I. Introduction

Impacted by globalization and opening of educational market, many countries in the world have tried to internationalize their higher education in response to the changing environment and to upgrade their national and international competitiveness. The proportion of international students is treated as one of the internationalization indicators in the global university rankings, such as Times Higher Education Supplementary ranking system. Though the traditional pattern of student mobility is from developing world to the United States or European countries, the new pattern of intra-regional movements is also noted (de Wit, 2008). While intra-European mobility includes a large number of international students (nearly 60%), intra-Asian movement is also growing with such emerging potential players noted, such as China, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, and South Korea are noted (de Wit, 2008; Lasanowski, 2009). The significant economic, political, academic, social-cultural implications and considerably growth trend has made student mobility become an important research topic in higher education (e.g. Altbach, 2004; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

An expanding activity in the internationalization of higher education in non-English speaking countries is offering English-taught programs (ETPs) to attract international students and responding to the global Anglicization in the academic field (e.g. Flowerdew & Li, 2009). For example, Germany has become a popular destination in attracting students from Brazil and Vietnam via offering ETPs for international students (Lasanowski, 2011). Likewise, Taiwan higher education institutions have tried to add ETPs in current curricula and programs to attract more international students. Taiwan has been devoted to raising its educational quality and has created significant appeal to foreign students (Lo, 2009). It was projected that the number of foreign degree-seeking students would increase to 12,830 by 2011, 10 times higher than that in 2002 (Lo, 2009; Taiwan MOE, 2008). Most of them come from Asian countries, reaching 70%. The second

largest group comes from continental America, accounting for 19% in 2007 (Taiwan MOE, 2008). Among origins of sending students to Taiwan for degrees, Vietnam was ranked at top 2, followed by Malaysia, with 1,826 enrollments in 2010 (Taiwan MOE, 2010).

As international students in a host country, they have many challenges in adapting to life and study in a culture which is different from their home countries. The common challenges for international students identified in literature are language difficulties, accommodation, dietary restrictions, financial problems, misunderstandings, loneliness and the existence of *racial* prejudice and *discrimination* (Lin and Yi, 1997). Among them, language-related issues are unavoidable but dynamic in learning experiences of international students in the host. Even though the students had equipped with high English language proficiency on IELTS or TOEFL before departure for study abroad, language-related issues that might cause their anxiety (Brown, 2008) still appear in both their academic and social lives. The language-related issues toward international students in English-speaking countries include the difficulty in listening and speaking; in understanding slang, idioms, common vocabulary, and topics of conversation; and lack of confidence in using English in daily life (Brown, 2008; Kuiper & Tan, 2007; Pan et al., 2008; Singh, 2005). Though literature on language-related issues of international students is well-recognized, most of it is likely to focus on those in English-speaking countries. Therefore, exploring language-related issues confronted by the international students in non-English speaking countries must be addressed. To attract international students, more and more higher education institutions in non-English speaking countries have offered English-taught programs (ETPs). For international students in the ETPs offered by a host in non-English-speaking country, the students still confront other types of language-related issues that have been neglected in the existing literature. The paper aims to take experiences of Vietnamese postgraduates in ETPs in Taiwan as

examples to explore language-related issues and coping strategies adopted by Asian students in non-English-speaking Asian host countries.

The paper begins with literature review on globalization and the increase in using English-taught programs (ETPs) to attract international students in non-English speaking countries. It then reviews the previous studies on learning experiences of international students in the host, regarding language-related issues and coping strategies that non-English background students experienced in English-speaking countries. Based on interviews with Vietnamese postgraduates, language-related issues, coping strategies and effects of language-related issues on their social and academic aspects are explored and discussed. The paper concludes with suggestions for the Taiwan government to play a host and universities in doing internationalizing higher education as well as for Vietnamese and Taiwanese students in engaging in a study environment.

II. Literature review

II.1 Globalization and the increase in English medium of instruction in higher education

According to Altbach (2004), "English is the Latin of the 21st century. In the current period, the use of English is central for communication knowledge worldwide, for instruction even in countries where English is not the language of higher education, and for cross-border degree arrangements and other programs" (p.8). While globalization brings different cultures, across national borders, together, it affects on languages and technology when it comes to education (de Wit, 2002). Therefore, it is currently considered that globalization has made English as the common medium of communication in most countries.

Under impacts of globalization, English language really affects higher education policies and work of individual students and scholars (Altbach, 2004).

Globalization also brings English-language products become dominant in the international academic marketplace. For example, higher education institutions in the world are pressured to publish in internationally circulated journals that are exclusively in English. This publication in these journals is considered as a necessary validation of academic work. As a result, the term of global Anglicization of academic publishing has been paid attention in research environment (Flowerdew & Li, 2009). Another example is that "textbooks written from a U.S or U.K perspective are sold worldwide, influencing students in academics in many countries and providing profits for publishers who function in English" (Altbach, 2006, p.217). In addition, English-language database in various disciplines is the most widely used internationally and universities must pay money for accessing the online resources. E-learning, distance education, online courses are other products of using English language in the global academic marketplace (Altbach, 2004).

More and more non-English speaking countries are "increasingly offering academic programs in English to attract international students" (Altbach, 2006, p.127). A direct consequence of this has been an increase in the number of English-taught programs (ETPs) at universities in non-English speaking countries. In Europe, ETPs is growing rapidly in European higher education institutions. With 50% of programs are offered in English, the Netherlands has become the lead provider in providing ETPs in Europe, followed by Finland and Cyprus. Likewise, Germany has become a popular destination in attracting students from Brazil and Vietnam via offering ETPs for international students (Lasanowski, 2011). In Asia, adopting English as a medium of instruction seems likely to remove "mobility barrier" to Asian countries in the past as well as to enable Malaysia and China to substantially enhance the number of international students, recognized as emerging contenders (Verbik & Lasanaowski, 2007). Providing ETPs is also launched in strategies of Taiwan government and universities in attracting more international

students (Lo, 2009; Taiwan MOE, 2008).

II.2 Language-related issues confronted by international students

Given that English far shadows other languages, the top five desirable destinations to attract international students are English speaking countries, such as the U.S, the U.K, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. These countries account for approximately 50% of total international students in the marketplace (Lasanowski, 2011; Kuiper & Tan, 2007). The literature on learning experiences of international students from non-English speaking background in these destinations, therefore, is also well-recognized. Among challenges for their adjustment in the host, language-related issues are unavoidable in their academic and social lives. Most language-related problems identified in the literature on learning experiences of international students were difficulties in listening and speaking, difficulties in understanding slang, idioms, common vocabulary, and topics of conversations, English academic writing and reading, and lack of confidence in using English in daily life (e.g., Brown, 2008; Kwiper & Tan, 2007; Pant et al., 2008; Warwick, 2006).

To guarantee English ability of international students, host higher education instructions often require a minimum score of English language proficiency for enrollment. However, whether international students obtain enough English requirement scores or not, language-related issues still appear in the learning experiences of international students in a host country. Malcolm and McGregor (1995) and Coley (1999) showed that although the students have presented the required English proficiency on entry to university, they find it is a considerable shock when their English is deemed unsatisfactory and they face possible failure. By exploring the experiences' lives of graduate students from non-English speaking countries studying in the U.K, Brown (2008) found that anxiety over language

ability is an inevitable part of the experience of culture shock. She further mentions that although the postgraduates obtain IELTS 6, the minimum English language proficiency for enrolling in most British universities, they still face with language issues in terms of poor spoken English, suffered feelings of anxiety, shame, and inferiority, and felt difficulties in engaging in international environment as well as in social interaction (Brown, 2008).

Apart from the international students' feelings toward their English language proficiency, they may face with challenges from the host academic environment through teamwork and class discussions. For instance, Warwick (2006) identified language-related issues affecting to Asian international students in the U.K, including: (1) they struggled to understand the accents of local students; (2) local students also struggled to understand Asian international students; (3) and misunderstanding between Asian students and local students in communication. As a result, Asian international students saw local students avoiding group work with them as well as finding other reasons to not sit with them or talk to them (Warwick, 2006). Another example was given by Taras and Rowney (2007). Their study showed that international students might be evaluated as less active participants in class discussion which results in lower academic performance by team-mates and teachers due to inequalities in English language proficiency. In group discussion, international students are likely to be paid less attention, even might be interrupted, by their local team-mates. Consequently, the cross-cultural opinions between local and international students in the groups might not be shared effectively as well as some valuable ideas might be ignored (Taras & Rowney, 2007).

II.3 Coping strategies of international students

A common strategy for students of non-English speaking background to react to language-related issues in English-speaking countries was the avoiding pattern

termed by this study. The avoiding pattern refers to the examples such as they join groups with their conational students (e.g. Brown, 2008; Kuiper & Tan, 2007; Singh, 2005) and/or make project work with other international students instead of local students. Ironically, when international students choose English-speaking country for study destination to improve their English ability, some of them spent less time to speak English (Kuiper & Tan, 2007). There was a separation between international students and local students in classes. As international students, they did not have many chances to communicate with local students, although the local students were present in class. As a result, they chose to work on projects with their co-national or other international students (Sing, 2005).

Apart from classes and lectures, international students tend to spend time on campus, mainly in libraries or computer labs for self-study. Lack of engagement with local communities was another common picture of international students stay in the host. The students, therefore, missed chances to perfect their English (Kuiper & Tan, 2007).

The literature above has focused on the influential role of English language in higher education and globalization. Because English is the current lingua franca of the global economy, international students are attracted in EPTs in non-English speaking countries to well-prepare themselves in joining the global workforce. More and more international students are studying in ETPs in non-English speaking countries as a result of ongoing globalization. Given this, understanding of the challenges these students encounter and the strategies they use to confront the challenges has become important and urgent.

III. Research Method

III.1 Research Design

Since the study aims to explore the language-related issues confronted by Vietnamese postgraduate students in Taiwan and how they coped with these issues

to adjust to the host, a semi-structured and in-depth interviews were employed. In-depth interviews use "individuals as the point of departure for the research process and yield rich insight into people's experiences, values, attitudes and feelings" (Hesse-Biber & Leavey, 2006, p.119). By using this way, the study could add a dimension to the understanding of learning experiences of Vietnamese postgraduate students in Taiwan that the current literature did not reveal.

In this research, a purposive sampling method was employed since the features of purposive sampling make it well suited to small-scale, in-depth qualitative studies (Ritche & Lewis, 2003, p.78). Initially, the researcher contacted with one Vietnamese graduate student in each university based on co-national friendship and had her/him introduced other Vietnamese students in her/his university to participate in the study. Participation in the research was voluntary.

The interviews were conducted in Vietnamese, the first language for both the researcher and participants. Based on the above literature review, the interview outline was structured mainly around 3 following topics:
1. What language-related issues in both academic and social life have you confronted?
2. What strategies do you try to cope with these issues?
3. What effects do language-related issues bring on your academic and social life?

III.2 Participants

Vietnamese international students who had studied master and PhD degrees in Taiwanese universities in English-taught programs were invited to participate in this study. There were totally 13 participants, 8 males and 5 females, who were studying in 5 universities in Taiwan. At the time of the interviews, participants ranged from 24 to 35 years old, and their length of residence in Taiwan was from 7 months to 43 months. To control the subjects' native language as a factor, Chinese-Vietnamese students are not included in the study. The details of participants are listed in Table 1.

Table1. The profile of participants

Participant's code	Gender	Age	Marital status	Discipline	Degree level	Length of residence
D001	Female	29	Married	Educational Administration	Doctorate	1 year
D011	Female	33	Married	Polymer Materials	Doctorate	2 years
D012	Female	35	Single	Chemical Engineering	Doctorate	3 years
D111	Male	33	Single	Automatic Control Systems	Doctorate	4 years
D112	Male	33	Single	Geospatial measurement techniques	Doctorate	2 years
D113	Male	27	Single	System Engineering	Doctorate	3 years
D114	Male	31	Married	Mechanical Engineering	Doctorate	2 years
M001	Female	27	Single	International Comparative Education	Master	1 year
M011	Male	27	Single	Educational Policy and Administration	Master	2 years
M101	Female	24	Single	Material Science	Master	2 years
M111	Male	24	Single	Material Science	Master	2 years
M112	Male	24	Single	Applied Math	Master	2 years
M113	Male	28	Single	Mechanical Engineering	Master	2 years

III.3 Data analysis

Once transcription was finished, each interview transcript was reviewed to be further familiar with all the data. Then, the excerpts of each participant was coded and ensured inter-coded reliabilities. The study employed a line-by-line coding to analyze the transcripts of the interview. This coding was "the most time-consuming form of coding but often the most generative" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.119). The question "What is going on here" was employed to discover phenomena and then these phenomena were labeled to concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The concepts emerging from responses of each participant to each question subsequently were listed together and ensured inter-coded reliabilities. They were then put into categories or sub-categories whose labels were chosen by the researcher based on the literature and *vivo* code. There are three main categories capture the perspectives of Vietnamese postgraduates studying in Taiwan: (1) language-related issues reported by participants were categorized into two sub-categories: external and internal dimensions; (2) coping strategies, including those for dealing with external and internal dimensions; and (3) effects of language-related issues on academic learning and social engagement.

IV. Results
IV.1 Language-related issues

Through the interviews, language-related issues confronted by the Vietnamese participants were divided into 2 sub-categories: external dimension relating to Taiwan environment and internal dimension relating to their second language proficiency. These issues are displayed in Figure 1. The details of factors reported by each participant are listed in Appendix 1.
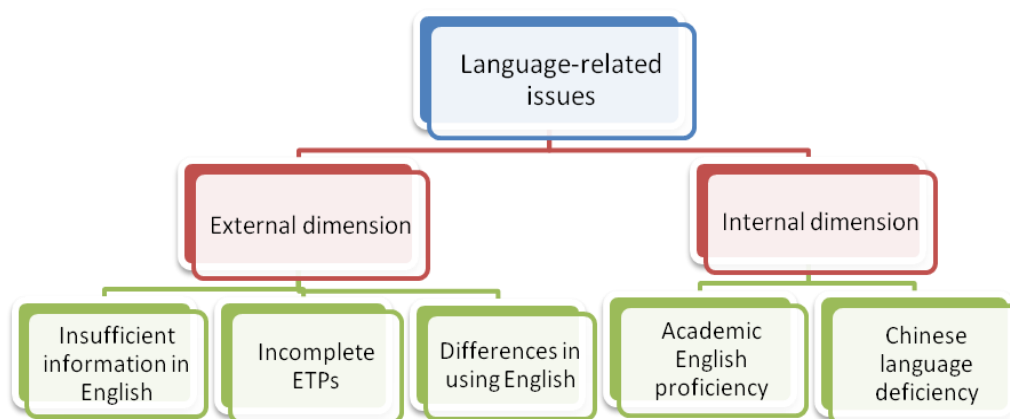
Figure 1 Language-related issues

IV.1.1 Issues derived from external dimension

The first external issues was the *insufficient information in English*, relating to lack of English language stated on universities' websites, information from faculty passing to international students, course registration forms, and notice boards within campuses. 10 out of 13 respondents said that they were still in passive states in receiving information from their faculty since they could not read Chinese. A PhD participant (D111) told that his friend lost chance to continue to study due to receiving information insufficiently and passively.

> *My friend comes from Germany……His department requires PhD students must finish qualified exams within the first 2 years. But he had not heard about this. He took qualified exam on the fourth semester, the last semester for him to take qualified exam as stated in the requirements. Unfortunately, he failed and he only had once chance by taking that exam. As a result, he stopped his study (D111).*

The second issue was the *incomplete ETPs* offered to international students, identified by 7 participants. They stated that they took some courses, even up to 70% of their courses, in which class discussion and representation were in Chinese. For participants who could not use Chinese language, this was really big issue for them to adjust. Incomplete ETPs was also related to the difficulty in using full

English instruction in classes where the majority of students were Taiwanese students since it would cause English language barrier for local students. Therefore, professors only had enough time to translate some main points of lectures into English for international students. The participant (M001) offered the following example, she said,

> ……Both English and Chinese are used in my department. In classes, teachers and students speak Chinese, slides are in Chinese, representations are in Chinese, and teachers also speak Chinese. The only thing I can get knowledge is English materials.(MOO1)

The third issue was *differences in using English* between Taiwanese and Vietnamese people, especially in accents and pronunciation. 6 out of 13 participants also confirmed that they felt strange with Taiwanese accents at the first days of arriving in Taiwan and this took them few weeks to get familiar with Taiwanese accents in speaking English. They also said that they had learned British English in Vietnam since they were in high schools while Taiwan higher education followed American English. While English used as second language for both Taiwanese and Vietnamese students, differences in using English was really challenges for the participants to adjust, especially at the first days.

IV.1.2 Issues derived from internal dimension

The significant issue was the *Academic English proficiency*, relating to lack of English academic words, academic writing skills, and fluency in speaking English, reported by 8 participants. They confirmed that their English language proficiency was not enough to be accepted to study in English-speaking countries. With such policies from Taiwan government in attracting international students, they had offered a "second chance" to study abroad. Therefore, they faced with Academic English proficiency when they stay in Taiwan. It was hard for them at the first days

to read English textbooks due to lack of academic words. Therefore, they spent much time in reading textbooks. In addition, while it was also the first time for them to use English in academic environment, they faced with challenges in English academic writing, especially writing papers to submit for journals or conferences. Some of the participants said although they had experiences in writing papers when they were in Vietnam, it was still difficult for them in writing English papers due to their lack of academic writing skills.

In evolving class discussions, these Vietnamese participants also said that their English language proficiency was not fluently enough in expressing their own opinions in participating class discussions or presentations in front of classmates. These challenges failed to participants in social sciences stronger than those in natural sciences. Participants confirmed that they spent much time in rehearsals before every presentation. For the participants in natural sciences they said that although their English language proficiency was limited in speaking skills, they still felt confident in using English since most of their time stayed in labs and their majors were needed to carry out experiments rather than using languages for discussions in classes like social sciences.

> *……Certainly, English is my challenge, but it is not too big problem for me. Because my major belongs to science and technology, it is different from social sciences. I think language is used less in my major, and the experiments are really important. (D112)*

Beyond classrooms, Chinese language deficiency was really obstacles of the Vietnamese postgraduates when they go out for shopping or travelling, especially at the first days they arrived in Taiwan. 10 out of 13 participants stated that they still faced with Chinese language barriers as international students in Vietnam whether they had learned it before departure or not. A 2-year PhD student (D114) shared his problems as follows,

……With regard to communication in Chinese in Taiwan society, it's nearly impossible. I only know some basic Chinese sentences that are quite enough to take a bus, go to the market, or buy some necessary things…… (D114).

IV.2 Coping strategies

To deal with language-related issues, the participants also planed and applied some strategies to adjust to external environment as well as supplement to internal dimension. Figure 2 displays copying strategies for the participants in dealing with language-related issues. The details of factors reported by each participant are listed in Appendix 2.

Figure 2 Coping strategies

IV.2.1 In dealing with issues derived from external dimension

Choosing other options was the common strategy dealing with incomplete ETP issues, reported by 7 participants. They said that the first step was taking other selective English-taught courses, even provided by different departments but still relevant to their disciplines. By taking this option, it looked like that they were doing 2 jobs at the same time: dealing with current knowledge to finish the courses and finding different material for their own research. A 4-year PhD student (D111) shared his coping strategies,

The best way is choosing the courses that are relevant or supported for my research dissertation. However, these were in Chinese and their number was also limited. So, I couldn't choose in this way. Therefore, I chose English courses but they were not related to my research. (D111)

However, this option was still limited. The participants often experienced by the second step that was finding other English materials on the internet or database from libraries by themselves if there were not English-taught courses provided by other departments. Since the participants could not use Chinese language to take part in class discussions, it seemed to them that they studied independently whether they were in or getting off classes. A master student in social discipline told about her strategy as follows,

> *……I found English materials and study by myself. Then I submitted my assignments to teachers but I rarely received their feedbacks. So, I really don't know how exactly I understand in these assignment topics (M001).*

The next strategy was *combining Chinese and English* in taking require courses: Chinese language for listening and speaking in classes while English for reading and writing, identified by three postgraduate students. These participants could use a little Chinese before coming to Taiwan and their Chinese language proficiency improved significantly during their stay in Taiwan. A master student explained his coping strategy,

> *…I've used Chinese language for representations or reports in classes since the second semester, not spoken English at all. Because I recognized that it's quite uncomfortable for all my classmates to listen to English. I felt that they stand for me. Therefore, I tried to speak Chinese more. (M011)*

As international students in ETPs in Taiwan, 3 participants said that they received such kindly help from campus support in dealing with language problems, in both Chinese and English language. Campus supports were from Taiwanese tutors who help students in learning Chinese language and adjusting educational system. Their university also provided English Corner to help international students in proofreading in writing English with the presence of English native-speaking teachers. As a master student said,

My university has substantively supported for international students in dealing with language barriers. I have 2 tutors (小老師- xiao lao shi) offered by the university, one for learning Chinese language and the other for supporting in doing the homework…… At that time, I've learned Chinese 7 hours per week.(M011)

IV.2.2 In dealing with issues derived from internal dimension

In terms of English language difficulties, 8 out of 13 participants said that the priority was improving English. They had their own strategies to improve 4 skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, along with well-preparation in advance for their presentation and lectures in classes. As a PhD student said,

I think to speak language fluently the first thing is to be confident and open your mouth. At the first time, I could understand what people said but felt hard to speak out. So I often listened to English channels, such as VOA, BBC to improve my English. Another difficulty is academic writing. I read much more papers and highlighted such useful structures, sentences to supplement to my writing skills. (D011)

In terms of Chinese language problems, 11 out of 13 participants said that their coping strategy was *conational-student support* when going out for shopping, eating, or going to public places at the first days of arriving in Taiwan. Whenever they wanted to buy anything, they just told what they need to senior Vietnamese students who could speak Chinese, and the seniors went with them and helped them to buy it.

Learning Chinese language was also a significant strategy, reported by 8 participants. This strategy was used not only in social life but also, to some extent, in academic life, particularly for those who study in incomplete ETPs. A PhD student, who graduated master program in Taiwan, remembered his experiences at the first days,

At that time, I often needed some help from senior Vietnamese students who could speak Chinese. Wherever I went out, I needed them to accompany with me. I also needed them for giving me some advices on how to adjust here or whenever I got sick. Then, I started to learn Chinese language at the language center…… I

started to speak out without doubting about how right or wrong I used the words.(D113)

The next strategy was *using body language* in communicating with local people, identified by 8 participants. Using body language was because the participants could not speak Chinese fluently and they use it to let people more understand or describe what they need more clearly. It was also the strategy for participants to go to local markets since elder people seemed to talk in Taiwanese. Body language was also used when the participants wanted to speak in English with Taiwanese friends, classmates or professors due to lack of fluency in speaking English language.

Only speaking English and a little Chinese was the coping strategy of 6 PhD students during their stay in Taiwan. This was because their Chinese language proficiency did not improve at all. The common reason for not improving Chinese language was not enough time for them to learn a new language due to their heavy workloads. Others confirmed that they did not have motivations for learning Chinese language to use it in daily life since their English university provided full English academic environment for international students so they preferred to improve their English language rather than Chinese. As a PhD student said,

> *Actually, I don't have many social contacts here. The second thing is that using English for communication is not the big problem for me. But using Chinese for social communication is nearly impossible. I can speak only common sentences to get on buses or go to markets to buy some necessary things.(D114)*

IV.3 Effects of language issues on academic learning and social engagement

The Vietnamese postgraduate students then were asked questions regarding how language-related issues affect their study and living. Through the views of 13 participants, the effects of language issues on academic learning and social engagement were explored.

IV.3.1 Effects of language-related issues on academic learning

The participants said that languages, both English and Chinese, affect strongly to their academic environment. Given that Taiwan has lack of English interface on websites, 10 out of 13 participants said that lack of Chinese language proficiency made them not using database resources effectively in Taiwanese universities, and this somewhat was considered as wasting of online materials. Another effect of language-related issues on academic activities was passive, and to some extents got bored, in participating in class discussions, especially for the students in social science disciplines. As a result, the cross-cultural opinions were not shared meaningfully within academic environment.

Another issue was the lost-chance to join in professors' research projects due to lack of Chinese language proficiency, reported by the 3 PhD engineering participants. It seemed to them that their research topics are different from what their professors has concerned. Therefore, the trial relationship between university, research, and company was lack of reality to them because of Chinese language issues.

With regard to English language, participants also confirmed that they spend much time for study due to using English as second language, especially the first days of arriving in Taiwan. With the presence of international students, the bilingual was used in classes. Whether English was used much or less, the Vietnamese students felt that they abused time of their classes since they were only the minority, compared to the number of Taiwanese students. In some situations, professors spent much time to explain more due to their English language deficiency. As a result, they said that they somewhat felt sorry for bothering their classmates and of course, their professors.

> *My professors taught for the whole students in classes and then they explained specifically for three of us (in English). This made my Taiwanese classmates somewhat not understand…… And I also felt that we were annoying them. (M111)*

IV.3.2 Effects of language-related issues on social engagement

While language is an important element in communication, the linguistic-social relationship established quite clearly in the views of Vietnamese postgraduates.

The effects of language-related issues on social engagement were prevalent in knowing about the host culture. Due to lack of Chinese language, the participants stated that they lost chances to explore Taiwan culture and Taiwan society beyond academic learning. What they know about Taiwan was mostly from communication with their classmates and professors. While information on local activities, local festivals were in Chinese, it was hard for the participants to read this. As a result, they stayed current in Taiwan with events at home.

Beyond classrooms, the participants said that they lost chances to participate in skill clubs such as music, painting within campus environment due to lack of Chinese language proficiency. Their participation in international student associations in the universities was also less active than local students' one since they cannot share their opinions in Chinese. As a master student said,

> *My university has some skill clubs, like learning how to play the guitar, something like that, but I can't join because they teach in Chinese. I think if I can learn, it would be useful for me in refreshing my mind after classes, and I can get new skills and of course, make new friends. (M101)*

Language-related issues also affected the Vietnamese participants (e.g. M112) in terms of finding part-time jobs to cover their study and living, beyond their scholarships. Since Taiwan has Chinese environment it would be easier for them to have teaching assistant or research assistant positions for their professors if they can use Chinese language fluently in academic environment.

V. Discussions

Language-related issues identified in this study include those derived from Taiwan external environment and the Vietnamese participants' language proficiency.

Within academic environment, while the Vietnamese postgraduates face with English language inequalities, which are well-recognized as the major issues for international students in English-speaking countries (e.g., Brown, 2008; Kwiper & Tan, 2007; Taras & Rowney, 2007; Warwick, 2006), they still confront other issues from the host in providing English medium of instruction. They are insufficient information in English, incomplete EPTs and the differences in using English as second language. Beyond classrooms, if international students in English-speaking countries face with difficulties in understanding and speaking English slang, idioms, or topics of conversation (e.g., Brown, 2008; Kwiper & Tan, 2007; Pant et al., 2008), the Vietnamese postgraduates in Taiwan also confront Chinese language-related problems in social engagement. They are afraid of going out, using public transport, or/and communicating with local people due to Chinese language deficiency. This study, therefore, reveals a complicated picture of language-related issues confronted by Asian students in non-English-speaking-Asian countries. That is, international students confront 3 types of language-related issues: (1) the students' English language proficiency; (2) the host's issues in providing ETPs; and the students' host language proficiency (3). Type (1) is often relevant in the experiences of international students in English-speaking countries while type (2) and (3) are specific issues for those in non-English-speaking Asian host countries.

Like international students in English-speaking countries, the Vietnamese also have their own suitable strategies to improve their English language proficiency. In fact, their English inequalities cause troubles for them in terms of spending much time for self-study and the participants can manage this issue during their stay in Taiwan. However, the limited use of English within Taiwan academic environment and Chinese language problems (type 2 and 3) are really their concerns. Among strategies to deal with these issues, the strategy of *combining English and Chinese* is likely to be effective for participants to master their language-related issues in

both academic and social lives. However, only 3 participants could reach this strategy although all participants learn Chinese language after arrival. While the master participants have significant improvement on their Chinese language proficiency, some even use Chinese in classes; there is no improvement at all for the PhD participants. Given this, master students seem to get more benefits to continue PhD degrees than those who had no prior learning experiences in Taiwan, as the case of the PhD participant (D113). He has graduated master program in Taiwan as well as got over language-related issues. This study, therefore, proposes an emerging picture for studying in multilingual environment like Taiwan. That is, language-related issues, to some extents, become opportunities for the students in the future: they could obtain one host language more, beyond English and their home languages. This is hard to find in the experiences of those in English-speaking countries.

While few Vietnamese postgraduates could apply the strategy of combining English and Chinese, language-related issues really affect the participants' academic learning and social engagement. They are likely "independent" students in classes in terms of high self-reliance on study, such as finding English material for the courses and well-preparation for classes, beyond discussions with professors. If international students in English-speaking countries might be evaluated less active than local students in class discussion due to lack of English proficiency, the Vietnamese participants in Taiwan also experience in passive states, even alone, in engaging class activities due to limited use of English in academic environment and few international students in classes. As a result, cross-cultural opinions between international and local students are also not shared meaningfully among members in classes. In addition, technology in Taiwan has been well-recognized in Asian region but participants in engineering disciplines lost chances to join their professors' projects, which are closely applied to Taiwan advanced technology, due to their Chinese language deficiency. Therefore, the trial relationship between their

research topics, their universities, and Taiwan technical companies is not applied effectively. In social engagement, Chinese language problems affect the Vietnamese participants in terms of exploring the Taiwan culture to study meaningfully in a multilingual environment. Consequently, they are staying in the host with events at home.

To deal with language-related issues for the international students, this study, first, suggests that there is a need for Taiwanese universities in providing full English medium of instruction. The second thing is to provide appropriate support programs to help students in coping with language inequalities. For example, the 3 participants in this study express their gratefulness to their university due to providing Chinese language tutors and English Conner for international students. Another suggestion is international student support centers should be established and advisors at these centers feel free to speak English to international students. These kinds of programs should be applied widely through Taiwanese universities to reduce language-related issues as well as make good impressions to international students in terms of studying in kind and friendly environment.

Through exploring the language-related issues and coping strategies of the Vietnamese postgraduates in Taiwan, the study also proposes some suggestions for both Vietnamese students and local students in engaging in a multilingual environment as listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Suggestions for both Vietnamese and Taiwanese students

For Vietnamese students	For Taiwanese students
1. Before coming to Taiwan, start learning Chinese language at basic level. Improve English language at academic level.	1.Be familiar with speaking English with international students
2. Learn Chinese language through conversations with local students. 　Improve English through conversations with other international students from Thai, India, Indonesia,.. 　Understand Taiwan culture.	2.Introduce Taiwan culture, norms to international students
3. Make friends with local students; try to get close relationships with local students.	3. Help international students in solving challenges (peer support, providing international students with needed information, establish friendly relationship with international students)
4.Be active in making project groups, home-work groups with local students.	4. Be active in evolving study groups with international students, manage time to contact with international students
5.Join in out-door activities with local people to know about Taiwan culture and have chances to learn Chinese language	5. Introduce traditional festivals to international students, pass information about these festivals (e.g., time, place, transportation to go there)

　　To date and to the knowledge of the researcher, the study is the first in-depth research on language-related issues affecting international students within Taiwanese higher education context, particularly from the perspective of Vietnamese international students. This study, therefore, is limited in some following respects. First, the sampling is relatively small, and the findings may not necessary to represent the whole figure of Vietnamese students in Taiwan. Second, the study only deals with language issues and is lack of exploring what is interesting toward linguistic aspect that the Vietnamese students experienced from

the host. Finally, this research only focuses on the views of Vietnamese postgraduates on language issues, it is need to do more research on the views of Taiwanese students and teachers to have a balanced understanding the challenges faced by both teacher and students in engaging multilingual environment.

VI. Conclusion and Suggestions

This study has identified language-related issues and coping strategies that international students studying in ETPs in a non-English-speaking country experienced. By interviews with 13 Vietnamese postgraduates in Taiwanese universities, the study has found that both English and Chinese language-related issues affect the Vietnamese participants in social and academic life. The English language issues include the host's problems in providing ETPs and the participants' language inequalities. The limited use of English as medium of instruction from the host makes the Vietnamese participants face with another Chinese language issue in academic environment, beyond their social life. While the strategy of combining the two languages, English and Chinese, seems to be effective for the master students to study in a multilingual environment like Taiwan, the PhD participants still cope with Chinese language issues due to no improvement on their Chinese language proficiency at all. Based on the findings, the study argues that the non-English speaking host countries should not assume that all language-related issues will automatically disappear once they have started to offer English-taught programs. The study, therefore, suggests that it is needed to provide appropriate support programs launched by Taiwanese universities to reduce mostly Chinese language-related issues for international students.

The study has made the knowledge of language-related issues confronted by international students in ETPs in Taiwan. While there is little research literature on language-related issues facing international students in ETPs, offered by

non-English-speaking Asian higher education institutions, the main findings above give feedbacks for Taiwan in internationalizing its higher education as well as enhance the understanding about the relationship between the impact of globalization and the growing ETPs. Well-preparation for providing ETPs with high quality is probably better than increasing the number of ETPs or increasing the number of international students in Taiwan under the impacts globalization. In fact, Taiwan higher education has its own strength in competing to other traditionally desirable destinations in terms of attracting internal students in ETPs along with and starting to learn Chinese language. This strength is hard to find in English-speaking countries and is going to be considered as new trend of language policy for higher education in attracting international students. Therefore, if ETPs are completed for international students, Taiwan will be a new emerging desirable destination in attracting international students.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1. Language-related issues identified by each participant

Issues/ Participants	D001	D011	D012	D111	D112	D113	D114	M001	M011	M101	M111	M112	M113	TOTAL
Issues derived from external dimension														
Insufficient English information	V			V	V	V		V	V	V	V	V	V	10
Incomplete ETPs	V			V				V	V	V	V	V		7
Differences in using English	V		V				V		V		V		V	6
Issues derived from internal dimension														
Academic English proficiency	V	V	V		V		V	V		V	V			8
Chinese language deficiency	V	V	V	V	V		V	V		V	V		V	10

Appendix 2. Coping strategies identified by each participant

Strategies/ Participants	D001	D011	D012	D111	D112	D113	D114	M001	M011	M101	M111	M112	M113	TOTAL
Dealing with Issues derived from external dimension														
Choosing other options	V			V				V	V	V	V	V		7
Campus supports	V							V	V					3
Combining English and Chinese						V			V			V		3
Dealing with Issues derived from internal dimension														
Improving English language	V	V	V				V	V	V	V	V			8
Co-national student supports	V	V	V		V	V	V	V	V	V	V		V	11
Learning Chinese language		V				V		V	V	V	V	V	V	8
Using body language	V	V	V				V	V		V	V		V	8
Only speaking English and a little Chinese	V	V	V	V	V		V							6