



Title of Project:

Teacher Support Needs of EFL Teachers at Foreign Language Centers

Researcher:

Nhu Hien Luong Phan
The University of New South Wales
n.luongphan@student.unsw.edu.au



Nhu Hien Luong Phan

Research Supervisor:

Prof. Anne Burns
The University of New South Wales

Project Summary:

In educational research, it is widely acknowledged that teachers face a variety of challenges and need substantial support in their teaching career. This phenomenon is of interest in the field of English language teaching (ELT) as little research has been conducted into the range of challenges encountered and support needs expected from the perspectives of teachers, both “non-native English-speaking teachers” (NNETs) and “native English-speaking teachers” (NETs). The phenomenon becomes a critical issue when teachers are central to improving English language education reform (Yook, 2010). Noticeably, the setting of Foreign Language Centers (FLCs) where learners worldwide can develop the hoped-for communication skills (Wedell, 2011) has remained under investigation. The primary aim of the study is to explore and to compare and contrast the challenges and support needs of NNETs and NETs teaching at private and public FLCs. The central tenet of the investigation is to identify a multifaceted teacher support needs framework for ELT settings. Employing a multiple case study, the data collection techniques comprised policy document analysis and 43 semi-structured interviews with teachers and educational leaders across public and private FLCs. The study argues that in a time of educational change, support models for teachers’ ongoing professional development should be incorporated with other support factors such as administrative, emotional and personal ones. The study also puts forward implications for teachers, educational leaders and policy makers. Insights into better educational leadership practices and policies supporting and retaining qualified teachers in reform implementation in Vietnam and similar contexts are discussed.