



Original Article

# Vietnamese Teachers' Attitudes Toward English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and Classroom EFL Teaching Practices

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**Abstract:** This paper reports high school teachers' attitudes toward English as a lingua franca (ELF) and their classroom EFL teaching practices in a province in Vietnam. This mixed-methods study involved 109 high school teachers from 11 high schools in answering the questionnaires, and 22 of them were invited for semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that high school teachers had positive attitudes toward ELF in three attitude components, including cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes. Additionally, they integrated activities for the promotion of ELF to their students in relation to eight sub-variables from cultural knowledge, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar to four language skills of students. Although facing difficulties in designing activities for ELF promotion, high school teachers still tried their best to introduce the existence of ELF and help their students accessible to the use of ELF in language learning. This study featured some limitations, but it can be of reference for the research context and other similar ones.

**Keywords:** Attitude, ELF, high school teacher, mixed methods study, teaching practice.

## 1. Introduction

English as a lingua franca (ELF) has been proved to hold a dominant position in many areas including education [1]. Graddol [2] opines that English tends to be widely used for business outside the borders of European

countries. Plus, the ASEAN Charter in 2009 stated that the working language of ASEAN is English [3], which means that English is a communication tool for ASEAN to connect to other international organizations. To a broader extent, Zikmundová [1] asserts that due to the rise in international travel, a uniting language becomes necessary to manage transportation, saves lives as well as operates international airplanes and ships; that is why English has

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been a worldwide lingua franca in air and sea transportation. Nevertheless, the global expansion of ELF in the world has raised a big question in language teaching and learning. That is, whether ELF should be seen in the same way as English as a second/foreign language is being taught. In countries where English is not the mother tongue, English is mainly used for international communication of the majority of the population, so internal communicative functions and sociopolitical status in the use of a language receive more support [4].

In Vietnam, the demand for English has become more and more heated over the past years, and one of the main causes of the changes in the status of English is the accession as the official member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2007 and the ASEAN economic community (AEC) in 2015 [5, 6]. Another factor is the open-door policy for foreign investment for the skilled workforce with good language communicative competence for the deeper and wider international and developmental process. According to Vu [7], the requirement of English competence is for all professional employment in Vietnam, and the number of people using English around the country has been increasing at a high speed. Those significant signals have urgently created changes in language teaching and learning in Vietnam to train Vietnamese young people to be better at English communication skills as well as more confident in using English outside the classroom [8, 9]. A great number of detailed measures have been taken by the government and the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) of Vietnam to enhance Vietnamese young people's communicative competence in English. Especially, the Decision No. 1400/QĐ-TTg "National Foreign Language Project scheme 2008 to 2020 Period" was issued in 2008 [10]. The main aim of this project is to set requirements for graduate students to be able to use English for effective and appropriate communications and function as global citizens. Accordingly, the English language teaching and learning have been positively changed.

In the context of Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, based on the MOET's National Foreign Languages Project, period 2017 - 2025, Ba Ria-Vung Tau Education and Training Department has held training courses for teachers of English and instructed them to apply innovative and creative ways of teaching to motivate students to use English. Although the majority of students prefer standard English to ELF, teachers should initiate using ELF and applying it into their classrooms within the context of English as an international language, a global language, and a lingua franca in an attempt to help students to be familiar to a variety of Englishes. With the aforementioned rationale, this study endeavors to explore to investigate ELF and its incorporation of ELF in language teaching and learning in terms of teachers' attitudes and classroom teaching practices. The study raises the two following questions:

- i) What are high school teachers' attitudes toward ELF in Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province;
- ii) What are high school teachers' classroom ELF teaching practices in Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province.

## 2. Literature Review

The term attitude can be defined as an individual's positive or negative reactions to a particular thing or event [11-13]. It has three main components, namely affective, cognitive and behavioral attitudes. The affective attitude refers to an individual's feelings, emotions and moods about a particular thing or event [14, 15]. The cognitive attitude refers to beliefs, thoughts and attributes about a particular thing or event [16]. The behavioral attitude is about the response to a particular thing or event [17]. Within the scope of this study, teacher attitude is defined as teacher's reaction to the ELF in an EFL context, and it includes three components, viz. affective, cognitive and behavioral attitudes.

Scholars [18-22] have indicated that the teaching practice of ELF features in some significant ways. Smit [22] proposes that using materials, sharing experiences, using audio or visual means, self-learning, seminars, exploring

the value of pair work, group work, etc. are what teachers should do in ELF classrooms. Borg [19] states that the choice of activities during the ELF lessons has a great impact on students. However, teachers' decision is dependent on a set of ideologies that teachers hold about their students as well as pedagogical practices [20]. Concerning the structures of the lesson, Jenkins, Cogo, and Dewey [21] show the differences in the lesson plan of the ELF classrooms. Instead of following the basic structure with pre-teaching, while teaching and post-teaching parts, ELF should focus more on extensive oral interactions with classroom activities such as group work, pair work, presentation, and so on in order to increase the incorporation among students. Additionally, the materials such as coursebooks, and curriculum also need to be designed in an ELF lesson plan; especially, the materials are proposed to have practical examples of how to incorporate the view that English is the language for international communication within ELF classrooms [23]. Relating to the choice of aids, Nalliveetil and Ali [24] affirm that the combination of textbooks with audio and video as supplementary resources for classroom language learning activities helps provide motivation and increase inspiration among students. Lessons taught with the help of technological aids are viewed as an effective technique that teachers should conduct so that ELF classrooms are more interesting and inspiring to students because the sounds and images attached in the learning activities make the teaching-learning process effective and attractive.

The way teachers give feedback on the students' mistakes also makes a huge influence on students in their learning. Negative feedback may not totally correct students' mistakes but reduce their production as participation, and feedback should be selective so as not to prevent students' attempt to communicate activities [25]. According to Al-Hasnawi [26], when reaching a certain level, students may have a sense of self-correction strategy which helps them avoid mistakes that might repeatedly appear in similar communicative

situations. Classroom management is of great importance in building effective ELF classrooms because teachers with good classroom management skills can create a positive classroom environment, meet classroom expectations and reinforce appropriate behavior as well as correct inappropriate behaviors skillfully [27].

Prior studies have indicated that the focus of ELF has been conducted in different contexts from various aspects. Kaur [28] did a study on teachers' attitudes toward ELF was carried out in Malaysia. Seventy - two participants from a teacher-training course took part in responding questionnaires. The results of the study revealed that native English accents were more favorable than non-native English accents although they were exposed to ELF in their training curriculum. In the context of Europe, Soruc [29] conducted a study to explore the practices and perceptions of non-native English - speaking teachers from five countries including Turkish, Italian, Egyptian, Germany and China. The questionnaires and interviews were used for data collection. The results revealed that most of the teachers preferred to use native speaker norms rather than features associated with ELF. In the context of Vietnam, Ngo [18] investigated Vietnamese teachers' and students' perceptions of ELF and found out the rising concern in the application of ELF to language classrooms in Vietnam. Twenty-five teachers and 100 students participated in answering the online questionnaires and Skype interviews. The findings showed that most of the participants understood that there was a high increase in the spread of English all over the world as well as its important role in Vietnam. Ho [30] carried out a study to examine teachers' understandings of ELF in terms of vocabulary, pragmatics, linguistics and its speakers as well as their judgment in integrating ELF in their classroom. The questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used for data collection. The results presented that teachers' perceptions of ELF, advantages and proposed ways of ELF incorporation in ELF classes were comparatively good. Especially, the majority of

those teachers preferred incorporating ELF through books and other published materials or widely recognized sources of knowledge such as seminars. The previous studies show the lack of focus on high school teachers' attitudes toward ELF and their classroom ELF teaching practices. Therefore, this current study aims to fill the research gap by examining the teachers' attitudes toward ELF as well as their classroom ELF teaching practices.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Setting and Participants

This mixed-methods study which underpinned by the pragmatic worldview was conducted to explore EFL teachers' attitudes toward ELF and their classroom ELF teaching practices from 11 high schools in Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province. The high schools were both public and private, and most of them were equipped with different types of facilities (e.g., computers, projectors, interactive boards) for the purposes of promoting the quality of teaching and learning. English was the compulsory subject, and some private schools had extra-courses taught in English such as sciences, arts, and social sciences. Regarding the research participants, 109 high school teachers of English were conveniently sampled from 11 high schools in Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, Vietnam. Among 109 teachers, 8.3% of them had under 5 years of teaching, 17.4% teachers had under 10 years of teaching, 37.6% teachers had 15 years of teaching and 36.7% teachers had more than 15 years of teaching. Especially, 19 teachers had a Master's degree, accounting for 17.4%, and 90 teachers had a bachelor's degree, making up 82.6%. Besides, the number of teachers having ever traveled abroad was 42, accounting for 38.5%. Of 109 teachers answering questionnaires, 20 teachers were invited for semi-structured interviews on a volunteering basis.

#### 3.2. Research Instruments

This study employed two research instruments, namely questionnaire and

semi-structured interview, for data collection. The questionnaire includes two parts, namely personal information and questionnaire content. The questionnaire content adapted from Smit's [22] and Jenkin's [31] study consists of 40 items divided into two parts: Part I (24 items with a 5-point Likert scale: *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*) and Part II (16 items with 5-point Likert scale: *Never* to *Always*). Part I is to explore the attitudes of the teachers toward ELF in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, four English skills, and grammar, while Part II asked about teachers' classroom ELF teaching practices in terms of introducing ELF knowledge and other activities. The Cronbach's alpha of part I and part II is 0.82 and 0.80, respectively. This means that the reliability of the questionnaire is relatively high. The semi-structured interview was designed to triangulate the collected data from questionnaires. Three main interview questions were formed to get insights into the reasons for different participants' attitudes toward ELF and their classroom teaching practices.

#### 3.3. Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis

Before the main study proceeded, the research instruments had been piloted. In order to ensure a consistent understanding of the participants, the questionnaire was designed in English and then translated into Vietnamese. The questionnaires were administered to 150 teachers in person, and it took them around 25-30 minutes to finish the questionnaires. Among 150 copies administered, 109 copies of the questionnaire were returned and accepted. Based on teachers' willingness, 20 teachers were invited for one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Each interview lasted around 20 minutes. All interviews were carried out in Vietnamese and recorded with the permission of the interviewees for later analysis.

Regarding data analysis, the SPSS software was used to process data from questionnaires in terms of descriptive statistics, i.e., Mean (M) and Standard deviation (SD). The interval mean scores are interpreted as 1.00 - 1.80: Strongly

Disagree/Never; 1.81 - 2.60: Disagree/Seldom; 2.61 - 3.40: Neutral/Sometimes; 3.41 - 4.20: Agree/Often; 4.21 - 5.00: Strongly agree/Always. Meanwhile, the qualitative data were analyzed using the content analysis approach. The interviewees were coded from T1, T2 to T20. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the qualitative data analysis, intra-rating was applied.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Results

#### 4.1.1. High School Teachers' Attitudes Toward ELF

Table 1 illustrates the overall result of high school teachers' attitudes toward ELF in three aspects. The overall mean score of the teachers' attitudes toward ELF is 4.13 (out of 5). To put it differently, the teachers had positive attitudes toward ELF. Particularly, the mean score of affective attitudes is the highest ( $M=4.17$ ;  $SD=0.61$ ), followed by cognitive attitudes ( $M=4.15$ ,  $SD=0.68$ ), while the lowest mean score ( $M=4.06$ ,  $SD=0.62$ ) belongs to the behavioral attitudes. It can be understood that teachers generally not only had good knowledge of ELF and expressed their strong preference for ELF but also were willing to help their students have a good understanding of ELF.

Table 1. High school teachers' attitudes toward ELF

	Content	N = 109	
		M	SD
1	Cognitive attitudes	4.15	0.68
2	Affective attitudes	4.17	0.61
3	Behavioral attitudes	4.06	0.62
<b>Average</b>		<b>4.13</b>	<b>0.64</b>

Teachers' attitudes toward ELF in terms of cognitive attitudes

As can be seen from Table 2, the results revealed the attitudes of teachers toward ELF in terms of cognitive attitudes. The participants strongly agreed that there was a considerable increase in students' cultural knowledge of other countries in the world (item A1:  $M=4.78$ ,  $SD=0.41$ ). Also, to other aspects of ELF,

participants perceived that pronunciation (item A2:  $M=4.35$ ,  $SD=0.65$ ), vocabulary (item A3:  $M=4.29$ ,  $SD=0.69$ ), listening skill (item A4:  $M=4.21$ ,  $SD=0.57$ ), speaking skill (item A5:  $M=3.94$ ,  $SD=0.74$ ), reading skill (item A6:  $M=4.15$ ,  $SD=0.70$ ), writing skill (item A7:  $M=3.93$ ,  $SD=0.84$ ), and grammar (item A8:  $M=3.56$ ,  $SD=0.78$ ) could be crucially important to ELF. It can be noted that teachers highly evaluated the teaching ELF in their classrooms because the students' cultural knowledge, pronunciation, skills as well as grammatical knowledge would be more enriched.

Table 2. High school teachers' attitudes toward ELF in terms of cognitive attitudes

Items	N = 109	
	M	SD
A1. ELF can help enrich my students' cultural knowledge of other countries in the world.	4.78	0.41
A2. ELF can help my students be familiar to different English accents in the world.	4.35	0.65
A3. ELF can help enrich my students' vocabulary in relation to many aspects in real life.	4.29	0.69
A4. The knowledge of ELF can improve my students' listening skills when being exposed to different varieties of English.	4.21	0.57
A5. The knowledge of ELF can help my students interact with others from different cultural backgrounds effectively and appropriately.	3.94	0.74
A6. ELF can improve my students my students' reading skill because of the increase in their vocabulary and background knowledge.	4.15	0.70
A7. ELF can help my students use written forms with from different cultural background effectively and appropriately.	3.93	0.84
A8. ELF can help my students to express their ideas freely in terms of grammar.	3.56	0.78
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>0.68</b>

The qualitative data collected from the interviews were taken into consideration in order to attain in-depth information on teachers' attitudes toward ELF in terms of cognitive attitudes. It was found out that high school teachers had a good understanding of ELF and its benefits to students' language learning. They shared their thoughts as follows:

i) One of the most special things that ELF brought to my students was the students' familiarity to different English accents, which was really good for them in real communication outside the classroom (T9);

ii) That my students had chances to listen to recordings from different varieties of English was a great thing for them because this could make their listening skills better day by day (T11).

Furthermore, the qualitative results revealed that high school teachers knew the importance as well as the influence of ELF on students in their classroom; especially, they appreciated the improvements in speaking and listening skills, students' knowledge of culture as well as vocabulary. Regarding reading and writing skills, high school teachers expressed that they needed

more time to evaluate their students' skills because those skills were not easy to be measured.

High school teachers' attitudes toward ELF in terms of affective attitudes

Table 3 indicates the results of eight sub-variables of high school teachers' feelings toward ELF. High school teachers expressed their strong interest in ELF because students' understanding of multilingual contexts could increase (item A9:  $M=4.31$ ,  $SD=0.60$ ), and they believed that teaching the students' non-native accents from non-native English-speaking countries was enjoyable (item A10:  $M=4.15$ ,  $SD=0.66$ ). Also, they showed their strong agreement of the increase in students' vocabulary (item A11:  $M=4.47$ ,  $SD=0.50$ ), and the development of students' communication ability (item A13:  $M=4.56$ ,  $SD=0.60$ ), listening skill ability (item A12:  $M=4.28$ ,  $SD=0.65$ ), reading skills ability (item A14:  $M=4.38$ ,  $SD=0.52$ ), and writing skills ability (item A15:  $M=4.04$ ,  $SD=0.62$ ). However, they were not sure about students' grammatical mistakes (item A16:  $M=3.14$ ,  $SD=0.78$ ).

Table 3. High school teachers' attitudes toward ELF in terms of affective attitudes

Items	N = 109	
	M	SD
A9. I find it interesting to help increase my students' understanding of multilingual contexts.	4.31	0.60
A10. I find it enjoyable to teach my students non-native accents from non-native English-speaking countries.	4.15	0.66
A11. I find it useful to get my students' vocabulary in different aspects of life increased.	4.47	0.50
A12. I feel happy to see that my students can hear different accents of English confidently.	4.28	0.65
A13. I feel happy to see that my students' communication is more effective and appropriate.	4.56	0.60
A14. I feel happy to see that my students can read faster thanks to their background knowledge and vocabulary	4.38	0.52
A15. I find it comfortable to help my students to get accessible to different varieties of English in written form.	4.04	0.62
A16. I don't feel worried about my students' grammatical mistakes/errors.	3.14	0.78
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>0.61</b>

Qualitatively, the results were quite compatible with the quantitative ones. Although the number of teachers who were concerned about grammar in ELF classrooms was greater than any other language aspects such as four

language skills, cultural knowledge and vocabulary, the majority of the interviewees confirmed that they totally believed in the benefits that ELF brought to their students in terms of language skills, awareness of cultural

backgrounds, and knowledge of vocabulary in real contexts. Some significant extracts are:

i) I had a feeling that I could do something really good for my students; that was letting my students be exposed to new words relating to real situations in life; therefore, it was easier for them to learn those new words by heart and used them in a particular context (T13);

ii) The greatest thing ever that made me eager was that ELF brought to my students was the effectiveness of communication among them. My students knew more about the ways to react in different communicative situations than before (T16);

iii) Grammar was an obstacle that I had to overcome because it played important role in getting high marks in exams; however, I also tried not to think of grammatical mistakes too much in order to encourage my students to use English more confidently (T17).

High school teachers' attitudes toward ELF in terms of behavioral attitudes

High school teachers reported (Table 4) that they generally conducted teaching activities so as to make use of ELF in their classrooms. They strongly agreed that they tried to introduce varieties of English grammar to the students (item A24:  $M=4.48$ ,  $SD=0.50$ ) and new words and their meanings in different contexts to students (item A19:  $M=4.41$ ,  $SD=0.56$ ). They tried to provide students with different writing styles (item A23:  $M=3.50$ ,  $SD=.80$ ) and non-native accents (item A18:  $M=3.72$ ,  $SD=0.70$ ). They also included a variety of teaching activities for speaking skill (item A21:  $M=4.06$ ,  $SD=0.61$ ), reading skill (item A22:  $M=4.07$ ,  $SD=0.57$ ), listening skill (item A20:  $M=4.11$ ,  $SD=0.72$ ), and culture (item A17:  $M=4.10$ ,  $SD=0.47$ ).

Table 4. High school teachers' attitudes toward ELF in terms of behavioral attitudes

Items	N = 109	
	M	SD
A17. I try to integrate the knowledge of ELF in terms of culture into the main lesson appropriately.	4.10	0.47
A18. I try to introduce different non-native accents from non-native English-speaking countries to my students.	3.72	0.70
A19. I try to introduce new words and their meanings in different contexts to my students.	4.41	0.56
A20. I use different sources of listening materials to get my students familiar to different non-native accents.	4.11	0.72
A21. I try to organize many pair-work or group-work discussions relating to life-like situations for my students to practice.	4.06	0.61
A22. I try to provide my students with different reading texts relating to many aspects of life in different countries.	4.07	0.57
A23. I try to provide my students with different writing styles in different non-native English-speaking countries.	3.50	0.80
A24. I try to show the varieties of English grammar to my students.	4.48	0.50
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>0.62</b>

The results of qualitative data collection showed that high school teachers were trying to use different ways to implement ELF into their lessons; particularly, the knowledge of cultures and non-native accents of different countries were two of the most introduced aspects of ELF. High school teachers also paid a lot of

attention to integrating ELF in speaking, listening and reading lessons to get students familiar to English in different non-native English speaking countries (e.g., T6, T9, T18). In writing skills, some teachers expressed that the integration of ELF was more difficult than three other skills; however, they also tried to

find writing materials that had different writing styles of non-native English -speaking countries in order to introduce to their students (e.g., T3, T4, T11). More importantly, the majority of high school teachers said that they always tried to make a comparison of the use of English grammar in different countries because their students were really interested in the varieties of English grammar introduced in grammar lessons (e.g., T5, T14, T18), which helped them remember the uses of grammatical structures longer as well as recall the old lessons more easily.

#### 4.1.2. High School Teachers' Classroom ELF Teaching Practices

Table 5 indicates high school teachers' classroom ELF teaching practices in terms of introducing ELF knowledge, namely the existence of ELF and its roles, the use of ELF in different cultural backgrounds, ELF accents, vocabulary, ELF in four language skills (speaking/listening/reading and writing) as well

as ELF in grammar. Participants always introduced the existence of ELF and its roles in different countries (item B1: M=4.30, SD=0.55), and they often showed films or videos containing ELF in spoken form (item B8: M=4.10, SD=0.59), provided students familiar with different accents of English through the use of recordings from non-native speakers (item B5: M=3.79, SD=0.92; item B3: M=3.76, SD=0.83) and written texts/newspaper articles produced in different countries (item B9: M=3.72, SD=0.91). Moreover, they sometimes provided songs/poems composed by non-native English speakers (item B6: M=3.36; SD=1.08) and asked their students to play roles of people from different cultural backgrounds (item B2: M=3.14, SD=0.95) and to search for the use of vocabulary in different countries in terms of ELF (item B4: M=3.16, SD=0.86), and used of non-native speakers as language models through audio recordings and video clips (item B7: M=2.79; SD=1.06).

Table 5. High school teachers' classroom ELF teaching practice in terms of introducing ELF knowledge

Items	N = 109	
	M	SD
B1. I introduce the existence of ELF and its roles in different countries nowadays to my students.	4.30	0.55
B2. I ask my students to play roles of people from different cultural backgrounds.	3.14	0.95
B3. I introduce the differences in ELF accents in different countries to my students.	3.76	0.83
B4. I ask my students to search for the use of vocabulary in different countries in terms of ELF.	3.16	0.86
B5. I let students listen to recordings from non-native speakers in order to make them more familiar with different accents of English.	3.79	0.92
B6. I provide songs/poems composed by Non-native English speakers.	3.36	1.08
B7. I use "non-native speakers" as language models through audio recordings and video clips.	2.79	1.06
B8. I show films or videos containing ELF in spoken form.	4.10	0.59
B9. I provide written texts/newspaper articles produced in different countries in the world for students to read.	3.72	0.91
B10. I ask my students to search for varieties of English grammar in the world.	3.08	0.98
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>0.87</b>

Similarly, the qualitative results revealed the in-depth thoughts of high school teachers toward ELF teaching practices carried out in their classrooms. Referring to the existence of ELF and its roles, interviewees confirmed that students in their classrooms were often introduced about ELF and its important meaning in different countries nowadays. As

for them, providing students with those kinds of information was an important step to changing students' thinking of ELF and supporting the use of ELF in the classrooms (e.g., T15, T20). In order to increase students' understanding of ELF, two-thirds of the respondents created situations in which students were asked to play various roles of people in the different cultural



backgrounds (e.g., T5, 14, T19). As explained by those who designed those activities, this helped students to be aware of the differences in cultures of countries in the world. Besides, the differences in ELF accents in different countries were also often introduced in language classes according to more than half of high school teachers interviewed. This aimed to build up their students' listening skills as more than half of high school teachers confirmed in the interviews (e.g., T7, T13, T14). Besides, twelve out of high school teachers (e.g., T1, T10, T18) revealed that they sometimes provided songs/poems composed by non-native English speakers so that their students were more familiar with different accents of English. Especially, according to 14 high school teachers, non-native speakers in audio recordings, video clips or films were used as language models in their classes in order to better their students' listening and speaking skills. (e.g., T13, T14, T19). Furthermore, about 50% of high school teachers sometimes supplied written texts/newspaper articles printed in different countries as well as grammar lessons containing varieties of English to students to get students to be exposed to the era of ELF as well as build up their knowledge of ELF. Relating to ELF, in terms of vocabulary, about 16 out of the respondents presented that their students were often encouraged to search for the use of vocabulary in different countries, which increased students' interest and curiosity among their students (e.g., T5, T19, T20).

Table 6 shows that respondents often introduced pictures or posters of ELF to attract students' attention to ELF (item B16:  $M=4.20$ ;  $SD=0.70$ ) and asked students to discover any aspects relating to ELF in the content of the textbook (item B15:  $M=4.06$ ;  $SD=0.64$ ) and to make posters indicating the features of ELF (item B12:  $M=3.97$ ;  $SD=0.72$ ). Additionally, they often created activities which contain aspects relating to ELF for students to take part in (item B14:  $M=3.70$ ;  $SD=0.97$ ) and invited non-native English speakers from other countries to talk to students about ELF (item

B11:  $M=3.43$ ;  $SD=0.87$ ). However, they sometimes organized seminars for the students to compare English varieties (item B13:  $M=2.88$ ;  $SD=0.90$ ).

Table 6. Other activities in the ELF classroom

Items	N = 109	
	M	SD
B11. I invite non-native English speakers from other countries to talk to students about ELF.	3.43	0.87
B12. I ask students make posters indicating the features of ELF.	3.97	0.72
B13. I organize seminars for the students to compare English varieties.	2.88	0.90
B14. I create activities that contain aspects relating to ELF for students to take part in.	3.70	0.97
B15. I ask the students to discover any aspects relating to ELF in the content of the textbook.	4.06	0.64
B16. I introduce pictures or posters that used ELF to attract my students' attention to ELF.	4.20	0.70
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>0.80</b>

Compared with the quantitative data, the qualitative results were quite compatible with what was analyzed above. High school teachers had other teaching practices in their classrooms intending to promote the use of ELF:

i) I held English-speaking clubs in which non-native English speakers were invited for their talk about the use of English in the era of ELF. I meant to provide my students with knowledge of language outside the classroom so that they were more confident in their speaking skills (T20);

ii) The review lesson in each unit was the time for my students to make a comparison of English varieties; I tried to do this, but actually, it was not easy because we had to search for the use of English in different contexts, which took a lot of time (T17);

iii) There were many ways to attract students' attention to ELF. Using pictures or posters could help my students understand the existence of ELF easily and quickly (T3).

#### 4.2. Discussion

This study highlights high school teachers' positive attitudes toward ELF in three attitude components (cognitive, affective and behavioral attitudes). Specifically, high school teachers had a good understanding of the importance and roles of ELF toward students' language learning; they expressed their strong affection to ELF; and they tried to conduct activities for the promotion of ELF among their students relating to eight sub-variables from cultural knowledge, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar to four language skills of students. This result may be because high school teachers were aware of the current status of English in the context of Vietnam as well as in ASEAN. Although they wanted to include the teaching of standard English (i.e., British English and American English), they were still committed to raise students' awareness of ELF. This study was partially unalignment to Kaur's [28] study whose findings indicated that teachers expressed their preference to native accents or language standards and did not take notice of ELF. However, the results in this study were compatible with those in other studies in Vietnam [18, 30] that teachers not only evaluated the importance and benefits of ELF more highly than the standard English but also tried to take some actions in order to implement ELF in the classrooms as well as encourage the use of ELF among their students. Such findings can imply that high school teachers in Vietnam may be well aware of the status of ELF as many of them have ever traveled abroad and interacted with people from different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it may claim teachers of English in Vietnam have gradually shifted their attitudes toward ELF, and they want to promote ELF in their teaching by trying to integrate different teaching and learning activities.

In order to support the use of ELF in classrooms, high school teachers integrated teaching activities. To put it differently, high school teachers were eager to introduce ELF knowledge and to create and design activities to

teach ELF in their classrooms. Particularly, high school teachers proved to have good knowledge of ELF, and they attempted to get their students exposed to ELF and be more accustomed to ELF in the classroom and outside. More importantly, teaching practices carried out in the classrooms were related to different aspects of language learning such as language skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing) and language functions (vocabulary, grammar, accents, cultures). This means that high school teachers in this study were really concerned about ELF and knew how to disseminate it in the classrooms. The most obvious clue was the introduction of the existence of ELF and its roles in different countries, which received a great of attention among high school teachers. One of the possible explanations can be that teachers could adapt their teaching to the particular requirements of their learners and encourage their students to get access to ELF and explore the diversity of English in the world.

Relating to high school teachers' introducing ELF knowledge, they were in favor of the activities that show films or videos containing ELF in spoken form, which were always available on the Internet; therefore, teachers found it not too difficult to search for. This seemed to be new when compared to the findings in other studies because the results in previous studies [18, 28-30] did not consider ELF as an important area of the learning process. Besides, high school teachers in this study designed activities related to the promotion of ELF in language learning such as role-playing ones, difference-finding ones in ELF accents, and vocabulary-finding activities on ELF. Furthermore, in order to better students' language skills, high school teachers let their students be exposed to different listening recordings, songs, poems, or real contact with foreigners coming to their classes and even access to written texts/newspapers printed in different countries and a variety of grammar use of English in the world.

In connection with activities in the ELF classroom, high school teachers not only

designed the lessons of ELF accompanying the main lessons but also created activities including aspects in relation to ELF for students to join. From the list of activities mentioned in the questionnaire, high school teachers expressed their preference to the use of pictures, posters of ELF and the discovery of aspects relating to ELF in the content of the lessons. The study done by Ho [30] only showed that teachers had changing attitudes toward ELF and integrated ELF through published materials or seminars; whereas the results in this study presented the findings that teachers were trying to use ELF as an indispensable part in each lesson; however, the difference was that the range in the application of ELF in language classrooms was not only information in the cultures, accents, vocabulary but also knowledge of four language skills and grammar. Because of this, high school teachers also talked about the hindrance in their language teaching and learning process. Nevertheless, they were still ready to continue with the integration of ELF in the classrooms for the reason that this would help their students build up confidence in using English in class and real life.

## **5. Concluding Remarks**

This study has cast light on high school teachers' positive attitudes toward ELF in the ELF classroom. Specifically, high school teachers had a good understanding of ELF, its importance and its benefits in their ELF classrooms; they expressed their strong predilection for the use of ELF for the increase in their students' knowledge of English and ability to use English in authentic contexts; and they tried to implement ELF in their classrooms by using different ways at a different rate; in other words, they had an optimistic view on ELF in their teaching. The study depicted the whole picture of teachers' attitudes toward the application of ELF in the classroom with relatively constructive results which helped encourage the use of ELF in classrooms in one province in Vietnam. Another major conclusion

is that high school teachers tended to apply different teaching activities (e.g., inviting non-native English speakers, asking students to make posters indicating the features of ELF, asking students to discover any aspects relating to ELF in the content of the textbook, etc.) to develop students' awareness of ELF and encourage the use of ELF in and outside the classrooms. Nevertheless, they still found uneasy designing activities relating to ELF because of the preparation time limit and scarce of source of materials.

Some implications are drawn. Firstly, when high school teachers have good knowledge of ELF and positive attitudes toward ELF, they are always willing to conduct a wide range of teaching strategies to introduce ELF to their students. This will help students acquire the knowledge of ELF actively and apply it into their authentic situations effectively and efficiently. Additionally, teachers should spend more time searching for learning materials related to ELF in different aspects such as culture, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and four language skills. Sharing knowledge of ELF and the materials with their colleagues is also a good way that teachers should do in order to boost the use of ELF teachers. Secondly, it is noticeable that teachers play a variety of roles in a language classroom such as instructor, facilitator, supervisor and monitor, so they make great contributions to the changes of and development of students' language learning. Therefore, high school teachers should be supplied with more training courses relating to ELF and teaching materials such as recordings, videos, textbooks, etc. Once teachers are provided with valuable teaching and learning materials concerning ELF, they will be more creative and positive to carry out different other activities in the classrooms. Last but not least, during the application of ELF in classrooms, high school teachers faced some difficulties which may hinder the promotion of ELF in the future. Thus, the support from stakeholders (e.g., the principals and administrators) is great of importance to high school teachers. The stakeholders should encourage teachers to apply

ELF in their classrooms and be creative in teaching practices for the promotion of ELF. Besides, there should be seminars or workshops for teachers to share and learn experiences from experts, experienced teachers and colleagues, which helps raise the spirit and strength of teachers who are trying to implement teaching activities in respect to ELF.

Although the study may make a certain contribution to the changes in language teaching and learning at the high school level in the research context. However, it may contain some limitations that need considering in later research. First of all, although the study applied the mixed methods design comprising questionnaire and semi-structured interview, it will be better if the further study makes some observations in the classrooms so as to compare and contrast the results of the study. In real classrooms, it may help the researcher to triangulate what was collected in the questionnaire surveys and semi-structured interviews. Another shortcoming of this study is that the number of participants should be expanded to high school students instead of only high school teachers. This may help to explore more about the use of ELF in students' attitudes. Last but not least, during the semi-structured interviews of this study, the interviewees presented some challenges in the implementation of ELF in the classrooms; however, because of the time limit, this aspect was not investigated in detail.

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