Research Article

Challenges and Strategies in Adult English Language Teaching in Vietnam: Evidence from Language Centers in Hanoi

*1,2Hai-Ha Thi Nguyen

About Author

¹ VNU University of Education, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam

² Jaxtina Education Joint Stock Company, Hanoi, Vietnam

ABSTRACT

This research examines the state of English language instruction for adult learners at private language schools in Hanoi, Vietnam. The study's objective was to pinpoint educational and administrative challenges and suggest strategies for enhancement. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving quantitative surveys from 356 students, 71 teachers, and 32 administrators, along with in-depth interviews with selected participants. Descriptive statistics were analyzed using SPSS, and thematic coding was applied. The study reveals five key findings: adult learners show strong initial motivation but often find it difficult to maintain; personalization is deemed essential, yet its execution is frequently superficial; practical language use is hindered by inconsistent teaching quality and overly theoretical curricula; collaborative and project-based learning is underdeveloped; and there is significant disparity in digital and physical learning environments among different centers. These findings highlight the pressing need to reevaluate instructional design, support systems, and teacher training in adult English language teaching (ELT) programs. Recommendations include incorporating personalized learning methods, enhancing experiential learning elements, and directing resources towards teacher development specifically for adult education in Vietnam. Crucially, the study provides practical recommendations for policy and practice based on individualized learning paths, experiential activities fit for real-world demands, and deliberate teacher development. It also implies that authorities should strengthen quality control systems if we are to keep the gains in adult English education in Vietnam.

Contact @ Hai-Ha Thi Nguyen
nguyenthihaiha1988@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of global integration, English has evolved into a necessary instrument for academic success, career advancement, and international correspondence. This trend has significantly increased the demand for English language education among Vietnamese adults. For a range of reasons-personal development, career advancement, international education-these students seek language acquisition. Private language centers (PLCs) have become more well-known as a substitute for public education since they offer flexible, market-oriented programs catered to the personal needs of students (Hang & An, 2020; Le, 2011).

ELT's efficacy in PLCs for adults is still a question even if it is rather common in metropolitan places like Hanoi. Studies show that many initiatives contradict the goals, learning styles, or real-world communication settings of adult learners. Course structures sometimes lack personalization and coherence, and instructional strategies sometimes copy conventional grammar-translation techniques (Graddol, 2006; Harmer, 2007). Moreover, inadequate teacher training, poor feedback systems, and uneven application of educational technologies help to accentuate the differences between students' expectations and institutional practices (Ajaj, 2023; Zimmerman, 2002).

The twin identity of PLCs as both commercial and educational entities aggravates these difficulties. As Ingram (2001) and Walker (2010) have shown, these centers have to strike a balance between operational effectiveness, client satisfaction, and pedagogical quality. This complexity demands a review of adult ELT's design, delivery, and management. Although earlier studies have looked at adult learning in formal or professional environments (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999; Nunan, 2015), empirical research on adult ELT in the private sector-especially in Southeast Asia, where PLCs rule the language education market-is sorely lacking. Especially few studies have methodically gathered the multi-stakeholder viewpoints of administrators, teachers, and students inside the same institutional ecosystem.

By looking at the present practices, difficulties, and improvement strategies of adult English language instruction in private language centers in Hanoi, this study seeks to close this gap. This paper specifically investigates (1) learner opinions of instructional quality, (2) teacher and managerial evaluations of teaching and learning conditions, and (3) the alignment-or misalignment-between institutional design and adult learning principles. This study provides theoretical contributions and practical insights by using a mixed-methods approach and evaluating both quantitative and qualitative data from 11 language centers, so helping to design more successful adult ELT programs in comparable educational environments.

Working closely with language centers around Hanoi, academic leaders have seen personally the ongoing conflict between operational limitations and educational goals. Although adult learners enroll with specific objectives-usually motivated by aspirations for career mobility or international study-their learning paths are often disrupted by inflexible courses, undertrained teachers, or environments that fail to support autonomy and real-life communication. These observations reflect more general systemic problems than isolated ones.

Therefore, this study reflects practical difficulties the researchers have faced in the professional setting in addition to reacting to scholarly gaps in the literature. It is driven by a need to close that discrepancy-between our knowledge of successful adult learning and what really occurs in private English centers' classrooms and conference rooms. The unique challenges faced by private centers in Southeast Asia, where rapid development typically outpaces the establishment of pedagogical frameworks and quality certification methods, remain largely unexplored despite the proliferation of studies on adult ELT worldwide. In addition to addressing theoretical gaps in the research, this study illustrates the practical challenges faced by educators and administrators who are attempting to bridge the gap between adult learning theory and actual classroom practice. The project intends to advance a more thorough and contextually aware understanding of adult English language instruction in Vietnam by tackling these systemic problems.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Adult Learning and Andragogical Principles

The motivations, cognitive processes, and learning behaviors of adult learners differ from those of children and adolescents. According to Knowles's fundamental concept of andragogy, which was further developed by Merriam and Caffarella (1999), adult learners are often self-directed, goal-oriented, and driven by experience. They prioritize education that is relevant, problem-oriented, and immediately useful to their professional or personal circumstances. Consequently, learner autonomy (Oxford, 2011; Zimmerman, 2002), personalization, and experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) must be integrated into adult education programs. These principles necessitate interactive methodologies that enhance practical communication abilities, context-relevant resources, and adaptable learning trajectories within the realm of English Language Teaching (ELT). Dörnyei (2001, 2005) highlights the significant influence of two primary elements - intrinsic motivation and feedback-on the perseverance of adult learners in acquiring a foreign language. Intrinsic motivation is characterized by the pleasure and interest that originate from within the learner; they engage in learning because they genuinely enjoy the language, find the process captivating, or aim to fulfill a personal objective related to the language, rather than being motivated by external incentives or pressures. Feedback, in contrast, involves the comments and recommendations learners receive regarding their learning journey. It aids them in recognizing their strengths, identifying areas for improvement, and adjusting their strategies to advance. Concurrently, Tomlinson (2013) underscores the significance of "learner-adjusted instruction", proposing that both teaching strategies and educational materials should be customized or modified to align with each adult learner's requirements, skill level, preferences, and learning style, instead of employing a uniform approach.

2.2. From Traditional ELT to Communicative and Experiential Approaches

In recent years, more interactive teaching methods such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) have largely supplanted the

traditional grammar-translation and lecture-focused approaches (Harmer, 2007; Nunan, 2015). These contemporary techniques position the teacher as a guide who engages students in activities that mimic real-life language use. Such methods are especially advantageous for adult learners, as they improve language proficiency and communication skills relevant to professional settings. Nonetheless, the persistent emphasis on exam-oriented curricula and rigid teaching frameworks impedes the widespread adoption of communicative teaching methods in numerous Asian countries, including Vietnam (Loc, 2010). Studies indicate that even well-intentioned reforms may struggle to be effectively implemented in classrooms without institutional backing and teacher training that aligns with adult learning principles.

2.3. Managing Language Centers: Balancing Education and Enterprise

There is a mix of market-driven tactics and educational goals that private language centers use to reach their goals. This two-part job is seen by Ingram (2001) and Walker (2010) as a conflict between academic honesty and client satisfaction. To be successful, these centers need to offer good training, one-on-one support, and smooth operations. Strong management methods are needed to keep this delicate balance. Language teachers use models like Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) and Context-Input-Process-Output (CIPO) to keep an eye on quality and encourage ongoing improvement (Zbar *et al.*, 2010). Along with planning and delivering the content, these models focus on how organizations do things like hiring teachers, testing students, and using technology. Khanh (2022) and Son (2011) have suggested adaptations of the CIPO model for PLCs in Vietnam, highlighting the importance of aligning teaching strategies with learner needs and market trends. Despite the acknowledged significance of adult-centered ELT, there is a lack of empirical studies on the practical application of communicative, personalized teaching methods in Southeast Asian private sector contexts. Few investigations in Vietnam have adopted a multi-stakeholder perspective, considering managers, teachers, and students within the same organizational framework. Additionally, there is limited understanding of how these stakeholders perceive challenges such as maintaining motivation, promoting self-directed learning, and ensuring program relevance to adult goals. This research addresses these gaps by integrating four distinct theoretical frameworks that inform institutional management and instructional design in adult English language teaching (ELT): andragogy, context-input-process-output (CIPO), plan-do-check-act (PDCA), and communicative language teaching (CLT). Table 1 summarizes the key features and relevance of each model to this study. By combining these approaches, the study adopts a comprehensive perspective to explore how language centers plan, execute, and enhance their programs while navigating managerial and pedagogical constraints, as well as how adult learners engage with English training.

Table 1. Key theoretical frameworks applied in the study

Theory/Model	Core Focus	Key Elements	Relevance to This Study
Andragogy (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999)	Principles of adult learning	Adults typically prefer to be self-directed and desire to have control over their learning journey. Their learning is often driven by specific objectives and aimed at addressing practical, real-world issues. They bring a wealth of life experiences that form a basis for gaining new insights. It is important for them to perceive the relevance and practical application of what they learn to their personal or professional contexts.	Guides the creation of learner profiles, the design of personalized curricula, and motivation strategies specifically crafted for adult learners. In the realm of educational management, andragogy aids in developing effective training programs for educators or administrators by concentrating on their unique needs and previous experiences.
CLT-Communicative Language Teaching (Nunan, 2015; Harmer, 2007)	Language teaching approach	In the teaching-learning process, the focus is on the needs, interests, and goals of learners. It highlights communicative activities that mimic real-world scenarios. It employs task-based learning, prompting students to use language to accomplish specific tasks.	Shapes the framework for classroom interactions, communication exercises, and combined learning activities. In terms of educational management, CLT requires that administrators ensure teachers have the necessary resources, space, and support to implement interactive and innovative teaching methods, moving away from traditional grammar-centric approaches.
PDCA-Plan-Do-Check-Act (Deming, 1986)	Continuous quality improvement in education	Develop a strategy based on objectives; execute the strategy; gather information and oversee its execution; evaluate outcomes, pinpoint issues, and make necessary modifications for the subsequent cycle.	Promotes ongoing enhancement of teaching standards and student support services. In the realm of educational management, the PDCA cycle serves as an essential instrument for assessing the success of policies, curricula, or support initiatives, allowing for timely modifications to improve the institution's overall quality.

CIPO-Context-Input-Process-Output (Zbar *et al.*, 2010; Khanh, 2022)	Systemic educational management	Schools are influenced by external contextual elements such as economic conditions, social dynamics, and policy frameworks. The system receives inputs like students, educators, funding, facilities, and curricula. Internally, processes include teaching strategies, interactions, and classroom management. The outputs are reflected in student performance, institutional growth, and the impact on the community.	The coordination and validation of data from all stakeholders and organizational levels are supported. The CIPO model offers managers a thorough understanding of school operations, aiding in the identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It enables data-driven decision-making and encourages sustainable institutional growth by analyzing the interconnections among all factors.

Although every one of these models provides insightful research on its own, their combined use lets one examine adult ELT in private language centers holistically. Promoting learner autonomy, relevance, and communicative competency-the educational imperatives-andragogy and CLT/TBLT stress Conversely, PDCA and CIPO present different angles on how institutions could control and preserve these educational strategies by means of systematic alignment and iterative development. This synthesis guarantees that the research not only catches the complexity of teaching and learning but also addresses the managerial issues special to the private sector in Southeast Asia. It also directly shapes the study topics by organizing them inside a framework that considers institutional efficacy as well as instructional quality.

3. METHODOLOGY
3.1. Research Design
This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design to investigate adult English Language Teaching (ELT) practices in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in Hanoi, Vietnam. Quantitative and qualitative data were simultaneously collected and analyzed independently prior to integration during the interpretation phase. This method corresponds with the CIPO framework, facilitating a systematic examination of contextual conditions, institutional inputs, instructional processes, and learning outcomes. The PDCA principles were employed to analyze management strategies and identify areas for instructional enhancement.

3.2. Research Sites and Participants
The survey was conducted in 11 private language centers that are part of a nationwide network for English education. A total of 459 people participated, including 356 adult learners aged 17 to 45 from various educational and professional backgrounds, 71 English teachers working full-time and part-time, and 32 academic managers and administrators. Participants were selected using stratified intentional sampling to guarantee diversity among center sizes, regions, and instructional modalities (offline, hybrid, and online).

3.3. Instruments
3.3.1. Quantitative Survey Questionnaires
Three distinct surveys were developed for administrators, instructors, and students. Each was developed using the CIPO framework, which comprises three dimensions: learning

process and motivation (input & process in CIPO), learning environment and outcomes (output & feedback mechanisms), and quality of instruction (plan & do in PDCA). A five-point Likert scale was employed to evaluate the items, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree." The survey instruments were evaluated with 25 participants and validated by three ELT experts to ensure their internal consistency and clarity. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of all subscales were greater than 0.85, as indicated by the reliability analysis.

3.3.2. Semi-structured Interview Protocols
Comprehensive interviews were conducted with a group consisting of five educators, five school officials, and five students. The interviews delved into the participants' personal experiences concerning motivation, engagement in the classroom, customization, feedback from teachers, learning support mechanisms, and environmental limitations. With consent, all interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and subjected to thematic analysis.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure
Data were collected between August and October 2024. Surveys were administered both online and in printed form, depending on participant preference. Interviews were conducted either face-to-face or via Zoom, depending on availability and scheduling issues.

3.5. Data Analysis
Quantitative data were examined using SPSS v27, which included descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations, cross-tabulations, and reliability assessments. For qualitative data, thematic analysis was conducted, utilizing both deductive codes from existing literature and survey areas, as well as inductive patterns that emerged from the data itself. The themes were cross-validated between the two coders. Triangulation was applied across stakeholder perspectives (learners, teachers, and managers), data types (quantitative and qualitative), and institutional conditions (size, mode, and staffing models) to ensure analytical credibility and contextual validity.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
4.1. Learner Profile and Motivational Characteristics
The demographic data reveals that the majority of learners are

young, with more than 90% of participants being under 30 years old and 65.7% identifying as university students (Table 2). This pattern underscores the increasing need for English as a means for academic and professional growth in Vietnam's swiftly evolving urban areas. Initially, most learners demonstrated strong motivation and well-defined objectives, which align with the principles of andragogy that focus on goal-oriented and self-directed learning in adults (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Nonetheless, both quantitative and qualitative findings pointed to a crucial trend: a notable decrease in learner motivation over time, caused by a discrepancy between their expectations and the actual classroom experience. Key contributing factors included limited classroom interaction, repetitive content, and weak personalization strategies, as supported by open-ended responses such as, "I signed up because I wanted to study overseas, but the classes feel repetitive after a while." - Learner, age 23. "I expected more speaking practice, but it's mostly the teacher talking and us taking notes." - Learner, age 26.

Table 2. Demographic and Motivational Profile of Learners (n = 356)

Category	Subgroup	%
Age	Under 20	50.0
	20-30	44.7
	Above 30	5.3
Employment	Students	65.7
	Working adults	25.3
	High school pupils	9.0

These reflections suggest that learners' needs for autonomy, task relevance, and communicative engagement-central to CLT and TBLT approaches (Nunan, 2015; Harmer, 2007)-were inadequately addressed in classroom delivery. From a theoretical standpoint, the reduction in motivation can be explained by Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which posits that learning environments need to satisfy three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Learners perceive that current instructional designs are lacking in all these areas. By analyzing survey data alongside interview responses, this study reveals a systemic problem in adult English programs: although learner motivation initially starts high, it is not sustainably supported due to misalignments in programmatic and pedagogical approaches. This finding highlights the strategic necessity for increased personalization, contextualized learning materials, communicative teaching methods, and teacher-training programs that specifically address adult learning principles.

4.2. Learner Perceptions of Instructional Quality
Students generally gave positive feedback on the quality of instruction, particularly highlighting the clarity of learning objectives (M = 4.31), the availability of resources (M = 4.29), and the coherence of curriculum design (M = 4.25) (Table 3). These results suggest that the essential components of program delivery, as outlined in the input-process stages of the

CIPO model, are largely in place. Nonetheless, interview data revealed some dissatisfaction with classroom dynamics and instructional engagement: "The lessons are well-organized, but they don't speak to my real-life situations", - Learner, age 28. "There are group activities, but we mostly just follow the teacher's lead". - Learner, age 22.

Table 3. Learner Evaluation of Teaching Practices

Item	Mean (M)	SD
B1.1. Students have a clear understanding of the knowledge and skills they will gain after completing each lesson or course.	4.31	0.748
B1.2. Students have all the tools and resources they need for their learning.	4.29	0.737
B1.3. The curriculum is well-structured to help learners avoid "losing direction" and make steady progress.	4.25	0.755
B1.4. Students have a clear understanding of the assessment methods and the criteria that will be applied. During group tasks, they are aware of each person's responsibilities and how to work together effectively. Everything is open and straightforward.	4.26	0.744
B1.5. The curriculum includes a variety of activities designed to make learners feel more at ease and involved, which in turn enhances the effectiveness of knowledge acquisition.	4.27	0.761

These qualitative insights reveal a gap between the structure of the curriculum and its practical relevance, a core concept in both andragogy and CLT. Although materials and plans are available, the learning process is predominantly teacher-led, which restricts chances for independent learning and communicative engagement. This discrepancy highlights the necessity to shift from simply covering the curriculum to actively implementing it, ensuring that content delivery aligns with the communicative and problem-solving objectives of adult education.

4.3. Administrator Perspectives on Teaching and Learning
Administrators expressed moderate satisfaction with instructional operations, particularly in terms of goal setting and the provision of materials (M = 3.91). However, the mean scores were lower for items related to personalization (M = 3.50), practical application (M = 3.28), and collaborative learning (M = 3.22) (Table 4). The results suggest that although strategic planning corresponds with the "Plan" and "Context" stages of the PDCA-CIPO models, there are notable difficulties encountered when executing the "Do" and "Process" stages of the model.

Table 4. Manager Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Conditions (n = 32)

Focus Area	Item (sample)	Mean (M)
Teaching-Goal setting and alignment	Clear course objectives (P1.1)	3.91
Teaching-Instructional planning	Plans aligned with learner needs (P1.2)	3.75
Teaching-Flexibility	Adapting to learner levels (P1.6)	3.59
Learning-Personalization	Learning styles considered (P2.2)	3.50
Learning-Real-world application	Practice-oriented instruction (P2.6)	3.28
Learning-Collaboration	Use of group/project work (P2.7)	3.22

This was echoed in interviews: "We train teachers to follow plans, but we lack time to coach them on differentiation." - Center Manager, Center A. "We see the need for learner-centered methods, but class sizes and tight schedules make it hard." - Academic Director, Center D.

The comments highlighted the structural constraints that impede the effective application of adult learning principles. Although administrators are aware of best practices, their implementation is obstructed by system-level limitations in staffing, time allocation, and performance metrics-an observation that aligns with the knowing-doing gap in the educational leadership literature (Fullan, 2001).

4.4. Teacher Reflections on Instructional Design and Support

According to Table 5, teachers largely affirmed the presence of materials (M = 4.10) and the clarity of instructional objectives (M = 4.00). This indicates a high level of operational consistency but also points to a shortfall in teacher autonomy and professional ownership-factors that are known to affect the quality and innovation of instruction (Nation & Macalister, 2010). Nonetheless, the average score for involvement in curriculum development was only moderate (M = 3.59), reflecting a lack of professional agency in making instructional decisions. Interview insights revealed deeper concerns: "We receive everything top-down. I wish we could adapt more to each class." - Teacher, full-time. "It feels like we're delivering a product, not guiding a process." - Teacher, part-time.

Table 5. Teacher Perspectives on Teaching Quality (n = 71)

Item	Mean (M)	SD
P1.2 Teaching materials are provided in advance	4.10	0.928
P1.1 Course objectives are clearly communicated	4.00	0.828
P1.7 Teachers involved in curriculum design	3.59	1.077

The responses highlight a fundamental tension between standardization and adaptability, which is a core issue in private language education. In the context of PDCA, educators are heavily engaged in the "Do" phase but have minimal involvement in the "Plan" or "Check" stages, which hampers innovation and a sense of ownership. The absence of both upward and lateral feedback mechanisms hinders professional growth and diminishes the ability to respond to students' needs effectively.

4.5. Infrastructure and Learning Environment

While both educators and school leaders praised the physical infrastructure, they voiced their dissatisfaction with the online systems and spaces for self-directed learning. This highlights a notable weakness in digital learning environments and points to a lack of physical infrastructure that supports peer collaboration and self-regulated learning, which are essential in adult education (Zimmerman, 2002; Wood, 2017). Administrators gave high marks to the physical infrastructure and learning materials (M = 4.16) but were not pleased with the learning management system (LMS) (M = 3.28) and the absence of shared learning spaces (M = 2.94) (Table 6). This disparity in learning environment resources hinders both self-regulation and peer learning. These issues were also raised by teachers and students: "The LMS is available, but we seldom use it. It's cumbersome and outdated". - Teacher, Center B. "There's no place to stay and review. We just leave after class". - Learner, age 21.

Table 6. Evaluation of Learning Environment (Administrators, n = 32)

Item	Mean (M)
P3.2 Learning materials are accessible and sufficient	4.16
P3.1 Classrooms equipped with modern teaching tools	3.75
P3.4 LMS is effective for learning support	3.28
P3.5 Common learning space is available	2.94

These remarks highlight the overlooked chances to develop comprehensive learning settings, which are vital components of adult education systems that promote independence and proficiency.

In the absence of effective digital or physical support systems, learning becomes fragmented and constrained by time rather than being continuous and self-directed.

4.6. Discussion

4.6.1. Declining Learner Motivation: The Engagement-Sustainability Gap

Although learners commenced programs with considerable intrinsic drive, the study revealed a notable decrease in engagement over time, mostly due to insufficient classroom interaction and non-individualized training. This discovery contradicts the core tenets of andragogy, which prioritize self-direction, experiencing significance, and goal orientation

(Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). This pattern corresponds with the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which asserts that unfulfilled desires for autonomy, competence, and relatedness reduce motivational persistence. Although learner needs are acknowledged in theory, classroom settings often fail to adequately meet them. Schools should incorporate personalized learning plans, project-based activities, and flexible pacing systems to sustain long-term motivation. Teacher education should focus on methods that encourage learner independence, such as scaffolding, peer interaction, and self-evaluation.

4.6.2. Instructional Design-Delivery Misalignment

Although learners provided favorable assessments of instructional clarity and curriculum organization, the interview data indicated a divergence between curriculum design and its applicability to real-world situations. Students sought practical communicative experiences but indicated that the education was primarily written and instructor-directed. This indicates an inadequate execution of CLT and TBLT principles (Nunan, 2015; Harmer, 2007), which prioritize interaction, meaning negotiation, and practical applications. Curriculum developers ought to utilize a backward design methodology, commencing with genuine communication tasks and integrating authentic materials. Moreover, educators should be enabled to customize content based on student goals and contextual needs, supported by peer collaboration and lesson co-design platforms.

4.6.3. Limited Teacher Agency and Professional Participation

Educators have indicated that, although receiving resources and instructional frameworks, their participation in curriculum development is negligible, and they possess restricted liberty in modifying lessons. This circumstance undermines their professional identity and motivation while limiting their instructional responsiveness. According to the PDCA paradigm, educators primarily participate in the "Do" phase while being sidelined in the "Plan" and "Check" phases, which consequently hampers continuous improvement and feedback mechanisms (Deming, 1986). It is essential to implement systems for teacher consultation in program development, encourage reflective practices, and enable grassroots innovation. Designating time, resources, and acknowledgment for curriculum feedback improves teacher engagement and instructional excellence.

4.6.4. Incomplete Implementation of Learner-Centered Models

The administrators exhibited an understanding of andragogical ideas; yet, their application was both incomplete and inconsistent. Data from surveys and interviews highlight a "knowing-doing" gap, where the concept of learner-centeredness is supported but not put into practice due to institutional and capacity limitations. This situation exemplifies a widespread disconnect between theory and practice, common in many educational reforms in resource-constrained settings (Fullan, 2001). According to the CIPO model, robust inputs and context may not necessarily lead to successful processes or outputs. It is advisable to restructure instructor performance criteria

to emphasize process quality, including student engagement and feedback delivery, rather than rigid compliance with syllabus coverage. Furthermore, the advocacy for micro-level PDCA cycles in classrooms is promoted, enabling educators to establish, evaluate, and enhance their teaching methodologies within their particular environments.

4.6.5. Deficient Learning Ecosystem: The Environment-Continuity Gap

Despite the presence of adequately prepared materials and classrooms, both students and instructors have recognized shortcomings in digital infrastructure, including Learning Management Systems (LMS), as well as a deficiency of environments suitable to independent or collaborative learning. These deficiencies obstruct the continuity of learning, especially beyond the classroom, which is crucial for adult learners managing intricate schedules. This signifies a structural deficiency in the input design, which consequently compromises the process and output elements within the CIPO model. Moreover, it constrains the realization of autonomy and competence elements essential for sustainable adult learning. To resolve these challenges, it is advisable to invest in intuitive LMS systems, adopt blended learning approaches, and create "learning commons" or digital forums to promote peer interaction, revision, and support. Integrating instructional design with environmental scaffolding can effectively accomplish long-term learning results.

4.6.6. Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This research significantly enhances the literature by amalgamating andragogical theory with private sector English language teaching methods. It utilizes the CIPO-PDCA dual framework to evaluate systemic alignment among stakeholders and introduces an empirically substantiated approach for improving adult English language teaching in Southeast Asia, a region characterized by the rising presence of private centers that remain underexplored. This study offers a contextualized knowledge of adult English language teaching dynamics in urban Vietnam by integrating a multi-stakeholder viewpoint and triangulating quantitative and qualitative data, an area that has been mostly neglected in TESOL scholarship thus far.

4.7. Implications
4.7.1. For Program Designers and Managers

Program managers are urged to transition from conventional, syllabus-focused planning to more learner-centered frameworks. This transition entails doing continuous needs assessments, diversifying course styles, and creating adaptive learning pathways for students. Utilizing the PDCA cycle at the institutional level helps promote a culture focused on evidence-based decision-making and ongoing enhancement.

4.7.2. For Teachers and Teacher Training Institutions

Program managers are urged to transition from conventional, syllabus-focused planning to more learner-centered frameworks. This transition entails doing continuous needs assessments, diversifying course styles, and creating adaptive learning pathways for students. Utilizing the PDCA cycle at the

institutional level helps promote a culture focused on evidence-based decision-making and ongoing enhancement.

4.7.3. For Learning Environment Developers
Private institutions must reevaluate their support infrastructure by investing in modular Learning Management System platforms, asynchronous learning tools, and collaborative physical environments. Adult learners necessitate adaptable and cohesive environments that transcend the classroom and promote enduring learning practices.

4.7.4. For Policymakers and Quality Assurance Bodies
Considering the pivotal function of PLCs in adult English education in Vietnam and elsewhere, quality assurance systems must advance to encompass not just input-output metrics but also learner experience, motivation, sustainability, and personalization. Regulators want to contemplate the implementation of hybrid models grounded in CIPO and PDCA principles to guarantee accountability and foster innovation within the private English language teaching sector.

5. CONCLUSION
This research examines the obstacles and enhancement tactics in adult English language instruction at private language centers in Hanoi, utilizing a mixed-methods approach. It delineates five fundamental issues: diminished motivation, misaligned teaching methodologies, restricted teacher autonomy, inconsistent learner-centered implementation, and insufficient learning ecosystems. These problems indicate profound structural discrepancies between adult learning theory and institutional practice. This study theoretically enhances TESOL studies by incorporating and applying andragogy, CLT, CIPO, and PDCA frameworks within a Southeast Asian private school environment, which is underrepresented in global research. It offers practical strategies for targeted interventions that can improve the experiences and results of adult learners. Subsequent research may enhance this study by performing comparative analyses across various provinces or nations, investigating the long-term effects of personalized learning interventions, and further examining learner subgroups (e.g., working professionals versus university students) for more precise program design. This study emphasizes the necessity of reconceptualizing adult ELT by addressing both structural and instructional dimensions, viewing it not merely as a simplified extension of school-based approaches but as a unique, dynamic, and learner-centered pursuit. Reflecting on this research, what stands out most is not the novelty of the challenges uncovered-they are widely known among practitioners-but the persistence and complexity of these issues when viewed from multiple perspectives. It became clear that solving them requires more than pedagogical reform: it demands a cultural shift in how private institutions view adult learners-not as customers to be retained, but as partners in learning who bring rich experiences and expectations. This paper does not claim to offer universal solutions. Instead, it seeks to provoke dialogue among educators, administrators, and policymakers who believe that adult English language education deserves more than one-size-fits-all models. There is no one-size-fits-all formula. Every classroom and every

English center is different. Therefore, educators, administrators, and policymakers need to collaborate to find the most flexible and suitable solutions for the specific characteristics of their own language center. It is essential to understand how adults learn and what they truly need and then build policies and educational programs accordingly, rather than applying a rigid, mechanical approach. Teachers must be equipped with modern teaching skills, especially methods suitable for adults, techniques for differentiating instruction for students of varying levels within the same class, and a practical, hands-on approach that helps learners communicate and apply their knowledge immediately. Grant teachers the freedom and creativity to innovate in their teaching methods. Simultaneously, the school and its management must foster a supportive environment that always encourages teachers to share their perspectives, explore new ideas, and continuously improve their lessons. The ultimate goal is not just about test scores. What's crucial is that learners feel more motivated and more confident and can genuinely communicate better. The language center needs to evaluate these student outcomes to determine if the current curriculum, teaching staff, and learning environment are effective and to identify what adjustments are needed for continuous improvement. The researchers hope this study contributes, in a small but meaningful way, to that ongoing conversation.

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