

When being asked to self-evaluate their own English proficiency for EMI study, the students' opinions were divided into two subcategories: *Sufficient ability* (22/35 students, 62%) and *insufficient ability* (13/35 students, 37%) of English competence for EMI study.

4.2.5. EMI lecturers' teaching methodology and English competence

4.2.5.1. EMI lecturers' teaching methodology

Students' responses to the question about EMI lecturers' teaching methodology could be classified into two major subcategories: *Positive comments* (27/35 students) and *negative comments* (8/35 students). As regards to *positive remarks*, students confirmed that the lecturers taught in details, with suitable amount of content knowledge in a lesson, clear objectives along with providing sufficient materials before the lessons and asking students to make presentation so that they could comprehend the knowledge more deeply. However, there were quite a lot of *negative comments*. There were 10 students who complained about the lecturers' teaching methodology including traditional teaching methods, no explanation of difficult English terminologies, fast teaching speed, and overuse of English in their lessons

4.2.5.2. EMI lecturers' English competence

EMI students' opinions can be grouped into two different categories: *Positive comments* (27/35 students; 77%) and *negative comments* (8/35 students; 23%). Concerning *the positive comments*, the EMI students highly appreciated the *lecturers' English*

proficiency, teaching experience and professional knowledge. About the *negative comments* (8 out of 35 students), EMI students' opinions were varied, but mainly focused on the *lecturers' pronunciation*, which caused difficulties for students to comprehend the EMI lectures.

4.2.6. EMI testing and assessment

Most EMI students said that the EMI testing and assessments in the institution were quite similar to those in VMI programmes. They both included written and oral assessments in English, which were positively evaluated by most EMI students. After describing the testing and assessment forms, the students' evaluation can be grouped into *positive* and *negative evaluation*. Concerning the *positive evaluation* (28/35 students, 80%) the students' opinions were diversified. The evaluation could be summarized as *precise, fair, specific, suitable, objective* and *confidential*. Apart from the above mentioned positive comments, the EMI students (7 students) had some negative comments concerning the EMI testing and assessments, which could be grouped into *illogical, ineffective, not inspirational*.

4.2.7. Facilities and materials for EMI study

EMI students' opinions of facilities and materials provided for EMI study were also divided into two major subcategories: *Positive* (26 students) and *negative* (9 students). It can be seen that most of students highly appreciated the facilities and materials used for EMI teaching and learning. Concerning the *positive comments*, facilities and materials were generally evaluated as *sufficient* and *good quality* (26/35 students), materials for reference provided in both English and Vietnamese. Despite most positive comments of the facilities, some students made *negative comments* on the provision of facilities and materials used for EMI such as *insufficient provision of updated materials, not upgraded facilities* for EMI study.

4.2.8. Impacts of EMI on students' content learning and English proficiency

4.2.8.1. Impacts on students' content learning

When being asked about the impact of EMI on students' content learning, the students' answers were grouped into two major subcategories: *Positive impact* (15/35 students, 43%) and *negative impact* (20/35, 57%). Therefore, the opinions were rather contradictory in terms of the impact of EMI on students' mastery of subject content. The first group of students who have *positive comments* mentioned many aspects that contribute to the impacts including *EMI coursebooks, acquisition of content knowledge, EMI vocabulary, job opportunity*. EMI was evaluated by 20 students that it had *negative impacts* on students' content learning due to some reasons such as *insufficient English abilities, comprehension of content knowledge, more time for study, reduction of content knowledge*.

4.2.8.2. Impacts on students' English proficiency

When being interviewed about the impacts of EMI on students' English proficiency, all students (35/35 students, 100 % of the answers) stated that EMI had positive effects on their English competence, including *overall improvement of English proficiency, English communication skills* and *EMI vocabulary*.

4.2.9. Factors affecting the success of EMI study

When being asked about the factors affecting the success of their EMI study, the students' opinions were diverse. Most of the answers focused on the *curriculum* and *coursebooks* (16 out of 35 students), *lecturers' teaching methodology* (15 out of 35

students), *students' English proficiency* (12 out of 35 students), *lecturers' qualifications* (10 out of 35 students), *students' motivation* (8 students), *facilities for EMI study* (7 students).

4.2.10. Decisions for choosing EMI study

Most of students (32 students) stated that they still registered to study EMI if they had been given a second chance to choose the course because of the advantages of this programme in comparison to the VMI programme, i.e. *job opportunities, improvement of English proficiency, lecturers' qualifications, soft skills* provided by EMI programmes, *good facilities* and *reasonable tuition fee* in comparison to similar EMI programmes in other institutions.

CHAPTER 5: CLASSROOM INTERACTION PRACTICES BETWEEN EMI LECTURERS AND STUDENTS

This chapter summarizes the findings related to EMI classroom observation practices based on the analysis of data from observation protocols and observation recordings..

5.1. Classroom interaction types

Data analysis of the classroom observation protocols has shown that there were four major interaction types emerged including interaction between the *lecturer and the whole class, lecturer and individual students, lecturer with students in pair work, lecturer with students in group work*. The data analysis shows that the teacher fronted-style was adopted in most EMI classes with lecturers teaching, explaining, asking and giving commands to students while the class kept listening to lectures and taking notes. The lecturer-whole class interaction took up the highest frequency while the other types played less dominant roles.

5.1.1. Lecturer-whole class interaction

Among these interaction types, the interaction between the lecturers and the whole class dominated with the highest frequency reported in the observation analysis (297 frequency counts /17 lesson observations), in which the lecturer taught and explained the content knowledge, asked questions, gave commands and work to the whole class and greeted the students when entering or leaving the class. However, the interaction between the class and the lecturer was rather limited (75 frequency counts/ 17 lesson observation). Often the class kept silent and took notes while the lecturer was teaching, sometimes answered the questions raised by the lecturer.

5.1.2. Lecturer-individual student interaction

The next interaction type was between the EMI lecturer and the individual student (78 frequency counts /17 lesson observation), in which the EMI lecturer asked one particular student to answer the question or to go to the board to do the exercise. When being asked by the EMI lecturer, the individual student stood up and did as required. Individual work was reported with 67 frequency counts per 17 lessons, in which the EMI lecturer asked students to work individually for a while.

5.1.3. Lecturer- pair work student interaction

Pair work was reported with 34 frequency counts with the lecturer asking students to work in pairs to solve a problem with their partners. Students interacted with each other in pairs to tackle the problem by exchanging ideas mainly in Vietnamese. While the students were doing pair work, the lecturer often moved around to check their work and gave advice or help if they encountered any problems.

5.1.4. Lecturer-group work student interaction

Group work was conducted with the lowest frequency (8 frequency counts), in which the lecturer asked students to work in groups to prepare for group presentation or discussing with their classmates about a problem. During group work, the lecturer moved around to inspect students' work and offered help if necessary. The students interacted with their peers to do their group work, they exchanges ideas and asked lecturers if they did not understand something.

5.2. EMI lecturers' and students' verbal and non-verbal interaction

As the observation protocols and observation recording differentiated the lecturers and students' actions, the data were analyzed into two themes, i.e. lecturers' and students' interaction based on a code system including open codes, focused codes and theoretical codes. Four major categories emerged in the lecturers' interaction included *use of English, code-switching to Vietnamese, use of teaching aids* and *their non-verbal behaviors (mobility/gestures)* while four major categories emerged in students' interaction consisted of *nonverbal behavior (silence & note taking), use of English, use of L1, and individual work/pair-work*.

5.2.1. EMI lecturers' verbal and non-verbal actions

The lecturers dominated the lessons with their actions and language expressions with the much higher frequency of actions than the students. *A teacher fronted instruction style* was adopted in most EMI classes with a little interaction between EMI lecturers and students.

5.2.1.1. Use of teaching aids

In all of the observed EMI classes, the EMI lecturers used teaching aids like laptops with power-point slides or PDF book to show on the smart board and the blackboard during the lesson.

5.2.1.2. Use of English

The EMI lecturers mainly used English to teach the content knowledge, ask questions, summarize the previous lessons and give tasks or commands to students. When using L2, they also used a lot of language cohesive devices in their speech to connect the ideas.

5.2.1.3. Codeswitching to Vietnamese

The EMI lecturers codeswitched from English to Vietnamese with high frequencies (approximately 50 times/a lesson of 90 mins) to explain the content knowledge, give the Vietnamese translation of terms, ask questions, summarize lessons, give commands, comment on students' answers and build rapport with students.

5.2.1.4. Non-verbal behaviors

In most EMI lessons, the EMI lecturers' most noted non-verbal behaviors were their movement and gestures. At first, they often stood next to the board or the slides to teach the content knowledge. However, during the lesson, they moved towards to the first row so that they could stand near the students. Especially in the practice lesson, or when the students were doing exercises, the EMI lecturers often moved around the class to check students' work. Body language like gestures or eye contact was used by all EMI lecturers. They often used hand gestures to point to the slides or the board, or point to the students to ask them answer the questions.

5.2.2. EMI students' verbal and non-verbal actions

In general, based on the observation protocols and recordings, the students' actions were very limited in comparison to the lecturers. In most observed lessons, the students often

sat at the desks, kept silent and took notes, worked in pairs with their classmates, exchanged ideas with classmates in low voices. Occasionally they replied to the lecturers' questions or demands in English or Vietnamese. In some situations, they moved out of their seats and worked in groups with their classmates, or they came to the board to do exercise as required by the EMI lecturers.

5.2.2.1. Non-verbal behaviors (silence and note taking)

This is the most common activity of EMI students in the observed lessons. The students kept silent and noted down the content knowledge on the slides, the boards or the EMI lecturers' explanations, particularly in the theory part of the lesson when the lecturer kept on teaching and explaining the content knowledge. Sometimes, they turned to their partners who sat next to them to talk.

5.2.2.2. Individual work/pair work/group work

The second most common activity of the students was working individually or working in pairs or groups, which they did when being required to do practice work. They turned to their friends and discussed with them on how to solve the problem raised by the lecturers. They also worked in groups to prepare for the group presentation such as preparing the information to include in the presentation slides. They sometimes moved out of their seats to go to their friends to discuss with them. They talked quite loudly about their work, which made the lesson more exciting, but this activity was only done in practice lesson, not in the theory lesson.

5.2.2.3. Use of L1

The next common activity of EMI students was using L1. They used L1 in most situations such as greeting the lecturers when they came to the class, answering the lecturers' questions, discussing with the lecturers and their classmates, asking for clarification for the content knowledge in the lessons, showing obedience with the lecturers.

5.2.2.4. Use of English language

The frequency of using English language was comparatively low in all observed lessons. The students used English to answer the lecturers' questions, mostly they used basic and simple English in their replies. When answering questions in English, most of them were rather hesitated in their answers. It seemed that they were not very confident in their answers. They gave the answers in very low voice, which was very difficult for the researcher to understand and transcribe from the observation recordings.

CHAPTER 6: LECTURERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF EMI CLASSROOM INTERACTION AND ITS IMPACTS ON STUDENTS' CONTENT LEARNING AND ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

This chapter presents the findings from the second part of the intensive interviews with EMI lecturers and students, which focused on their perceptions and opinions on EMI classroom interactions to explain how and why they interacted in the observed EMI classes as well as the impact of the interaction on their disciplinary learning and English competence.

6.1. EMI lecturers' perception of classroom interaction

6.1.1. EMI lecturers' descriptions of teaching EMI lessons

Based on the analysis of interview data, the procedures that all the EMI lecturers reported to use to teach EMI lessons can be divided into three steps: *Pre-teaching*, *during teaching* and *post teaching*. Pre-teaching stage included *Preparing materials*, *Sending materials to*

students, Asking students to prepare for the lessons. During teaching stage consisted of *Warming up, Introducing English terminologies & reviewing previous knowledge, Explaining the difficult parts in details, Delivering the lessons with teaching aids as illustrations, Using English as the instructional language, Codeswitching to Vietnamese.* Post teaching stage included *Summarizing the lessons, Reminding students to prepare for the next lessons, Giving homework or test to check students' comprehension*

6.1.2. EMI lecturers' perception of classroom interactions

The interviews with EMI lecturers focused on the core categories emerged from the data analysis of classroom interaction observation including the EMI lecturers' use of languages, use of teaching aids and their non-verbal behavior while teaching, then explored their evaluation of classroom interaction, impacts of classroom interaction on students' content learning and English proficiency, and solutions to improve classroom interaction.

6.1.2.1 Use of languages by EMI lecturers

In general, the *lecturers' use of instruction languages* was affected by *curriculum requirements, lecturers' beliefs* and *students' English proficiency.* EMI lecturers used English for *teaching the content knowledge, asking questions, and summarizing the lessons.* Apart from the use of English in EMI lessons, a common practice of EMI lecturers during their lesson was *the use of codeswitching to Vietnamese.* EMI lecturers said that they codeswitched to Vietnamese mainly to *explain content knowledge, translate the EMI terminologies, and summarize the lesson* in order to help students comprehend the content knowledge.

6.1.2.2 Use of teaching aids

Using teaching aids while teaching is a very common practice of EMI lecturers. In all observed lessons, they used the *black boards, power-point slides, video clips, coursebooks* to teach their lessons.

6.1.2.3. Non-verbal behaviors (movement and gestures while teaching)

Another common observed non-verbal behaviors of EMI lecturers was their varied movement while teaching. In all, the lecturers agreed that movement while teaching depended on their habits and personalities, however, the purposes were rather similar. Moving around the class aimed to check students' work and build better rapport with students and standing near the board to teach and explain content knowledge.

6.1.2.5. Impacts of classroom interaction on students' content learning

When being interviewed about the impact of interaction on students' content learning, all of the lecturers agreed that classroom interaction played a very important role in the students' EMI subject learning. Classroom interaction could *improve students' comprehension of content knowledge and their creativity in EMI learning.* However, EMI lecturers admitted that students' interaction in EMI classes was rather limited, which affected their comprehension of content knowledge.

6.1.2.6. Impacts of classroom interaction on students' English proficiency

All the lecturers agreed that classroom interaction has very positive impact on *students' English proficiency,* particularly their *English communication skills* like listening and speaking skills.

6.1.2.7. Solutions for improving classroom interaction

The EMI lecturers mentioned several ways to improve the classroom interaction, which can be grouped into major themes: *Solutions for lecturers* and *solutions for students.* The

solutions for EMI lecturers were then classified into the following categories: *Improving their teaching methodology, determining students' targets and levels to have appropriate methods, encouraging students' interaction by asking questions, organizing group work or pair work, using different forms of assessments, and using appropriate instructional languages*. The solutions for students proposed by EMI lecturers were grouped into following subcategories: *Improving their English competence, preparing for lessons, learning EMI terminologies, setting groupwork*.

6.2. EMI students' perception of classroom interaction

6.2.1. EMI students' description of EMI lessons

EMI lessons described by EMI students could be divided into three main stages based on the emerged categories from data analysis including *pre-teaching, during teaching, and post teaching stage*. There were similarities between the lesson descriptions of EMI lecturers and students. Pre-teaching stage included *Sending materials to students and asking them to prepare for lessons*. While teaching stage consisted of *Introducing the subjects, Using presentation slides, Teaching and explaining English terminologies in Vietnamese, Combining English and Vietnamese in delivering the content knowledge, Asking questions or using tests to check students' comprehension*. Post teaching stage contained *Summarizing the lessons, Giving homework or sending more materials for reference*.

6.2.2. EMI students' perception of classroom interaction

6.2.2.1. Use of instructional languages by EMI lecturers

Most students (32 students) gave positive comments. They said that EMI lecturers were very flexible in combining English and Vietnamese in their lessons, which could help them comprehend the lessons and translate EMI terminologies.

6.2.2.2. Lecturers' use of teaching aids

EMI students commented that the EMI lecturers combined varied kinds of teaching aids such as slides, video clips and smart boards etc. to deliver the content knowledge in an effective way.

6.2.2.3. Lecturers' non-verbal behaviors while teaching

EMI students reported that many lecturers moved around while teaching but some only stood near the board to teach the lessons. Most EMI students stated that lecturers' moving around had several benefits including *improving the classroom interaction, enhancing the effectiveness of the lesson delivery, controlling students' work, avoiding the boredom and building better rapport with students*.

6.2.2.4. EMI students' evaluation of classroom interaction

EMI students' evaluations were diverse. According to their opinions, some EMI classes had good teacher-student interaction while some others had little interaction. A majority of students (25 students) claimed that the classroom interaction mainly depended on *lecturers' teaching methodologies and their personalities*. Most of them admitted that interaction was *rather limited* and they explained the students' behaviors in many different ways. In all, interaction took place when the lecturers asked EMI students and the students performed *diverse behaviors* in these situations.

The common behavior of EMI students was keeping silent when lecturers asked questions. There were many explanations given by EMI students for this behavior, including *limited English ability, disciplinary knowledge, concentration on the lessons, their psychological and physical states*.

6.2.2.5. *Impacts of classroom interaction on students' content learning*

Most students (30 students) agreed that classroom interaction could help improve students' knowledge of subject content while some others (5 students) claimed that little interaction in some classes had very little impact on students' content learning. In all, positive comments outweighed the negative opinions. Firstly, the majority of students believed that classroom interaction helped enhance their content knowledge if the lecturers interacted well with the students. They also thought that classroom interaction could help to solve problems emerged during the lessons. Students also gave some comments of EMI lecturers' personalities. Most of the lecturers were friendly, helpful, and ready to help the students. Apart from the positive comments on the impact of classroom interaction on students' content learning, a few students (only 5 of them) still had negative opinions of the classroom interaction. They claimed that classroom interaction was limited due to the *lecturers' strict personality, their overuse of English language, students' insufficient preparation for lessons.*

6.2.2.6. *Impacts of classroom interaction on students' English proficiency*

All students agreed that classroom interaction greatly affected students' English proficiency, especially communication skills. However, the interaction was *varied across the subjects*, as viewed by the EMI students. In general, students improved their English competence in the lessons that lecturers interacted well with students but they did not enhance their English skills in the classes where the interaction was limited. Apart from positive comments (30 students) about the classroom interaction on the impact of students' English proficiency, a few students (5 students) complained about the *limited interaction* between the lecturers and students in some classes, which were caused by *lecturers' teaching methodology, their non-verbal behavior and use of instructional languages.*

6.2.2.7. *Recommendations for improving classroom interaction*

EMI students proposed several solutions including *identifying students' levels before teaching, appropriate use of English and Vietnamese in delivering the lesson contents, providing opportunities for students to practice their English speaking skills, introducing EMI terminologies with examples, organizing more group work discussions and lecturers' friendly and helpful personalities.* All the solutions they suggested aimed at the lecturers.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSIONS OF MAIN FINDINGS

This chapter summarizes the findings from data analysis based on the constructivist grounded theory methodology by Charmaz (2006). The major findings related to four research questions are addressed and discussed with reference to the results of previous studies.

7.1. Summary of main findings

7.1.1. General perceptions of EMI teaching and learning practices

Research question 1: *What are the EMI lecturers and students' perceptions regarding general EMI teaching and learning practices at the institution?*

EMI lecturers' perceptions of EMI practices

All of them reported positive motivations for EMI teaching at the institution. Concerning the benefits of EMI, the lecturers listed the advantages of this policy at the institution, including students' English proficiency improvement and job opportunities, and international integration for EMI lecturers. However, there were several disadvantages

due to students' weak English proficiency and lecturers' task of updating EMI materials annually. The difficulties in teaching methodology, curriculum framework, EMI terminology system in Vietnam, students' mixed abilities in English and content knowledge, and their limited interactive behaviors in EMI study were some of the general problems mentioned by EMI lecturers. Concerning the EMI policy in general, all lecturers concurred that it should be maintained because the need for high-quality labor resources led to the establishment of these programs. However, the institution should raise the standards of EMI programs by setting more quality control measures and more specific objectives. The curriculum, student enrollment requirements, lecturer quality, students' English language competency, teaching and learning facilities, and financial assistance for lesson planning and syllabus design were among the variables identified.

EMI students' perceptions of EMI practices

EMI students gave several justifications for their decision to study EMI, including improving English proficiency, employment prospects, the quality of EMI courses, the profession advancement, overseas study possibility, preferences for the major, family members' advice, and recommendations from university admissions staff. English competence and job opportunities created by EMI courses were among the factors that most strongly influenced students to choose EMI as their majors at the university. Regarding the advantages of EMI study, the students cited such factors as the motivations for EMI study including improving their English proficiency and professional knowledge, job opportunities, access to international teaching methods, opportunities for further study, updated materials, and conducive learning environments. In general, most EMI students reported positive motivations for EMI study thanks to the benefits it would bring to them. Notwithstanding the advantages listed above, students still had to overcome several obstacles, such as acquiring EMI terminology, listening to EMI lectures, translating EMI materials, identifying EMI learning methods, and locating Vietnamese resources to aid in EMI. The students' perspectives on how EMI affected their ability to learn content knowledge varied greatly. Due to their limited English language and reduced subject knowledge compared to VMI subjects, more than half of the students claimed that EMI had a detrimental impact on their disciplinary learning. The other half of the students stated that the updated EMI coursebooks and materials, the clear and thorough presentation of the coursebooks in comparison to Vietnamese ones, the provision of EMI terminologies and job opportunities created by EMI programs, and other factors had a favorable impact on their subject study. As regards the impact of EMI on students' English proficiency, thanks to an overall development in their English abilities and EMI vocabulary, all students thought that EMI had beneficial effects on their English competence.

7.1.2. Interaction practices in EMI classes

Research question 2: What are the lecturer and student interaction practices in the observed EMI classes?

The teacher-fronted style was still dominant in most EMI classes with the lecturers teaching and explaining the content knowledge using both English and Vietnamese, using teaching aids to support their teaching, moving around the class to check students' work. The use of instructional languages was flexible, with frequent codeswitching to Vietnamese to explain the content knowledge, translate English terminologies, ask questions, summarise lessons, give commands, comment on students' responses and

develop rapport with students. Students played a rather passive role, keeping silent and taking notes during lessons, working individually, in pairs or in groups, occasionally standing up answering lecturers' questions, using a combination of English and Vietnamese to answer the lecturers' questions with domination of the mother tongue in their exchanges.

7.1.3. Lecturers' and students' explanations for interaction practices

Research question 3: Why do these interaction practices take place as explained by EMI lecturers and students?

The EMI lecturers and students' perceptions varied in some ways and were similar in others with regard to these main categories. As perceived by the lecturers, three key factors including the curricular requirements, lecturers' beliefs and students' English competency had an impact on the lecturers' usage of instructional languages. Notwithstanding the students' varied English proficiency, EMI lecturers explained that they mostly used English to teach their subjects because they had to adhere to the criteria of the EMI curriculum and that EMI was mandated for content delivery. Concerning the use of codeswitching, all of the instructors acknowledged that they regularly shifted to Vietnamese to explain the difficult contents, translate the EMI terminologies, and summarize the lessons. All of these were designed to aid students, particularly the weaker ones, in understanding the subject matter, which was the lecturers' main focus. They all agreed that it was sometimes essential to code switch to Vietnamese to teach the content knowledge, particularly while teaching terminologies, not only owing to the limited English competence of Vietnamese students but also because understanding EMI terminologies in Vietnamese is necessary for students' future employment.

Regarding the students' perceptions of the lecturers' use of instructional languages, the students confirmed that the EMI lecturers used both English and Vietnamese while presenting the subject materials in EMI classes. The majority of students positively evaluated the lecturers' combination of instructional languages since they thought it might assist them to learn challenging subject contents and understand English terminologies, which was highly beneficial for them in their future careers. Consequently, it can be concluded that the EMI lecturers' and students' perceptions towards the usage of instructional languages were rather comparable in a number of ways. However, this combination might vary based on the students' English proficiency levels, as reported by EMI professors and students. The use of teaching aids by EMI lecturers made up the second emerged category. The importance of teaching tools in conveying EMI content knowledge was affirmed by EMI lecturers. Blackboards, PowerPoint slides, PDF books, and instructional videos were among several teaching materials. According to EMI instructors, slides and videos were essential mediums that effectively supported the students' understanding of the lesson's technical concepts and numbers. The usage of teaching aids by EMI lecturers was confirmed by EMI students as well, and the majority of them favorably rated this use because it aided in their understanding of the professional information. The non-verbal behaviors of the lecturers including their movements and gestures while they were teaching was the next category analyzed. The lecturers asserted that this nonverbal behavior was largely influenced by their personalities and habits. Concerning this, the majority of EMI students said that lecturers moving around the room may boost interaction in the classroom, improve the effectiveness of course delivery, manage students' work, prevent boredom, and foster

better relationships between lecturers and students.

EMI lecturers' and students' evaluation of classroom interaction yielded results that were comparable in some ways and different in others. According to EMI lecturers, EMI students' English proficiency and personalities, educational traditions and cultural elements significantly constrained the amount of contact between lecturers and students in the classroom. According to EMI students, the classroom interaction differed across the subjects. Interaction was good in some courses but limited in others due to teaching methods used by EMI teachers, the students' English language and subject knowledge, as well as their psychological and physical conditions.

7.1.4. Impacts of classroom interaction on students' content learning and English proficiency

Research question 4: How do the classroom interaction practices facilitate or inhibit students' content learning and language proficiency as perceived by EMI lecturers and students?

All of the lecturers who were asked about the effects of interaction on students' content learning concurred that interaction in the classroom was crucial for improving students' subject comprehension, but that the limited interaction in EMI classes had an adverse effect on students' content knowledge. They all said that several Vietnamese students did not participate actively in class, which negatively impacted their understanding of the content materials.

Concerning the impact of classroom interaction on students' English proficiency, all the lecturers agreed that classroom interaction has significant impact on students' English proficiency, particularly their English communication skills. In their opinion, the effectiveness of student-teacher interaction depended on both the lecturers' teaching strategies and the students themselves. They clarified that the students' English language skills, including speaking, listening, and reading were improved through classroom interaction. Students read a lot of EMI materials and were obliged to communicate with their professors in English. Writing was not enhanced as much as other skills as the students did not have to practice using this in EMI classes.

As regards students' situated perspectives of this impact, all students concurred that classroom interaction greatly affected students' content learning and English proficiency. However, the interaction was varied across the subjects and the lecturers, as viewed by the EMI students. Students stated that they improved their content knowledge and English competence in the lessons that lecturers interacted well with students. Despite the positive comments regarding the influence of classroom interaction on students' content learning and English competence, a few students had negative views of the classroom interaction. According to them, there were some EMI instructors who were too strict and hard to get along with, which resulted in limited interaction in their lessons.

7.2. Discussion of main findings

7.2.1. EMI lecturers and students' perceptions on EMI practices

Concerning the EMI lecturers and students' opinions of the EMI practices, there were several similarities and differences found in comparison to the extant literature. The similarities include the lecturers' and students' positive motivations for EMI, concern for students' English proficiency input, lecturers' reasons for EMI teaching, lack of guideline for EMI methodology, workload for EMI lecturers and students. Another finding that

partly corresponds to several previous studies is the students' perception of the impacts of EMI on their content learning and English proficiency. As discussed in the literature review chapter, most of the findings show negative impacts of EMI on students' content learning while only a few represent positive ones. In the current study, half of the students believed that EMI had detrimental impact on their content learning while the rest did not have the same opinion. These students explained this was due to their limited English proficiency, which hindered their subject comprehension. Concerning the impacts of EMI on students' English proficiency, all students in the study believed that EMI helped them to improve their overall English competence and EMI vocabulary. However, the findings related to this were rather contradictory in previous studies. Thus, it can be concluded that studies on how EMI affects students' content acquisition and English proficiency have yielded a variety of findings, which may be a result of variations in the context of the study and involved participants.

7.2.2. EMI classroom interaction practices

The findings of the research have reflected the domination of teacher-fronted methodology in EMI classes in a Vietnamese university setting, which might hinder the interaction between lecturers and students, resulting in detrimental effects on students' content learning, attentiveness, and classroom engagement. Taking into consideration the extant literature in this issue, the study has confirmed the results of the previous studies despite several differences in geographical, cultural and educational contexts, as well as the lecturers' and students' competence in content knowledge and English.

There were some similarities and discrepancies between the findings of the perceptions of EMI teachers and students in the previous literature and the current study related to the use of L1 and L2 in EMI classes. The majority of research on EMI classroom interaction confirms that both EMI professors and students support the usage of codeswitching in EMI lectures thanks to the benefits that this use brings to students. One noteworthy finding of the study is concerned with the EMI lecturers' perspectives of the use of codeswitching to L1. Aside from reasons connected to the students' limited English competence, EMI teachers believe that using L1 can assist students understand the terminology in both English and Vietnamese, which is particularly advantageous for students in their future professions in Vietnam. In comparison to other studies in the body of literature, this is seen as a novel finding because the other research did not address this rationale behind why EMI teachers use codeswitching when transferring content knowledge. Concerning the other major categories in the study, the use of teaching aids by EMI lecturers or other non-verbal behaviours like EMI lecturers' movement during EMI lessons have not been mentioned in the extant literature.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher revisits the most pertinent findings, discusses the implications, limitations and proposes some suggestions for further research.

8.1. Recapitulation of the findings

The study has provided the findings based on the four research questions focusing on the EMI lecturers' and students' perception of teaching and learning practices at the university, the actual EMI classroom interaction practices and their explanations for these interaction as well as the impact of the interaction on students' disciplinary learning and English abilities. The findings show lecturers' and students' positive motivations for EMI policy, benefits and challenges of EMI as well as other aspects. Finding related to classroom interaction practices show a teacher fronted style adopted in most EMI classes with the lecturers' and students' use of verbal and non-verbal actions. Lecturers' and students' views on the impacts of classroom interaction practices on students' cont learning and English proficiency differed significantly. In general, classroom interaction practices were mainly shaped by hidden dimensions in the participants' diverse and situated perceptions. EMI policy makers should be aware of the key stakeholders' perceptions in order to make right decisions on how to implement EMI from the macro to micro levels.

8.2. Implications of the study

8.2.1. Implications of the study

The findings of the current study provide some implications for EMI pedagogy, which aims to improve the classroom interaction in EMI courses, leading to students' better content learning and English proficiency.

8.2.2. Recommendations for Vietnamese HEIs undertaking EMI programs

The findings of the study have pointed out some problems in the implementation of EMI policy in a Vietnamese technical university. The recommendations are given to key stakeholders at the institution including EMI educational managers, EMI lecturers and students in order to contribute to enhancing the quality of EMI education. These recommendations and suggestions can be applied to other Vietnamese higher education institutions with similar contexts and conditions.

8.3. Limitations

The limitations of the study relate to the small number of participants (only 6 EMI lecturers and 35 EMI students). The number of participants in this study was determined by the theoretical saturation of the data acquired, similar to other qualitative studies. Another problem with the study and a barrier to the applicability of the results is the lack of demographic data from the participants. The employment of theoretical and purposive sampling techniques is another limitation. Thus, all the limitations of the study are concerned with the issue of generalizability and the interpretation of conclusions drawn from the data.

8.4. Suggestions for further research

It is necessary to conduct comparative studies to assess the advantages and drawbacks of various EMI models in higher educational institutions worldwide. More investigations should be conducted to examine multilingual/bilingual practices such as translanguaging/codeswitching, or the use of L1 by EMI lecturers and students in EMI classes in higher education institutions. More research should be done in terms of teaching methodology training provided for EMI lecturers to investigate appropriate

EMI pedagogy. Necessary language support for EMI students throughout EMI courses requires more investigations. Clear benchmarks for English competence for EMI have also not yet been established by research and in need for further studies.

8.5. Concluding remarks

This constructivist grounded study was set out to develop a general explanation of EMI classroom interaction practices based on the data analysis of classroom observations and intensive interviews with 6 lecturers and 35 students in a Vietnamese technical university. The findings show that participants' perceptions play a very significant role in shaping the interactions. Recommendations given by these key stakeholders can be taken into consideration to improve the quality of EMI classroom interaction for students' better content learning via the medium of English language in Vietnamese higher institutions.

THESIS-RELATED PUBLICATIONS

1. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha (2018). *Impacts of English as a Medium of Instruction on students' content learning and their English proficiency: A critical Review*. National ESP conference: ESP teaching and Learning in Vietnamese Higher Education: The Status Quo and the Directions. Banking Academy of Vietnam.
2. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha (2018). *Some challenges in English as a Medium of Instruction courses in higher education institutions*. 2018 International Graduate Research Symposium. University of Languages and International Studies, VNU.
3. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha (2019). *Exploring lecturers' and students' perceptions on the impacts of English as a medium of instruction in a Vietnamese technical university: A case study*. 2019 International Graduate Research Symposium. University of Languages and International Studies, VNU.
4. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha (2020). *Classroom interaction in English medium instruction in higher education institutions: A critical literature review*. 2020 International Graduate Research Symposium. University of Languages and International Studies, VNU.
5. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha (2021). *Review on approaches in grounded theory: A comparison of similarities and differences*. 2021 International Graduate Research Symposium. University of Languages and International Studies, VNU.
6. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha (2022). *Lecturers' perceptions of English medium instruction classroom interaction in a Vietnamese technical university*. 2022 International Graduate Research Symposium. University of Languages and International Studies, VNU.