

Nguyễn Duy Khang

Vĩnh Long Community College, Việt Nam
khangmekong2017@gmail.com

Today's teachers' CEFR competence in the classroom – a view of critical pedagogy in Vietnam

Abstract. This paper aims to investigate new perspectives about today's teachers' CEFR Competence¹ in the classroom under the view of critical pedagogy in Vietnam. The focus is on recognizing teachers' CEFR competence in their teaching practice and beliefs in the context of Vietnam when developing learners' CEFR competence. In light of pedagogical innovation and the social-adaptive divergence of English teaching and learning practices, various critical pedagogical perspectives would be analysed using the data collected from 13 Vietnamese teachers teaching learners with various CEFR goals with the instruments of a survey and semi-structured interviews. The data would be processed using Padilla's technique of unfolding matrix and then classified to be relevant to different categories of CEFR competence in teaching language in today's Vietnamese society. The findings would be considered in terms of types of teachers' CEFR competence in teaching to satisfy learners' goals in their learning. To some extent, teachers showed their unfamiliarity with or alienness to CEFR principles for teaching and learning English in which teachers were aware of and prepared themselves with new abilities, skills, and expectations to strengthen their language competence. The results of this study may be valuable for pedagogical trainers, educators, teachers, and teacher trainees of English at different levels of education and schools where learners represent a diversity of abilities and goals.

Keywords: language education; CEFR competence; English teaching and learning; EFL context; today's teachers' competence; English learning in Vietnam.

¹ CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference.

Introduction

In the context of Vietnam, English has been classified as a primary foreign language with *around 90% of learners learning this language*². In recent years, the importance of learning English has even been tied to the new demands of any courses, careers, or businesses. The development of English teaching and learning has been accelerated in accordance to globalization with legal and directed documents from the Vietnam Communist Party (VCP) emphasizing the new holistic educational reform³ such as Resolution 29, the national foreign languages project (Project 2020)⁴ and an updated version of this project to the year of 2025.

Although English teaching and learning has been given much attention and has somehow contributed considerably to the development of the tendency to learn English, a result of a non-standardized and regular assessment in the country has revealed ten serious problems, three of which follow:

- Sufficient attention has not been paid to quality assurance in English teaching and learning. Many tasks must be done in the future to put in place quality assurance and accreditation criteria and practices.
- It has been controversial in the Vietnamese context whether or not the two foreign languages should be taught in secondary school and children should start studying English earlier in primary school. A national project on foreign language study has been completed and presently shown out for public discussion.
- There has been an increasing trend to recognize English as a very important tool in national development, cooperation, and globalization. (Extracted from Worldwide Translation, 2007)

Along with the official contributions of the British Council, Cambridge English Language Assessment, and so on, the quality of English teaching and learners' demands as well have been significantly changed. In addition, as a turning point in the national foreign languages project, Vietnam has adopted the CEFR framework for English teaching, learning, and evaluation. A Vietnamese version of the framework for language competence with 6 levels has been approved and enacted by both the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Home Affairs to all levels of education

² Worldwide Translation (2017).

³ Vietnam Communist Party's (2013) Resolution 29.

⁴ The Vietnamese national foreign languages project 2020.

in Vietnam from kindergarten to higher education, including that of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers⁵. However, the notions of CEFR may not have been fully understood and applied into real teaching contexts among state-owned, private, and international schools or language centers.

In the meantime, teachers in general and English teachers specifically in Vietnam have been oppressing the learners with many standards or focusing on accuracy or immediate effects rather than promoting the use of real language functions to the learners (Nguyen, 2017). Consequently, it is worth examining if teachers recognize any standards for teachers of English as a foreign language in the CEFR.

A solution is recommended so that teachers of English can be aware of the future development of language teaching in Vietnam. Thus, the goal of the present case study is to examine how teachers of English understand their competence in the light of the CEFR, what they have been teaching for years to learners of English and how they perceive students' central roles.

Concurrently, the paper will clarify the concepts of teachers' CEFR competencies versus standards under the view of critical pedagogy.

A review of literature

Different standards are applied for classifying EFL teachers in Vietnam. Various competencies and standards have been employed by different institutions to classify Vietnamese EFL teachers without any clear unification. According to Merriam-Webster's definition, standards include criteria or qualifications established by an authority, an institution, a system, or *general consent as a model or example*. In any levels of education, certain standards are applied to teaching as models or units of measurement with specific criteria or structures.

In the case of education, standards thus serve as a point of reference and a way of ensuring consistency when needed, both in school and in life.

Kuhlman & Knežević (2014, p.7)

In their study, Seufert et al. (2005, p. 6–7) identify standards in education as (1) content standards, (2) indicators as pedagogical standards, (3)

⁵ Joint Circular 21-22-23/2015 and Joint Circular 36/2014 about standards for teachers in the educational system.

performance standards, and (4) program standards as indicators of quality. These standards have been combined, analyzed, adapted, and cited in TESOL guidelines as follows:

1. Content standards: Content knowledge is teacher candidates' knowledge of the content they plan to teach and their ability to explain important principles and concepts that are delineated in professional standards. This might include, for example, linguistics, language acquisition and development, and culture. Generally, there are two types of content standards:
 - a. Declarative knowledge consists of what candidates know, or knowledge of concepts and facts.
 - b. Procedural knowledge is what candidates know how to do.
2. Pedagogical standards: These standards focus on:
 - a. how to teach, how students learn
 - b. what is taught (the curriculum)
 - c. effective teaching strategies to impart the specialized knowledge of a subject area (e.g., planning, instruction, analysis, and evaluation)
 - d. students' diversity and on differing approaches to learning
 - e. how culture influences teaching and learning
 - f. what teachers need to know about students' preconceptions that must be engaged for effective learning
 - g. teachers' familiarity with standards-based instruction, assessment, and learning
3. Performance standards: Performance standards describe how well or to what extent:
 - a. standards are met
 - b. the criteria and evidence document that a standard has been met
 - c. standards demonstrate the level of performance expected to determine progress (this often includes scoring rubrics)
 - d. standards include exemplars of learners' work to help teachers align instruction
 - e. instruction and assessment are at the appropriate level of difficulty
 - f. standards lead to assessments aligned with content standards

Kuhlman & Knežević (2014, p. 7)

If EFL teachers adopt these aforementioned standards in their teaching, it would be fully compatible with the CEFR descriptors of the teachers' competencies. From that sense, professional standards should be examined

in comparison to CEFR competencies (Council of Europe, 2001) and defined with the following characteristics:\

Six levels of language proficiency that range from the A1 “breakthrough” level to the C2 “mastery” level by a set of descriptors that define language learning outcomes in actual language use.

The assessment accuracy is increased with clear descriptors defining standards of proficiency.

The CEFR is currently widely adopted, especially at the policy level and in the context of assessment.

Denies & Janssen (2016)

In Yoneoka's (2011, p. 89) research, the adoption of CEFR has been assured to be goals with a transparent and consistent framework for 25 different languages. However, in Vietnam, most private or international schools, centers, and institutions have applied different standards for quality assurance when hiring their teaching staff including those with diplomas or certificates issued by the British Council or Cambridge English Language Assessment. In other contexts in Vietnam, state schools and centers have used the frameworks issued by the Vietnamese government for standardizing EFL teachers and none of them is similar or related to the CEFR or even the EFL professional teaching standards (Kuhlman & Knežević, 2014) issued by TESOL International Association. However, although the Vietnamese project 2020 has certified a new set of standards for EFL teachers in line with the competencies for linguistic knowledge and skills set by the CEFR, it briefly demonstrates the requirements for EFL teachers in any English teaching conditions (see Table 1).

According to Fleckenstein, Leucht & Köller (2018, p. 2), “standardized tests for foreign language proficiency have been increasingly mapped onto the CEFR by standard-setting procedures”. With an increased usage in education, the CEFR becomes the guidelines for EFL teachers in many contexts including Vietnam for curriculum development, pedagogy, quality assurance, and assessment. However, an interesting finding from this study is that “teachers have not been extensively trained in using the CEFR, this is a rather encouraging finding” (Fleckenstein, Leucht & Köller 2018, pp. 9–10)

Table 1. The requirement for EFL teachers in Vietnam (Source: Government, adapted by the researcher)

Positions	Requirements
EFL teachers for early education to primary schools	B.A. or higher including or with a certificate of pedagogy and a certificate of language competence at B1
EFL teachers for secondary schools	B.A. or higher including or with a certificate of pedagogy and a certificate of language competence at B2
EFL teachers in high schools	B.A. or higher including or with a certificate of pedagogy and a certificate of language competence at C1
EFL teachers in higher education	B.A. or higher including or with a certificate of pedagogy and a certificate of language competence at C1
EFL teachers in international or private schools/ centers	Not any official records and the requirements depending on the demands on the quality of each institution, but usually IELTS* 6.0 or higher for different levels of learners and locations (city, suburb, or the countryside)

* International English Language Testing System

Teachers have not accessed or been trained thoroughly and systematically on CEFR-based materials, assessment, or even their self-evaluation towards their own competencies. As a result, CEFR training may extremely influence the EFL teachers' qualifications, characteristics, and their teaching. In some contexts, CEFR competencies may or may not satisfy or build up the capacity for the current teachers of English. The terminology of competence varies itself as the mastery of the subject matter, empathy, interaction, communicating skills, pedagogical skills, didactical skills, situational understanding, soft skills, motivation, social skills, knowledge of learners, oral presentation skills, creativity ability, and pedagogical knowledge (Ubani, 2012, p. 40). According to Ballantyne et al. (1998, p. 53), teacher competence has an important role in making decisions and positively or negatively affects the teacher's behavior, and teaching, and the learning process of the learners.

However, one well-known competence, which every Vietnamese teacher may possess, but does not exist in the CEFR is the competence of being an oppressor in traditional teaching. Therefore, if considering today's teachers' competence to "be an oppressor" (Freire, 2005), English teachers in Vietnam need training to abandon the oppressor's attitude in their teaching.

In addition, intercultural competence is nowadays important for teachers of English. According to Deardorff (2009, p. 6), this complex competence is an ambiguous concept with different important components of knowledge which requires deep and thorough comprehensions from the others' perspectives. It involves the skills and organizational ability to manage

interaction, to build the relationship, to communicate, to plan, and so on (Ballantyne et al., 1998, pp. 56–57).

Besides, the teachers may need to have social competence. This type of competence is compatible with the sociolinguistic competence in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) and described as the ability to understand the situations and make some logical decisions in one's learning and living related to the social issues. Magelinskaitė-Legkauskienė et al. (2018, p. 1) find that the learners encounter troubles in productive functioning at school in Norway. For that reason, if the teachers do not have the social competence to guide or facilitate their learners to overcome a variety of situations in their real life, more training for this competence should be organized and social competence should be added to CEFR guidelines or standards.

In some contexts, new teachers are expected to have the ability of mastering the knowledge and the linguistic competence as well as the competence of making accurate assessment of learners' capacity and also of their own professionalism. According to the CEFR guidelines, there has been more focus on assessment, the pedagogical possibilities, the levels of references, the language learners' or users' competencies (the competencies for teachers could be extracted or generalized from the learners' ones), the issues of learning and teaching languages, the tasks and roles in the language teaching environment, and the diversified conditions and curriculum. A set of competencies has not been prepared for EFL teacher education neither by the Council of Europe or any official agents in other countries.

The CEFR (2001, p. 193) equates the competence of giving fair and consistent assessment with the following qualitative categories: turn-taking strategies, co-operating strategies, asking for clarification, fluency, flexibility, coherence, thematic development, precision, sociolinguistic competence, general range, vocabulary range, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary control, and phonological control. Although these categories have not been allocated to the teachers' competencies, teachers of English as any users of the language should be aware of them so as to ensure good training and promote appropriate learning conditions for the learners. Prominently, the competence of multicultural education for classroom interaction should be recognized widely when this language is spoken by not only the native speakers of English but also the majority of non-native speakers. Wiseman and Fox (2010, p. 27) emphasize the competence in multicultural education as follows:

When most teachers had the opportunity to consider a broad view of culture and then apply it to their professional contexts, their understandings of teaching and learning in the classroom was enhanced.

Wiseman and Fox (2010, p. 35)

Finally, another prominent competence, mentioned in the CEFR is the competence of using ICT (Kirschner et al., 2008, p. 435). The pedagogical competence of using ICT may facilitate the process of teaching and learning and enhance the capability of educational innovation and practice. If EFL teachers recognize how fast the world is changing and how it affects education, the art of teaching and learning English should be connected with the use of technology as one of the most effective teaching aids and even as a source of language input around the world. In research carried out by Kuusisto et al. (2016, pp. 12–13), new technology and digital life have forced the teachers to change their attitude to different values, knowledge, and philosophies. It is essential for any teacher to be confident with a new set of competences towards ethics and life demands in this digital era.

The methodological concepts

The study focuses on examining whether the EFL teachers in the context of Vietnam have mastered or seriously taken into account the notions of CEFR for their understandings and daily teaching practices. The research aimed at answering the question:

What are the EFL teachers' practice and beliefs about their CEFR competencies?

In order to answer this question, this case study was conducted with qualitative data from a structured interview with 13 EFL teachers from an international language center in a province in the remote area of the Mekong Delta. These teachers have been teaching English from 6 months to 10 years. The interviews were carried out in Vietnamese, the native language of both the interviewer and interviewees. This helped the interviewees fully express their opinion about the reality of their teaching regarding the notions of the CEFR. In addition, the quantitative data were collected from an online survey using google documents given to the same participants. However, interviewees were anonymous and this contributed to the reliability of the study.

The data from the interviews was coded and framed using Nguyen (2018) – the author's new application of Paddila's (1994) *techniques of unfolding matrix to locate the answers for the research question*⁶. The interviewed data were translated into English by the author and checked by one of his colleagues who specialized in English teaching.

The findings

The findings from the interviews and the survey have shown different perceptions about the competence of EFL teachers in teaching learners of English. It seems that Vietnamese EFL teachers notice more competencies than the authors of the CEFR. English teaching in accordance to CEFR describes the framework of language proficiency from which the essential competencies for the teachers have been retrieved. As discussed in the review of literature, the teachers of English may need varied sorts of competencies including (1) the standards of content, pedagogy, and performance from TESOL guidelines, (2) the competence of evaluating the learners' language performance, understanding learners, coping with the multicultures and plurilingual conditions, activating the pedagogical possibilities for different levels of references, and being able to promote the language learners or users' competences, (3) the competencies of mastering the subject matter, empathy, interaction, communicating skills, teaching skills, situational understanding, soft skills, motivation, social skills, knowledge of learners, oral presentation skills, creativity ability, and pedagogical knowledge, and (4) the possible competences from the critical pedagogy of not being an oppressor, making decisions, having intercultural knowledge, being confident with social competence, and having the ability of using ICT in EFL teaching. From the analysis of this case study, Vietnamese EFL teachers shared their language teaching competences based on the CEFR descriptors. These competences have been collected from the teachers' own teaching experience and working duties.

⁶ The original version of Padilla's (1994) unfolding matrix was used to frame to direct the collecting data process. This new application of using Padilla's technique was for the post collecting process. It was consulted to Prof. Raymond Padilla for the ideas and it was agreed to be an original application of this technique.

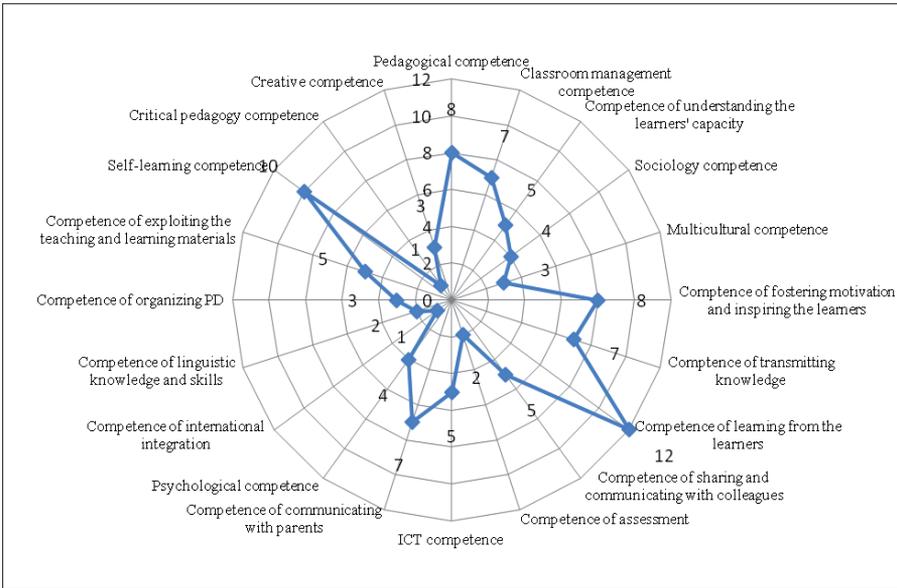


Figure 1. The distribution of Vietnamese teachers' competence in EFL teaching in accordance to CEFR

As can be seen from Figure 1, the today EFL teachers of English in the research context should involve around 20 types of competencies. Of these, the top competencies should be the peaks in the figure including (1) competence of learning from the learners, (2) self-learning competence, (3) the competence of fostering motivation and inspiring the learners, and (4) pedagogical competence. This figure also emphasizes the teachers' perception about their essential competencies in their EFL teaching career. The lowest attention was on two competencies of (1) international integration and (2) critical pedagogy. The highest attention was on the competence of learning from the learners.

If searching for the CEFR competencies as reviewed in the literature, the social competence, multicultural competence, the competence of assessment, and that of linguistic knowledge and skills were not commonly classified as important for the EFL teachers with less than three votes out of 13 from the survey.

Generally, the data presented some featured competencies of today teachers of English. After the analysis process, it is obvious that the teachers self-reflected on the competencies for their careers. In the following section, the writing will focus on discussing the findings about: (1) the important competence to Vietnamese EFL teachers, (2) the competence of being

humorous in the classroom, and (3) the competence of making changes from teachers' roles to students' ones.

The major important competence of Vietnamese EFL teachers

The data showed that Vietnamese EFL teachers had their own thoughts about the competences for their careers. In this research context, they shared their important competences in teaching English for CEFR standards.

A major difference was found between the qualitative data and quantitative data. From the qualitative data, one of the most important competences of an EFL teacher would be the competence of self-learning. Most interviewees believed that the ability of self-learning would allow them to improve their skills, knowledge, and teaching demands. The competence of learning would open their minds and give them chances to communicate and share their teaching ideas with their colleagues without the issue of losing face which is a feature of Asian culture. This competence would also help them learn from the materials, the program, the scales, the requirements for language teaching in the CEFR. Their teaching would be more compatible with the new demands of the learners and the society. In addition, the second most important competence was the resistance of being an oppressor. In most teaching contexts in Vietnam, although most courses or trainings target the learners to achieve the language capacity as described in the CEFR, teachers tend to design their teaching in accordance to their oppression of the learners. The oppressing signals were found in how the lessons should be organized, what materials should be exploited, and how the linguistic performance should be recognized. The qualitative data demonstrates that EFL teachers should not be oppressors in the classroom. However, the quantitative data indicated three most important competences, i.e. pedagogical competence, classroom management, and self-learning competence. Pedagogical competence was about the ability to create the learning activities and build a language learning environment for learners. The competence of classroom management was about the skills or techniques to organize or facilitate the teaching tasks so that the lessons can be taught effectively. Self-learning competence would be also important as one of the lifelong learning requirements for any teachers.

The pedagogical competence linked many interesting stories from the interviewee's teaching experience with one main untested fact. This untested fact shows that "*the pedagogical competence was not learned during their university study but they started to recognize their paths of professional development and the demands of changes in every lesson for different learners*"

needs” [this idea was found in all 13 interviews]. The working and teaching environment in a private center that forces them to use English as the main medium of instruction and the high demands of the learners’ needs presented in the CEFR have led them to the notion of pedagogical competence. This competence is totally different from what could be studied and practiced at the college or university levels because they have been facing different generations of language learners. The learners in the digital era need different types of teachers for their learning rather than those who have been embedded too long with a fixed mindset during the domination of traditional education of the oppressors (Freire, 2005). The learners need to be listened to and their needs or learning capacity should be the main attention in any classroom. Teaching EFL in Vietnam these days requires different sorts of pedagogical competence. Teachers should be able to understand the learners’ central roles in learning, experiencing, developing, and acquiring the language. That explains why most Vietnamese EFL teachers in the research context voted for this competence to be the most important one (9 votes out of 13). Some extracts about the importance of pedagogical competence are as follows:

A teacher of English must have good language knowledge, skills, devotion in education, and the pedagogical competence. Pedagogical competence is important because it helps the teachers to be the teachers, not the machines. [VA01M]

Teaching methodology has been changed and my teaching competence is totally different from my teachers at the university. We care more about the learners, their language development, and the requirements for the tests from English Cambridge. For that reason, pedagogical competence is like a soft skill for teachers to do the better job in their teaching. Without it, learners may not want to study with us. [VA09Y]

Pedagogical competence is not learned but acquired or emancipated by the teachers’ own levels of teaching experience. I need this competence for my teaching, my preparation, my methods to work with children, my ways to share with them or guide them in their learning, and my reactions during the class activities. [VA11T]

Pedagogical competence has become the new strength of EFL teachers in Vietnam and has turned out to be one of the criteria for recruitment in private sectors. It is also compatible with Newby (2012) for the purposes of making didactic competencies explicit and transparent. This competence allows teachers to be able to organize lessons, solve problems, design activities,

be flexible and creative in many situations, understand the learners, nurture their language improvement, inspire the learners, involve all no matter their ability, and be a good listener in the classroom.

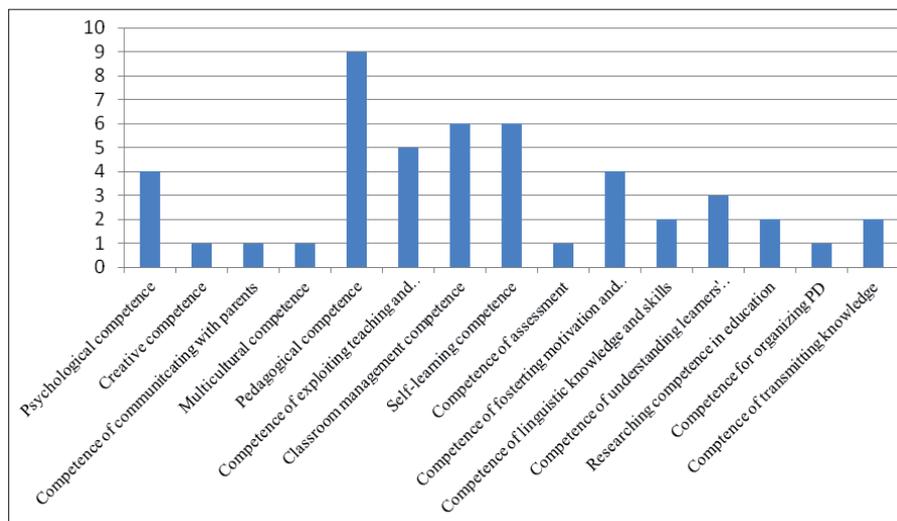


Figure 2. The important competencies to Vietnamese EFL teachers

In Figure 2, it is interesting that Vietnamese EFL teachers identified (1) competence of assessment, (2) creative competence, (3) competence of communicating with parents, (4) multicultural competence, and (5) competence of organizing PD (professional development) as the least important competencies in their teaching. It is unexplainable that the teachers do not really pay attention to the CEFR although their learners exams organized by Cambridge English Language Assessment which are based on the Framework. Out of 13 responses, only three of the answers mentioned the six levels of English proficiency as described in CEFR while the rest could not give the appropriate notions. This finding is also compatible with the data from the interviews.

The competence of being humorous in the classroom

This competence of being humorous in the classroom is not documented in any TESOL guidelines or the CEFR features or requirements. However, Vietnamese EFL teachers add this unfamiliar competence to the CEFR principles for language teaching and learning.

This competence seems at odds with language teaching in the traditions of Vietnamese education where the teachers are the transmitter of the language knowledge and evaluation goes through the system of principles in *banking education* (Freire, 2005). In that context, there is usually one way of communication and teaching. No humorous contents or acts should be involved. However, in the current trends of English teaching with the massive influence of the CEFR, the philosophy should be changed. The research participants believed that the learners can learn and develop their language skills through interaction (Barnes, 1976). A sense of humor in the language classroom may encourage them to learn more effectively. This idea has been confirmed by all 13 interviewees. They have all tried to bring fun moments to their classroom. These humorous acts could be from the teachers' teaching, the exaggeration of something happening in the class, the activities, and even the teachers' intentional ideas for making the class fun. The reasons for bringing humor to their classroom can be found in the following opinions:

My learners usually laugh in the class. They sometimes laugh at their friends' ideas, my different use of language, my voice, or even some fun things from the lessons. [VA15M]

I think I make the class laugh and learn. I sometimes prepare with attention the humorous moment for them and act for them to be fun. [VA04N]

Sometimes when the lessons are too difficult or boring, I organized some relax minutes to the class. I use my facial expression or my voice to create something fun for them and then we continue the lessons. It always works better everytime. [VN28D]

Although this competence was classified important by all research participants through the interviews, no signal was found from the survey. The open question was included but no answers were collected. This discrepancy illustrates the possible values of different methods of data collection so that one type of data would support or contribute to the missing parts of the other. In other words, the competence of being humorous in the language classroom is unexpectedly important because it may contribute to the process of language teaching and learning.

The competence for making changes

Another competence not discussed in CEFR, but as important as an urgent call for any Vietnamese EFL teachers, is the competence of making changes. Making changes was meant to reflect the teachers' ability to renovate their teaching, accept new facts and ideas, incorporate new trends, apply alternatives in every new lesson, or *transcend themselves in every new lesson of their teaching* (Biesta, 2013). Again, all the interviewees expressed their viewpoints about the ability to make changes in their teaching. They tried to convince the author that their teaching tendency has been modified from less teacher-talking to more learners-talking or learning. All participants highlighted this change as one of the vital competencies for a teacher of English in Vietnam in the era of information and fast technology transformation.

The participants nominated the roles of the ability to change or to make changes in teaching languages in accordance to the new demands of the society. The teachers with an open mind would be able to accept or be tolerant with different ideas or confrontations. From that, they can learn more, try more ways of teaching, discuss or share their "ignorant ideas" (Ranciere, 1991) with colleagues or educators in other contexts, and "listen to understand"⁷ the learners' capacity easier. One of the interviewees commented as follows:

Any good teachers of English, regarding of any official standards and tested qualifications, should be aware of the competence of changing or making changes. Without this competence, teaching becomes harder, the lessons become less interesting, and the learners become more boring [VA26K]

Making changes would be limited to the changes in how the teacher understands what language competence means, its sources, and its properties; how the teachers would design, teach, and reflect in every lesson; how the teachers would like to be different or give alternative teaching with or without the aids of educational tools such as computer-assisted tools, applications for learning, TED education, google and so on; and how they added diversity to learners' learning in every lesson. In fact, the data from the interviews revealed that the teachers in this research site would like to share their openness and their competence of changing or making changes for themselves and for their careers as language instructors.

⁷ The ability to observe, to care, to listen, and to nurture for understanding the learners

Conclusions

An obvious limitation of the study is a small amount of participants, i.e. only 13 Vietnamese EFL teachers from a private education sector. Consequently, the results may not be representative of all EFL teachers in the Vietnamese educational system. However, the new ideas of the teachers in the research context have revealed some new trends of the CEFR requirements in this country. The CEFR requires some sort of competences for the teachers and learners to use as references for their teaching and learning. The Vietnamese government has some official standards for EFL teachers, but they are usually different from the descriptors in the CEFR.

The findings in this research have shown that more attention should be paid to enhance teachers' essential capacity to fulfill the requirements and standards in the CEFR.

Competencies of EFL teachers not discussed in CEFR and useful in the context of Vietnam include pedagogical skills, the competence of being humorous and the competence of making changes.

However, the oddness of these perceptions was synthesized from experienced EFL teachers who have been teaching English to the learners targeting the mastery of different levels of the language from A1 to C2 in accordance with the CEFR. The values of these competences would foster the teachers to change their mind, their teaching, their lessons, their understandings, and even their approach or environment to be the new appropriate teachers for different type of today learners. In this research context, the competence of learning is always the most important one. They have urged themselves to learn from the learners, their colleagues, new teaching and learning materials and channels, new demands, new technology, and even the new facts in any future.

No matter how the Vietnamese government builds and operates the system of plurilingual testing, the teachers and the learners in the private educational sectors, like in this research, will always target the qualifications from the Council of Europe, the CEFR. For that reason, the teachers will always need a variety of competences plus those in this study.

References

- Ballantyne, R., Thompson, R. & Taylor, P. (1998). "Principals' Conceptions of Competent Beginning Teachers." *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 26(1): 51–64.

- Barnes, D. (1976). *From Communication to Curriculum*. Penguin Education. Penguin Books Ltd, Middlesex, England.
- Biesta, G. (2013). *The beautiful risks of education*. Colorado, USA: Paradigm Publishers.
- Council of Europe. (2001). *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Strasbourg.
- Deardorff, K. D. (2009). "Exploring interculturally competent teaching in social sciences classrooms." *Enhancing Learning in the Social Sciences*, 2(1): 1–18.
- Denies, K. & Janssen, R. (2016). "Country and Gender Differences in the Functioning of CEFR-Based Can-Do Statements as a Tool for Self-Assessing English Proficiency." *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 13(3): 251–276.
- Fleckenstein, J., Leucht, M. & Köller, O. (2018). "Teachers' Judgement Accuracy Concerning CEFR Levels of Prospective University Students." *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 1–12.
- Freire, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. (30-year anniversary publication). The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc: New York.
- Joint Circular 21-22-23/2015/TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV dated September 16, 2015 about the standards for different teaching positions in Vietnam and the Joint Circular 36/2014/TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV dated November 28, 2014 about the standards for teaching positions in higher education.
- Kirschner, P., Wubbels, T., & Brekelmans (2008). "Benchmarks for teacher education programs in the pedagogical use of ICT." In J. Voogt & G. Knezek (Eds.), *International handbook of information technology in primary and secondary education*. (pp. 435–447) New York: Springer Science/Business Media.
- Kuhlman, N. & Knežević, B. (2014). *The TESOL guides for developing EFL professional teaching standards*. Retrieved on June 10, 2018 at <https://www.tesol.org/docs/default-source/papers-and-briefs/tesol-guidelines-for-developing-efl-professional-teaching-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=6>.
- Kuusisto, E., Gholami, K. & Tirri, K. (2016). "Finnish and Iranian teachers' views on their competence to teach purpose." *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 1–15, Doi: 10.1080/02607476.2016.1226553.
- Magelinskaitė-Legauskienė et al. (2018). "Teacher perceptions of student social competence and school adjustment in elementary school." *Cogent Psychology*, 5:1–15.
- Newby, D. (2012). "Supporting good practice in teacher education through the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages." *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 6 (3), 207–218.
- Nguyễn, D. K. (2018). "New Application of Raymond Padilla's Unfolding Matrix in Framing Qualitative Data and the Follow-up Activities for Educational Research." *Journal of International Qualitative Methods*. Available at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/metrics/10.1177/1609406918786820>.
- Nguyễn, D. K. (2017). "Action research about students' significant learning in higher education: one of the valuable tools for pedagogical professional development." *VNU Journal of Science: Education Research*. 33 (2). 39–51.

- Padilla, R. (1994). „The unfolding matrix: a technique for qualitative data acquisition and analyses.” *Studies of Qualitative Methodology*, 4: 273–285.
- Prime Minister (2008). Approvals for implementing the national foreign languages project in the national education system from 2008 to 2020.
- Rancière, J. (1991). *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*. Stanford University Press. California.
- Seufert, P., Sherman, R., Amador, N., Condelli, L., Silver-Pacuilla, H., Tetteyfo, S., Faller, B., Knight, L., & Ward, K. (2005). *A process guide for establishing state adult education content standards*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research. Retrieved on June 11, 2018 from http://www.adultedcontentstandards.ed.gov/ReferenceFiles/Guide/Adult_Education_Process_Guide.pdf.
- Ubani, M. (2012). “What characterizes the competent RE teacher? Finnish student teachers’ perceptions at the beginning of their pedagogical training.” *British Journal of Religious Education*, 34(1): 35–50.
- Vietnam Communist Party. (2013). Resolution 29-NQ/TW dated 04/11/2013 issued by the Xith Vietnamese Communist Party on the 8th Congress about renovating basically and holistically education and training.
- Wiseman, A. & Fox, K. R. (2010). “Supporting Teachers’ Development of Cultural Competence Through Teacher Research.” *Action in Teacher Education*, 32(4): 26–37.
- Worldwide Translation. (2017). *The Role of English in Vietnam’s Foreign Language Policy: A Brief History*. Retrieved on June 10, 2018 at <http://www.worldwide.rs/role-english-vietnams-foreign-language-policy-brief-history/>.
- Yoneoka, J. (2011). “From CEFR to CAFR: Place for a Common Asian Framework of Reference for Languages in the East Asian Business World?” *Asian Englishes*, 14(2), 86–91.