

## TOWARD ESL-INFORMED CLASSROOMS IN VIETNAM: RECONCEPTUALISING THE EFL CLASSROOM AS A LANGUAGE-RICH ENVIRONMENT

According to Braj B. Kachru's (1985) model of the Three Circles of English, Vietnam is situated in the Expanding Circle, where English is primarily taught as a foreign language and rarely used beyond the classroom. As a result, learners' outcomes have often been characterised by knowledge about English rather than the ability to use it for meaningful communication. While recent policy directions emphasise the creation of "English-rich environments" in schools, the transition toward English as a Second Language (ESL) remains challenging at the societal level.

This workshop demonstrates that an ESL-oriented shift can be initiated at the classroom level by reconceptualising EFL classrooms as language-rich environments where English functions as the primary medium of instruction, interaction, and meaning-making. Drawing on key insights from Second Language Acquisition, including input, interaction, and sociocultural perspectives, the workshop proposes a practical framework comprising three dimensions: input-rich exposure, interaction-rich use, and scaffolded learning.

Participants will explore concrete strategies for implementing this framework, including the use of multi-modal input, task-based interaction, comprehensible teacher talk, scaffolding techniques, and the integration of language skills within meaningful contexts. The workshop also highlights the importance of teacher competencies, particularly English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, language awareness, and classroom discourse skills.

Through reflective surveys, strategy checklists, and micro-teaching activities, participants will evaluate their current practices and develop actionable approaches to creating and sustaining ESL-like classroom environments. The workshop ultimately demonstrates that meaningful pedagogical change at the classroom level can bridge the gap between EFL and ESL in practice.

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