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PROCEEDINGS
TESOL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS 2017
INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY IN TEACHING
AND LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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**Theme: INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY IN TEACHING
AND LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Date: May 20 2017

Venue: HCMC Open University

37 Ho Hao Hon, District 1, Hochiminh City, Vietnam

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MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CONVENOR

Dear participants,

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, I am pleased to welcome you to the 5th HCMC Open University TESOL Conference 2017.

A special welcome for our keynote speakers: Dr. Diana Dudzik and Dr. Thuy Bui, each of whom brings a wealth of research expertise to the Conference. I look forward to their insightful presentations, and their input and comments during the conference.



The 5th annual HCMC Open University TESOL Conference has attracted a large number of high quality papers leading to a rich one-day conference program. I would like to thank the reviewers for evaluating 50 papers in a limited time frame. My special thanks go to the moderators of the sessions who have willingly undertaken the responsibility of organizing the sessions.

I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Nguyen Van Phuc, Rector of HCMC Open University, Dr. Le Thi Thanh Thu, Dean of the Graduate School, and Dr. Nguyen Thuy Nga, Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, who support and help us to run the 5th TESOL Conference.

I am delighted to express my thanks to the publishers McMillan, Cambridge, and Cengage for their contributions and support of the 5th TESOL Conference.

I hope that your participation to this conference will provide you with the opportunity to learn from other experiences, explore new

horizons and share best practices in TESOL.

Hochiminh City, venue of this conference, will enable you to discover a city with impressive architecture, large cultural offer and beautiful surroundings that will make your stay unforgettable.

Thank you very much for coming to the 5th TESOL Conference. We hope you enjoy your time with us.

Dr. Huynh Cong Minh Hung

Conference Convenor

KEYNOTE SPEAKER 1

EFL Teacher Development for the 21st Century



Dr. Diana Dudzik

Fulbright Scholar, Fulbright Program in Vietnam

Abstract

What do 21st Century English teachers need to know and be able to do? How can technology help teachers to develop? Vietnam has been asking these two questions since 2008. Two major answers are the development of the country's first subject-specific teachers standards, the English Teacher Competencies Framework, and a program to design blended (online and face-to-face) teacher development for the country's 80,000 public school English teachers. We'll examine these two questions to explore what Vietnam's English teachers need to know and be able to do, and how they can take charge of their professional development using online resources.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER 2

Critical Literacy in EFL Teaching: Agentive Empowerment, Ideological and Language Transformations



Dr. Thuy Bui

Vietnamese-German University

Abstract

The study, conducted in a mountainous province in Vietnam, explored how teaching methods of critical literacy (CL) were effective with high school students and their perceptions about these approaches. The study employed engaged ethnography (e.g., Phyak & Bui, 2014; Davis & Phyak, 2015) in which the researcher worked collectively with 27 students in understanding current pedagogical issues and applying CL in a real classroom. In particular, students were provided an opportunity to learn English through CL which was embedded in project-based learning. The findings indicated CL pedagogies significantly improved students' English language competency and multiple skills such as leadership, presentation, and collaboration. Moreover, the students' responses strongly indicated CL is a meaningful, applicable, and critical approach for their English language improvement, socio-cultural awareness, and agentive development. The study offered some recommendations for applying CL pedagogies in language teaching, paying special attention to students' agencies while providing them with ample CL methods, and opportunities to enrich their academic English competency for effective language learning and ideological and academic transformations.



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THE 5TH ANNUAL HCMC OPEN UNIVERSITY TESOL CONFERENCE

Time: 7h30-16h15, Saturday, 20 May, 2017

Venue: HCMC Open University 35-37 Hồ Hảo Hớn St., District 1

CONFERENCE PROGRAM					
Time	Event				
7:30	Registration (Hall-2 nd Floor)				
8:00	Opening Ceremony (Hall- 2 nd Floor)				
8: 15 – 9: 15 Keynote 1: Dr. Diana Dudzik (EFL Teacher Development for the 21st Century) (Hall – 2nd Floor)					
9: 15 -9:30 TEA BREAK					
	Hall- 2 nd floor	Room: 504	Room: 702	Room: 604	Room: 602
	<u>Session 1</u> TEACHER DEVELOPMENT Moderator: <i>Dr. Huynh Cong Minh Hung</i>	<u>Session 2</u> COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGAGUE LEARNING Moderator: <i>Bui Do Cong Thanh</i>	<u>Session 3</u> LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES Moderator: <i>Associate Professor Ho Thi Kieu Oanh</i>	<u>Session 4</u> TEACHING MODELS Moderator: <i>Dr. Le Thi Thuy Nhung</i>	<u>Session 5</u> TEACHING CHINESE Moderator: <i>Dr. Ho Thi Trinh Anh</i>

<p>9:30</p>	<p>Writing for publication in applied linguistics in Vietnam: Challenges and opportunities <i>Bui Thuy</i></p>	<p>Early-career teachers' professional experiences: an empirical study on ICT application in teaching pictures storytelling in HCMC, VN <i>Tran Vu Diem Thuy</i></p>	<p>A2 –level English listening learning by non-major English Vietnamese students at Da Nang University <i>Ho Thi Kieu Oanh</i></p>	<p>English medium instruction in higher education: Theoretical perspectives and recent development <i>Le Thi Thuy Nhung</i></p>	<p>Một vài kỹ xảo khi giảng dạy tính từ làm trạng ngữ trong tiếng Trung Quốc <i>La Thi Thuy Hien</i></p>
<p>10: 00</p>	<p>The importance of Higher-Order Thinking with young learners <i>David Kaye (Macmillan)</i></p>	<p>Vietnamese high school English teacher's levels of ICT integration in teaching according to SAMR model <i>Nguyen Xuan Minh</i></p>	<p>Evaluating the effectiveness of using Sandwich Feedback by Vietnamese and American teachers on students learning attitude <i>Lai Hoai Chau</i></p>	<p>EFL curriculum development in the Vietnamese higher education: An innovative approach <i>Pham Ngoc Thach</i></p>	<p>Một số vấn đề trong dạy và học môn kỹ năng viết ngành tiếng Trung tại Khoa NN, Đại Học Mở TPHCM <i>Truong Vy Quyen</i></p>
<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>
<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>

	Hall- 2 nd floor	Room: 504	Room:702	Room: 604	Room: 602
10:30	<p>Large scale teacher development in the 21st century – issues and solutions</p> <p><i>Pham Uyen (Cambridge)</i></p>	<p>Business English students’ use of website-based resources for translation</p> <p><i>Chu Quang Phe</i></p>	<p>Exploring the motivations of non – English major students in English learning at HOU</p> <p><i>Le Phuong Thao & Nguyen Chau Bich Tuyen</i></p>	<p>The importance of intercultural communicative competence in English language teaching and learning</p> <p><i>Pham Tan Tai & Tran Quoc Thao</i></p>	<p>汉语时政较为突出的用词现象越译例析</p> <p><i>Ho Thi Trinh Anh</i></p>
11:00	<p>TT-SET augmented with POT: a structured procedure for academics’ reflection</p> <p><i>Nguyen Vu Phuong</i></p>	<p>The indispensability of developing online training system in faculty of foreign languages at HCMC Open University</p> <p><i>Nguyen Chau Bich Tuyen</i></p>	<p>Students’ attitudes towards project activities in pilot English textbooks Grade 10</p> <p><i>Le Hong Cam Tu</i></p> <p><i>Phuong Hoang Yen</i></p>	<p>Project based learning in teaching writing skills</p> <p><i>Diem Thi Thu Thuy – Tran Thi Hanh</i></p>	<p>Những khó khăn của sinh viên ngành tiếng Trung ở cấp độ sơ cấp khi học môn đọc hiểu và một vài kiến nghị giảng dạy</p> <p><i>Trần Quang Huy</i></p>
11:30	<p>In-service professional development to university English</p>	<p>Role play in an ESL classroom through movie segments</p>	<p>Attitudes towards brainstorming and problems facing English-writing</p>	<p>Benefits of project work in ESP classes</p> <p><i>Pham Duc Thuan</i></p>	<p>Bàn về biên soạn giáo trình Văn Học Trung Quốc cho sinh viên</p>

	teachers: Implications for improvement <i>Le Bich Thuy</i>	<i>Nguyen Thuy Duong</i>	learners <i>Le Thi Minh Thuy</i>		ngành ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc <i>Luu Hón Vũ</i>
12:00 – 13:00 LUNCH (Restaurant “Tu Do” 58 Ho Hao Hon, District 1, HCMC)					
13:00-14:00 Keynote 2: Dr. Bui Thuy (Critical Literacy in EFL Teaching: Agentive Empowerment, Ideological and Language Transformations) (Hall 2 nd F)					
	Hall- 2nd floor	Room: 504	Room:702	Room: 604	Room: 602
	<u>Session 1</u> RESEARCH STREAMS Moderator: <i>Dr. Huynh Cong Minh Hung</i>	<u>Session 5:</u> COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING Moderator: <i>Dr. Nguyen Thi Xuan Lan</i>	<u>Session 3</u> LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES Moderator: <i>Associate Professor Ho Thi Kieu Oanh</i>	<u>Session 4</u> TEACHING MODELS Moderator: <i>Dr. Le Thi Thuy Nhung</i>	<u>Session 5</u> TEACHING SKILLS Moderator: <i>Bui Do Cong Thanh</i>
14:00	An investigation into conceptual metaphors	Non- English major students’ reflections	Students’ silence in EFL classroom at Military	Utilizing posters in oral presentation in	Developing HOU English majors’

	denoting “LIFE” in American and Vietnamese short stories <i>Dinh Thi Mai Anh</i>	of computer-mediated collaborative learning <i>Nguyen Thi Xuan Lan</i>	Science Academy <i>Nguyen Thu Hanh</i>	American and British studies <i>Vu Doan Thi Phuong Thao</i>	critical and creative thinking skills through photo-based activities <i>Bui Do Cong Thanh</i>
14:30-14:45 TEA BREAK					
	Hall- 2nd floor	Room: 504	Room:702	Room: 604	Room: 602
14:45	The logic of four textbooks under the proposition analysis <i>Truong Ngoc Tuong Linh</i>	Application of web based tools in pronunciation teaching at tertiary level <i>Tran Hong Le & Le Nguyen Dieu Anh</i>	How to avoid common prepositional errors made by Vietnamese ESL learners: A cognitive linguistic perspectives <i>Tran Tin Nghi</i>	A discussion on communicative language teaching <i>Nguyen Binh Phuong Ngan Trang</i>	A study on speaking skill development in the light of behaviorism <i>Vo Duy Duc</i>
15:15	Some factors affecting the acquisition of the passive voice <i>Truong Van Anh</i>	Using the E-portfolio on Google Sites as an Assessment Tool to	Factors inhibiting Vietnamese non majored English students’ willingness to communicate	A comparison of Vietnamese and American greetings in order for language	Investigating some elements affecting the readability of TOEIC text primary level

		help English student teachers develop their autonomy <i>Phan Thi Thu Nga</i>	<i>Nguyen Van Tham & Phuong Hoang Yen</i>	learners to communicate more effectively <i>Ho Thi My Linh</i>	<i>Nguyen Thi Nhu Diep & Luong An Vinh</i>
15:45	An investigation into the relationship between self- efficacy and oral presentations <i>Nguyen Thi Ngoc Hanh</i>		The development of bilingual English-Vietnamese education in Vietnam <i>Hoang Thi Tuyet</i>	The effectiveness of project based learning integration in the curricula at the school of foreign languages Thai Nguyen University <i>Bui Ngoc Anh</i>	Teachers' use of oral corrective feedback in speaking lesson <i>Lai Bao Hoa</i>
16:15 Closing Ceremony and Lucky Draw Prizes (Sponsored by Cambridge and Cengage) (<i>Hall – 2nd floor</i>)					

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING INTEGRATION IN THE CURRICULA AT THE SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY

Bui Ngoc Anh

School of Foreign Languages - Thai Nguyen University

Abstract

The paper mainly discussed the importance and major advantages of Project-Based Learning integration in the curricula at School of Foreign Languages, Thai Nguyen University. For methodology, there was a combination of a pre-experimental design (pre and post-test) and the case study research design. The researcher took an observation on some periods of the subjects centered around projects and asked for students' perspectives about project-based learning by giving them questionnaire. Furthermore, individual in person and online interviews were also conducted with teachers from English Department at the same school. After analyzing collected information and statistics, results indicated that both teachers and students felt favorable to working with project-based learning. It brought remarkable effects to learning and teaching process. Particularly, students had chances to improve not only basic language skills but also other necessary competence.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English is considered to be the most popular language in the world. It is seen as a useful tool for the purpose of connecting people on the earth and the key to achieving success in a variety of fields. However, "How to teach and learn English effectively?" is still a big issue which demands researchers to spend large amounts of

time and effort to discover the best answers to this question. Integrating project-based learning in the curricula at Thai Nguyen University in general and School of Foreign Languages in particular is regarded as a useful and efficient strategy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

General definition of project-based learning

There are a range of terms which both refer to project-based learning such as *experiential learning* and *negotiated language learning* (Eyring, 2001; Legutke & Thomas, 1991), *project method* (Kilpatrick, 1926), *project approach* (Diffily, 1996) and *investigative research* (Kenny, 1993).

According to Legutke and Thomas (1991), PBL is not an available method but an "educational philosophy which aims at providing the direction, and some possible routes, to a more democratic and participatory society". In other words, it is the learners' duty to base on instructional steps to create their own products and deal with troubles by themselves.

Also, Beckett (2002) regards a project work as a lasting activity which consists of both personal and collaborative tasks, namely building up inquiry questions and schedule as well as gathering and analyzing data.

In addition, it is claimed by Haines (1989) that projects, multi-competence operations, attach special importance to topics rather than small details. Learners play a vital part in choosing appropriate fields and working approaches so that they can control the "end product". The writer convincingly concludes that project method helps students to "recycle" their existing knowledge by giving them "natural contexts".

Moreover, researchers are advised to consider typical types of projects when defining PBL. The first type named *structured project* in which teachers give their pupils available and specific methods.

Thus, students just follow the indicated way for finding and tackling information. Besides, a *semi-structured research method* shows both project area and methodology providing that learners must be much more active and responsible for their studying process.

Thirdly, learner-centered language target is the characteristic of an *unstructured project*. That means they are free to create and manage the learning timetable, content and methodology (Petersen, 2004). In his viewpoint, the diverse ways of collecting data and where it is found also produce a number of projects. One of them is *correspondence research* through which messages are sent between people by using letters, phone calls and email. Another type is *survey project* that allows students to search for their favorite survey instruments, to gather necessary document and to analyze assembled ones. Last but not least, *production project* requires learners to work with materials such as boards, chalk, posters, slides and other visual and audible aids. Then, they are also asked to hand in reports, narrative work and brochures or to give a short oral presentation.

In conclusion, there are many kinds of projects and ways for defining PBL, so teachers should take them into consideration to apply this method at school effectively.

Advantages of project-based learning

Project-based learning integration brings a large number of benefits to teachers and students. According to many specialists, it is worth applying PBL at schools because of its undeniable effectiveness.

Beckett (2002) clearly states that project-based instruction gives learners motivation to acquire knowledge, to improve problem-solving ability, and to develop both independent and co-operative working skills. Students are usually believed to have a good chance to reinforce critical thinking and decision-making skills through working with subjects centered around projects.

Besides, this teaching approach creates a convenient condition for students to have “increased attendance, growth in self-reliance, and

improved attitudes toward learning” (Thomas, 2000). Dewey, an American pragmatist, also emphasizes that it is necessary to make the classroom become the society’s reflection. In that circumstance, students are allowed to act as real attendants and active learners, so they can get information better than just receive knowledge from their teachers passively (Eyring, 2001).

More convincingly, educators and professors all over the world also reveal positive results of studying with PBL integration. Peterson and Myer (1995) used to carry out a study to make comparisons between collaborative project and traditional style studying Community Agency Counseling: Programs, Issues, and Policies in a university in the US. Their research found that students were capable of understanding how agencies work and mastering the basics of running an agency due to project method. In Hong Kong, an English course organized by Gardner (1995) gained expected achievements by applying project research. His course was designed to develop students’ academic listening comprehension and note-taking skills. Fortunately, it increased not only listening and note-taking skills but also writing competence for learners in that university. Another successful learning model was in the UK with the attendance of a group of teenagers from West Germany. Hilton-Jones (1988) held a six-week project-based English-language course and she was pleased with the considerable results. Her program motivated the learners to enhance reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in English and enabled them to see their language learning needs through project-based activities.

Creating environment for experiential language learning is considered a preeminent advantage of studying with projects. Beck and Simpson (1993) provided a group of students an opportunity to learn language and improve personality by letting them join a voluntary campaign. Their first attempt to get cultural understanding was unsuccessful. However, after pointing out jobs descriptions and procedures clearly, they received pleasant outcomes. A majority of students in that group felt being improved dramatically with

confidence and fluent English speaking capacity over seven weeks getting involved in volunteer projects.

The effectiveness of PBL integration was also proved in Beckett's (2002) doctoral dissertation about the execution of project-based instruction in a Canadian secondary school class. After interviewing 73 pupils from Taiwan, Hong Kong and China, she concluded that students acquired knowledge and basic skills well through project work. Furthermore, teachers who applied this method expressed their interest of using it because they could take a multi-skill approach to language teaching.

Not only learners but also teachers find it beneficial to use PBL during learning and teaching process. Thomas (2000) indicates the fact that "professionalism" and "collaboration" among colleagues are remarkably enhanced. In addition, working with projects provides a good chance to build up close-knit relationships between teachers and students. Most educators agree that PBL integration brings along a model accommodating diverse learners by introducing a wide range of learning opportunities into the classroom.

In conclusion, project method offers learners great motivation for improving innate abilities and learning other necessary skills basing on their nonstop effort.

Method

The applied methodology in this study was a combination of pre-experimental design and the case study. The purpose is to make a comparison between pre-test's and post-test's results. Additionally, the descriptive research method was employed which combines characteristics of both quantitative and qualitative methodology. It can be seen as an effective way to describe the actual picture of numbers and statistics rather than explain it. More specifically, two main data gathering methods applied in this study were questionnaire and interview. The case study design also allowed researchers to explore individual difficulties of each learner and propose suitable

solutions to particular problems.

Participants

There were 84 students and 5 teachers taking part in this research. The participating students, 84 in total, with 81 females and 3 males, were from English Education Class – Course 35. Because they were sophomore, these pupils fell between the age of 19 and 22 and they have learnt English for at least 10 years. Despite coming from different provinces, they studied in the same class and shared the common objectives such as getting good marks in English subjects, mastering basic language skills, communicating well with foreigners, and having a stable job in the future.

Besides, five teachers of English belonging to varied age groups also participated in this study. They have been teaching English subjects and have background knowledge about PBL. All of the review questions were answered by them sincerely and concisely. Their cooperation and enthusiastic help made great contributions to the research's success.

INSTRUMENTS

Questionnaire

Questionnaire was designed for the purpose of investigating students' perspectives and evaluation about the importance and the effectiveness of PBL. All of the questions having the use of grammar and structures at the elementary level mainly focused on exploring their opinions about this studying method. This was a good chance for learners to reflect their subjects' content and effectiveness.

More particularly, ten questions were given to the participants which were completed within 20 minutes. In the first two questions, it was the students' job to answer the year numbers of learning English and the average mark for the two subjects "English Oral Proficiency" and "English Written Proficiency" at university. Next, they were asked whether PBL is important or not. The sixth question required them to

show their opinions and approval degree in terms of benefits got from project approach. The next two questions asked for ranking some given elements in the range of difficulty and showing attitudes about the importance of suggested solutions according to the level from 1 to 5. Last but not least, the investigator wanted to know the successful percent of PBL integration and students' additional recommendation to increase this method's effectiveness.

Interview

An interview with five teachers of English was implemented in which they shared opinions by answering ten questions designed by the researcher. They all have been teaching English at SFL-TNU and they have background knowledge about PBL. The goal of this activity is to find out the teachers' opinions about students' current results in English subjects and their perspectives about the effectiveness of PBL integration in the curricula at this university. Moreover, they were highly supposed to suggest some solutions to reduce limitations in studying projects in the future.

RESULTS

Students' perception of PBL integration's importance

According to the results got from the questionnaire, it could be concluded that almost all students agreed that PBL integration in the curricula at SFL – TNU was extremely important. Of all the participants, 87 percent of them claimed that PBL was “Very important”. The rest people (13 percent) considered it as an “important” method. More remarkably, none said that it was “not important”. Therefore, subjects around projects were regarded as a positive solution to reduce and solve problems encountered by learners when studying English.

Students' benefits getting from PBL integration

Generally speaking, PBL integration in the curricula brought students at SFL – TNU a lot of advantages in the recent years. Subjects

around projects could be considered as positive approaches which improved both teaching and studying qualification. The designed questionnaire gathered sophomore's viewpoints about benefits of PBL application and it could be reflected in the following table

Table 2: Students' opinions about benefits of PBL

Benefits of PBL	SA	A	D	SD	TS	AS
Developing integrated language skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing)	68	9	7	0	313	3.7
Improving critical thinking and problem-solving competence	33	41	10	0	275	3.3
Promoting independent and co-operative working skills	5	37	40	2	213	2.5
Having good chances to experience real-world situations	22	43	19	0	255	3.0
Making students more flexible by letting them take different roles (manager, monitor, researcher, employee, etc.)	25	54	5	0	272	3.2
Increasing students' confidence and communicating skills	13	68	3	0	262	3.1
Noted: 3.6 – 4: Strongly Agree; 2.6 – 3.5: Agree; 1.6 – 2.5: Disagree; 1 – 1.5: Strongly Disagree						

Results from teacher's interview

The interview was carried out by the researcher with the attendance of five teachers from English Department at SFL-TNU. There were 10 questions in total and they were divided into three main parts.

Firstly, the first three questions were intended to find out the teacher's evaluation of students' results in EOP (English Oral

Proficiency) and EWP (English Written Proficiency). Some shared: “The overall result was at normal level, usually between 6.5 and 7.5. Just a few students got the AS of 8 or 9”. It could be explained that they put much attention to their favorite skills and neglect other skills for a long time without revision.

Secondly, the following five queries collected these lectures’ assessment about PBL integration’s effectiveness as well as difficulties encountered meanwhile applying this approach. Two of them revealed that they used to teach Drama Project and Magazine Project and those subjects appeared to be extremely profitable to their students. However, because those were new ones, so both teachers and pupils jumped into troubles in implementing them at university.

Lastly, the interviewees were supposed to give some suggested advices for the purpose of improving PBL’s qualification. Several teachers shared: “Giving students more chances to practice both language skills at school and providing them extra sample products from previous generations may help them to study better”.

Discussion

The results of the study showed that almost all students (87%) strongly affirmed the great importance of PBL integration in the curricula at SFL. The initial reason was that PBL brought them opportunities to practice all language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) at the same time. The latter reason was that subjects around projects also develop learners’ other vital skills like problem-solving and critical thinking. Moreover, it is PBL that reduces students’ difficulties in language learning and raises their results in English subjects. Therefore, it can be considered as a positive solution in teaching and learning language at university.

However, in addition to significant advantages having form PBL, the sophomore also came across some areas of difficulties while working with projects and students sincerely expressed their viewpoints about

the importance of solutions in the questionnaire which would contribute to reduce PBL integration's limitations. These opinions should be taken into consideration so as to improve the effectiveness of this approach in the future.

CONCLUSION

In summary, this study was designed to investigate teachers and students' perspectives towards the effectiveness of project-based learning integration. A small survey was conducted with the attendance of 84 pupils and 5 teachers of English at SFL-TNU. By using data collection instruments and background information at PBL, the researcher found out significant results and discussed it with an objective view. According to the findings, although students have learnt English for a long time, their average mark in English subjects was not as high as expected. Nevertheless, PBL could be seen as a positive solution to this problem. According to some lecturers, this method brought learners not only basic knowledge but also necessary skills through real-life contexts.

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS DENOTING “LIFE” IN AMERICAN AND VIETNAMESE SHORT STORIES

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Abstract

Metaphor has attracted the attention of scholars interested in language for more than 2000 years (Ning Yu, 1998). Traditionally, metaphor was viewed as a matter of language, only used in literature to embellish discourse (Kövecses, 2010). However, cognitive linguistics presents a different view of metaphor, stating that metaphor is pervasive and essential in language and thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). It is defined as understanding one abstract conceptual domain (target domain), in terms of another concrete one (source domain). The concept of life has been one of the most common target domains, which is hard to fully comprehend without establishing a set of mappings, i.e. a set of systematic correspondences, between this undelineated notion and other better-known ones. Therefore, this study attempts to probe into conceptual metaphors denoting “life” in nineteen American and nineteen Vietnamese short stories from 1975 to 1991 in the light of Lakoff and Johnson’s framework (1980). The two sets of collected data, specifically 89 illustrations in English and 114 in Vietnamese, are compared and contrasted to find out the similarities and differences in the use of these conceptual metaphors between two languages, in the hope to contribute to foreign language teaching, learning, and translating process.

Keywords: *Conceptual metaphor, life, English, Vietnamese*

INTRODUCTION

Cognitive linguistics is the approach to the study of language that began to emerge in the 1970s and has been increasingly active since the 1980s. Until now, a large amount of research has been carried out in the light of cognitive linguistics over the world in general and in Viet Nam in particular, and most of them have focused on semantics with a deeper insight into the use of conceptual metaphor in language. Conceptual metaphors involve two concepts and have the form A is B, where the more abstract concept A such as love, life, economy and argument is comprehended in terms of the more concrete concept B including war or a container. Therefore, the investigation into conceptual metaphors with the aim to find out similarities and differences of using this kind of meaning transference among languages in the world brings great benefits to the English teaching, learning and translating process.

Life has been one of the most inspirational and enchanting topics for thousands of writers across the time. Although the concept of life is commonly mentioned in our daily life or everyday conversations, its definition or true meaning cannot be described by only one or two words. For instance, imagine life is a game. People are considered as players, who need to play as skillfully and fairly as they can with the aim to win, or acquire their own goals in life. If the concept of life is perceived in terms of a journey, people are considered as travellers trying their best to overcome all impediments on their way to reach the final destinations. As a result, the abstract concept of life can be metaphorically mentioned through other more delineated ones. Depending on the distinctive features of different cultures or specific geographical characteristics of regions in the world, life has its own uniqueness.

The research entitled: “An investigation into conceptual metaphors denoting “life” in American and Vietnamese short stories” is conducted in the hope to contribute to the process of understanding and interpretation of conceptual metaphors in American and Vietnamese short stories.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), Lakoff and Johnson present their strong arguments against the traditional view of metaphor and introduce a new one that challenged all the aspects of this widely-share theory in a coherent and systematic way. They claim “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.3). They also introduce the notion of conceptual metaphor and illustrate their viewpoint with a huge number of linguistic examples. This work is the main theoretical background and guideline for my study.

Since then, a considerable number of researches have been carried out in the light of cognitive linguistics in the world and in Viet Nam as well. In Lakoff and Turner’s work (1989), *More than Cool Reason: A field guide to poetic metaphor*, the conceptual metaphors denoting “life” were mostly examined on the scope of poems. Other minor researches on the concept of life includes *The Journeys of Life: Examining a Conceptual Metaphor with Semantic and Episodic Memory Recall* (Katz & Taylor, 2008) with a deeper insight into only one conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. This conceptual metaphor is also discussed by Lakoff (1994) and Winter (1995). In Viet Nam, there are some noticeable cognitive linguists, such as Lý Toàn Thắng (2005), Trần Văn Cơ (2007), Nguyễn Đức Tồn (2007, 2009), Phan Văn Hoà (2008) and Nguyễn Lai (2009). Lý Toàn Thắng (2005) in his book “Ngôn ngữ học tri nhận – Từ lý thuyết đại cương đến thực tiễn tiếng Việt” gives an introduction to cognitive linguistics and presents distinctive features of linguistic models about the world. Trần Văn Cơ (2007) explains the traditional view of metaphor and points out the new viewpoint on this figure of speech in the light of cognitive linguistics. Nguyễn Đức Tồn (2008) and Nguyễn Lai (2009) do research on the use of conceptual metaphors in idioms and poetry respectively.

In general, none of researches have been carried out to examine conceptual metaphors denoting life in American and Vietnamese

short stories during the period of time 1975 - 1991, which motivates me to make an investigation in this topic.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this study, the researcher attempts to give answers to the following questions:

1. How are the conceptual metaphors of life conceptualized in American and Vietnamese short stories from 1975 to 1991?
2. What are the similarities and differences of the conceptual metaphors denoting life in American and Vietnamese short stories from 1975 to 1991?
3. What are the implications for the use of conceptual metaphors in teaching, learning and translating?

METHODOLOGY

In this research, both the quantitative and qualitative method are used in the process of analyzing the collected data. Besides, Contrastive and Comparative Analysis are utilized with the aim to find out the similarities and differences of conceptual metaphors denoting life in American and Vietnamese short stories.

The quantity of metaphorical expressions denoting life found is the exact number of 203 samples, specifically 114 lexical units in Vietnamese, and 89 illustrations in English. The two sets of data are analyzed and compared on the basis of the classification of conceptual metaphors introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their famous work *Metaphor: We Live By*. There are three different kinds of conceptual metaphors, specifically **structural metaphors**, **ontological metaphors** and **orientational metaphors**.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explain that in **structural metaphors**, “one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another” (p.14). **Ontological metaphors** relate to our experience of physical objects

and substances, which allows us to pick out parts of our experience and treat them as discrete entities. As a result, “we can refer to them, categorize them, group them, and quantify them – and by this means, reason about them.” (p.25). **Oriental metaphors** deal with “spatial orientation: up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, central-peripheral” (p.14).

In order to achieve the aims of this study, the data are both quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed. Firstly, the quantitative method is used to give statistic results of the collected data. To be more specific, the data are examined in terms of the frequencies of structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors in the nineteen American and nineteen Vietnamese short stories. Secondly, the qualitative method is applied to analyze and evaluate the collected data into conceptual metaphors denoting life, as follows:

LIFE IS A JOURNEY	LIFE IS A CONTAINER
LIFE IS A WAR	LIFE IS A PERSONAL POSSESSION
LIFE IS AN ENTITY	LIFETIME IS PASSING OF TIME
LIFE IS A PERSON	LIFE IS A MACHINE
LIFE IS A STORY	LIFE IS A GAME
LIFE IS A PAIN	

FINDINGS

1. Similarities

In both languages, the more abstract concept of life are commonly perceived in terms of the more concrete ones including a journey, passing of time, a war, a story, a game, an entity, a container, a personal possession, and a machine. The evidences show that the highest frequency of occurrence belongs to the ontological metaphors in both languages, accounting for an impressive

percentage of 55.2 with 112 samples out of 203 illustrations in total. The quantity of structural metaphors makes up the second highest proportion of 44.8 with 91 examples. However, there is no metaphorical expression denoting orientational metaphors found on the scope of this study in both languages.

Regarding the ontological metaphors, the conceptualization LIFE IS AN ENTITY is the most common one in both languages. On the basis of our practical knowledge about physical objects and substances, both American and Vietnamese people tend to identify our experiences as entities. With such understanding, “we can refer to them, categorize them, group them, and quantify them – and, by this means, reason about them” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 25). To be more specific, an entity is a tangible and visible object, or a physical item. It is connected with things that actually exist or are present; and can be seen and felt rather than things that only exist in a person’s mind such as the notion of life. In contrast, life is an abstract term, which merely can be understood based on general ideas and not on any particular real person, thing or situation. It normally exists in thought or as an idea but not having a physical reality. In other words, this concept does not represent people or things in a realistic way. Therefore, in order to refer to, quantify or classify life, both American and Vietnamese people conceive it in terms of an entity. Common expressions in both languages are **a life** (*một đời*), **many lives** (*nhiều đời*), and **thousands of lives** (*nghìn đời*). Life can be categorized into various types such as **a sexual life** (*đời sống tình dục*), **a spiritual life** (*đời sống tinh thần*), **a practical life** (*đời sống thực tiễn*), **a miserable life** (*đời sống khốn khổ*), **a city life** (*đời sống đô thị, đời sống thị thành*), **a private life** (*đời tư, cuộc đời riêng*), **a political life** (*đời sống chính trị*), **a harmonious life** (*đời sống hoà đồng*), **a new life** (*cuộc sống mới*), **a past life** (*đời sống quá khứ*), and **an impoverished life** (*cuộc sống nghèo khổ*). Some aspects of life are also mentioned, such as **the hardship of life** (*cái khắc nghiệt của đời*).

Life is conceptualized as a container and found in both languages. With our perception of people's body as a container with in-out orientation, other abstract notions are also comprehended according to this way. In both American and Vietnamese people's mind, life is used to store things, and even we can go into and go out of it. The typical examples of this type are **in life** (*trong đời, ở đời*), **into life** (*vào đời*), **wipe something/ somebody out of life** (*xoá cái gì đó/ ai đó ra khỏi cuộc sống*), **disappear from life** (*biến mất khỏi cuộc sống*), **come back into life** (*quay trở lại với cuộc sống*), **erase somebody/ something from life** (*xoá bỏ ai đó/ cái gì đó khỏi cuộc sống*), and **full of** (*đầy*).

The conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A PERSONAL POSSESSION is commonly expressed in both languages. Each person always considers life as his or her own things. Therefore, American people tend to put possessive adjectives such as **my, our, his, her, their** before the abstract noun of life, in order to show their ownership, while in Vietnamese, they use the word **của** to represent this relationship, as in examples **cuộc sống của mẹ con Thẩm, đời của lão, số phận của lão, của vợ chồng, con cái lão**.

In regards to structural metaphors, life is conceived in terms of a journey in both languages. The American use the verbs such as **be lost, turn, swerve, and veer off** to show the motion of travellers on their life journey, while in Vietnamese, common ones include **đi chuyến đi cuối cùng của cuộc đời, đi gần hết cuộc đời, and đi qua đời**. In addition, **way** and **track** are usually found in American expressions, while Vietnamese ones consist of phrases such as **khúc đường đời, quãng đời, đường đời, đoạn đời, and nẻo đường**.

Lifetime is comprehended as passing of time in both languages. People's lives are considered as a series of days or years, with prevalent American lexical units such as **ten years of my life, another day in my life, over the last ten years, in the seven years that remained of his life, and the last year of the old man's life**; and common Vietnamese ones such as **bảy chục năm đã sống, sống cô**

độc những năm về cuối, sống tròn bảy chục năm, mỗi ngày một khép kín của đời lão, những ngày cuối đời của lão, and sống thêm mười năm nữa. On the base of all the illustrations found in American and Vietnamese short stories, it is believed that most of expressions used to talk about life come from the ways people mention about the passing of time.

The conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A MACHINE is also found in American and Vietnamese. The American use the verb **break** to indicate the state of life being damaged and stopping working, while Vietnamese people have the word **hỏng** with the same meaning. In particular, when talking about the broken state of life, the American tend to mention about the ways or **the proper tools to fix, repair, remedy or mend** it. The samples denoting this kind of conceptual metaphor found in Vietnamese short stories merely account for an insignificant percentage of 1.0, in comparison with others.

Life can be understood through the more concrete notion of a war. On the verge of death and life, the American have to **mobilize their strength** and **fight for** their own lives. Similarly, Vietnamese people also try their best to **undergo a life battle** (*trải qua một trận xáo trộn đời sống*) in order to survive or be alive in this world.

LIFE IS A STORY is another common conceptual metaphor, with American metaphorical expressions such as **stories about life**, and **make a perfect little story**, and Vietnamese ones including **thứ chuyện đầy hấp dẫn về đời sống, mẫu chuyện tâm sự về đời tư, kể đời mình, kể nghe vài đoạn đời, and đời chẳng ít chuyện trớ trêu**. Both American and Vietnamese people consider life as a story containing interesting and unpredictable circumstances, which can be told and shared with other people.

The illustrations showing the way of understanding life through the notion of game only take up a small percentage compared with others in both languages. While American people **play with life as a dice game**, Vietnamese ones conceive life as **một cuộc chơi phàm tục** or **một cuộc chơi sinh thú**.

On the scope of this study, no data illustrating the orientational metaphors can be found in both languages.

2. Differences

It is observed that Vietnamese shares with English all the basic metaphor source domains for life. However, a metaphor that Vietnamese has, but English does not, is LIFE IS A PAIN, accounting for 2% with 4 illustrations. The reasons for the presence of this conceptual metaphor might be predictable on the base of Vietnamese historical context at that period of time. On April 30th, 1975, it marked the event when Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops captured Saigon (now known as Ho Chi Minh city), which is called as Reunification Day, Victory Day, Liberation Day, or the official name of Day of liberating the South for national reunification. This victory put an end to the Vietnam War, also known as the American War, which occurred in Vietnam, Lao, and Cambodia from November 1st, 1955 to the fall of Saigon on April 30th, 1975. During this devastating war, thousands of innocent people were killed, and a significant number of families in Viet Nam were broken by those lives lost. Vietnamese people had to suffer from severe pains that could not be described in words. Coming from this war, despite all the happiness and pride of the victory against a strong and powerful country as America, Vietnamese citizens must deal with negative results of the war such as starvation, innocent death, disability, poverty, violence, reduction to population, destruction of resources, and crash of economy. Their lives after the Reunification Day, or more specifically from 1975 to 1991 were extremely hard and indigent, which was closely and faithfully reflected in literature in general, and in Vietnamese short stories in particular. That might be the reasonable explanation for the association between life and a pain, or the presence of the life-related expressions around the concept of pains.

Another noticeable difference of life conceptual metaphors in two languages is that while there are 7 lexical units derived from LIFE IS

A PERSON in the collected American data, no expressions manifested from this conceptualization are found in the Vietnamese short stories. This might be because of the distinctive features of cultural values between two countries. Americans strongly believe in the concept of individualism. To be more specific, they consider themselves to be separate individuals who are in control of their own lives, rather than members of a close-knit, interdependent family, religious group, tribe, nation, or other group. Meanwhile, the most important factor in the value system of the Vietnamese is the family. The family is the center of the Vietnamese common man's preoccupation and the backbone of Vietnamese society. By virtue of the principle of collective and mutual responsibility, each individual strives to be the pride of his family. These core values in American and Vietnamese culture may affect the languages used in literature and everyday life as well, which leads to the differences in using conceptual metaphors denoting life between them. That the American value the individualism may explain the reason why the metaphorical expressions manifested from LIFE IS A PERSON are found in the short stories. Each life is also considered as a person who can independently make his own decision. In contrast, the Vietnamese society is deemed to be more traditional or family-oriented; therefore, there are no expressions derived from this conceptual metaphor.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

1. Conclusions

This research is carried out with the hope to strengthen the theory of cognitive linguistics in general, and cognitive semantics in particular. Besides, the researcher also hopes to find out the similarities and differences of conceptual metaphors denoting "life" in American and Vietnamese short stories from 1975 to 1991. On the basis of all the analysis above, it is obvious that the abstract concept of life is commonly perceived in terms of other more concrete ones in both languages. There are some similar conceptual metaphors found in

American and Vietnamese corpus analyzed in the study, including LIFE IS AN ENTITY, LIFETIME IS PASSING OF TIME, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, LIFE IS A CONTAINER, LIFE IS A PERSONAL POSSESSION, LIFE IS A MACHINE, LIFE IS A WAR, LIFE IS A STORY, and LIFE IS A GAME. Regarding the differences, the most noticeable one is that there are no metaphorical expressions manifested in LIFE IS A PAIN found in American short stories, while no evidences show that LIFE IS A PERSON exists in Vietnamese ones. This may be because of the different cultural and historical background of two countries.

2. Implications for learners

Hopefully, the findings of this study will bring students a number of benefits in their learning process, as follows.

Firstly, metaphor can aid the development of reading skills. Empirically, Boers (2000) found that students who had access to the original literal use of the figurative vocabulary were better at figuring out the author's opinion than those provided with synonyms of the target language items. Therefore, after reading this research, students may have a basis knowledge about conceptual metaphor theory, and understand more about the representations of conceptual metaphors denoting "life" in English and Vietnamese, which facilitates their process of reading other materials related to this field, and as a result, benefit their reading comprehension in general.

Secondly, thanks to understanding metaphorical expressions in both languages, learners will become more interested into reading original texts or works in English, which creates a great opportunity to broaden their vocabulary source, especially figurative expressions. Working with metaphorical language, learners can understand the making of meaning and sense, and thus can acquire an effective way of learning to improve their language proficiency.

Lastly, when students have a solid knowledge of conceptual metaphor theory, and a wide range of metaphorical expressions, they

will be able to produce metaphors to serve different purposes in life. Most scholars tend to be cautious regarding learners' production of figurative language. The argument has been that foreign language learners often need to comprehend metaphors more than produce them (Littlemore & Low, 2006, p. 46; Low, 2008, p. 222). Kecskés and Papp (2000) even explicitly caution learners against the use of metaphors because this is a communicative risk. However, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) emphasize the ubiquity of metaphors in everyday's life. Recently, MacArthur's (2010) paper also expresses a strong interest in learners' productive metaphors. She highlights the benefits of encouraging metaphor production, and points out that metaphor is the most powerful tool to make meaning from everyday words.

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STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS FOR MEDICAL ENGLISH TERMINOLOGY RETENTION

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Abstract

One of the difficult tasks in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes is helping students to retain terminology of their fields of study. This is especially true in medical classes at a medical college in the Mekong Delta where students have very low level of English proficiency. The current study applied the use of authentic materials in teaching medical terminology to 250 EFL students majoring in pharmacy and nursing. Data on their perception toward the effects of using authentic materials on medical English terminology retention were gained from questionnaires. The study findings reveal some useful implications for teachers of ESP classrooms in the Mekong Delta in specific and in Vietnam in general.

Keywords: *ESP; authentic materials; students' perception.*

INTRODUCTION

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has established itself as a viable and vigorous movement within the field of EFL learning. According to Fiorito (2005), teachers in ESP classrooms concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language

structures. Therefore, the focal purpose of EFL teaching in ESP classrooms is that English is not taught as a subject separated from the students' real world. It is addressed that the integrated points into a subject are more important to the learners. It cannot be denied that teaching ESP in Vietnamese context is challenging because of several reasons. The first reason is that English language teachers do not have much expertise of the fields they teach. It seems to be difficult for them because they have to study more about the subject content and lack confidence while conveying that such specialized content. Regarding students' role, they are not familiar with how to learn English in depth. Accordingly, their language proficiency is still limited. In addition, most teaching materials that teachers bring to the class are not authentic to students.

For the teaching context of the Can Tho Medical College, students cannot retain their medical English terminology, which influences their ESP final exams and communicative competence. They claim that they cannot use and retain medical English terms for fulfilling the final tests as well as communicating outside the classroom. Therefore, students' specific difficulties need to be figured out so that teachers can support them effectively. Since authentic materials are believed to promote students' vocabulary retention, using authentic materials related to medical issues is expected to assist students in the process of learning terminology.

Few studies have been conducted to explore the effect of using authentic materials in teaching medical terminology in Vietnam. That is the gap that the current study aims to fulfil. In the study, students' perceptions toward teachers' use of authentic materials for medical English terminology instruction are explored.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Authentic materials and ESP

Authentic materials have been used for years and claimed to be a good complement for English classes because they motivate students

to learn and bring them positive attitudes toward language learning experience.

According to Ianiro (2007), authentic materials are defined as the printable papers, video, and audio materials that students encounter in their daily lives. In addition, Nunan (1999) defines “authentic materials as spoken or written language data that has been produced in the course of genuine communication, and not specifically written for purposes of language teaching” (p. 54). However, Peacock (1997) claims that authentic materials have been produced to support learners’ social purposes in their outside world. Generally, authentic materials consist of anything that is considered as a part of communication (Darwish, 2014). He revealed that there are four types of authentic materials used during the teaching and learning process. These types include authentic listening/viewing materials, authentic visual materials, authentic printed materials, and realia used in EFL classrooms.

Likewise, Kilickaya (2004, p. 1) indicated that authentic materials are given as an “exposure to the real usage of the everyday life language”. In addition to this, McNeill (1994) argues that the authentic language can be a tool created in order to “fulfil some social purposes in the language community in which it was produced” (p. 4). Another opinion is that authentic materials relate to the language produced by native speakers for a particular language setting (Gilmore, 2007). Together with these authors, Bacon and Finnemann (1990) (as cited in McNeill, 1994) proposed that “authentic materials are texts produced by native speakers for a non-pedagogical purpose.” According to such a definition of authenticity, authentic materials can be found in a real situation, and it can be produced by non-native speakers. They are described as materials produced to meet the requirements of social purposes.

For the purpose of the current study, authentic materials are referred to anything that prepares language learners for real-world communication in their particular social contexts.

Authentic materials and vocabulary retention

Davies and Pears (2003) (as cited in Mansourzadeh, 2014) believe that new vocabulary should not be taught in isolation. The process of learning new vocabulary has been challenging for the learners. More specifically, stages of vocabulary learning can be grouped into 5R processes: receiving, recognizing, retaining, retrieving, and recycling in four language skills (Shen, 2003). First of all, students have to encounter new words from teachers, native speakers or other students. After encountering and identifying new words, students try to put their efforts to recognize them. In the second step, forms or meanings of the words can be generally identified. The new words from sound and form may be a basic factor for retaining and retrieving words from memory and finally recycling in four language skills will occur.

It is believed that the students' retention ability needs to be concerned because the ability of remembering things is definitely important to students. With a wide range of vocabulary, students will be able to communicate and express themselves. Retention of information can be ranged from minutes up to someone's lifetime (Marefat & Ahmadishirazi, 2003). From the benefits of vocabulary retention process, it promotes the educators find out the appropriate ways or materials for their vocabulary instruction.

Another interesting point is that different kinds of materials can facilitate the students' comprehension and learning of L2 vocabulary and content (Baltova, 1999). Materials and activities which involve learners or students in thinking about the words will allow them to remember and retain the target words more easily.

Broadbent (1958) (as cited in Craik and Lockhart, 1972) proposed that:

Information must be held transiently before entering the limited-capacity processing channel. Items could be held over the short term by recycling them, after perception, through the same transient

storage system. From there, information could be transferred into and retained in a more permanent long-term store. (p. 671)

In such a retaining process, authentic materials are believed to help learners enormously.

THE STUDY

Research questions

This study aims to explore EFL students' perceptions of teachers' use of authentic materials for medical English terminology instruction at a medical college in Can Tho City. Specifically, the study is designed to focus and find out the answers for two questions:

- (1) *What are EFL students' perceptions of teachers' use of medical authentic materials to teach medical English terminology?*
- (2) *What types of authentic materials do students find the most helpful for medical English terminology retention?*

Participants

For the purpose of the present study, the participants in the research included 250 EFL students including 190 females and 60 males at a medical college in Can Tho City. They are majoring in pharmacy and nursing.

Most of the students were at the elementary level of English, aged from 18 to 25 years old (the average age: 19.5). These students just finished and successfully passed the General English Course at the medical college. For this General English Course, they studied general English with the *Smart Choice 1* coursebook. It is a four-skill coursebook from Oxford University Press for adults and young learners who are looking forward to improving their abilities to communicate in English language. The course consisted of 90 periods of learning or 6 credits. Students attended class for 6 periods per week. They were required to fulfill the course syllabus in 15 weeks. This publication of the book gave teachers opportunities to

find a valuable supplementary of practice materials in Teacher's Book, the Workbook with self-study listening, and iTools with Click & Change Library and Video. Beginners could use Smart Choice 1 at their A2 level of English proficiency.

These students were learning medical English in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classroom at the time of the study. In terms of medical English, *Nursing 1* from Oxford University Press was applied for nursing students and *Medicine 1* from Oxford University Press was for students majoring in pharmacy, lab technique and doctor. This ESP course lasted for 60 periods of 10 weeks (6 periods per week). These 250 students were invited to fulfill the questionnaire and 12 students of three different levels of English were selected to participate in focused group interviews in order to find out their points of view about their perceptions toward their medical terminology learning and their preferences of authentic materials in medical terminology learning and recalling. 12 students were divided into 3 focused groups (good, average, weak students) clarified by their competence from the general English results.

Research instruments

A questionnaire was used for collecting the information to answer the two research questions. This questionnaire was adapted from Laba's (2014) study for the different contexts at the medical colleges in Mekong Delta. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section was designed to explore EFL students' perceptions of teachers' use of authentic materials for medical English terminology instruction, and the second section was set up to investigate EFL students' preferences toward to the types of authentic materials.

The questionnaire follows a 5 Likert scale design and consists of 29 statements which can be grouped into 5 clusters:

Cluster 1: Students' perceptions of medical authentic materials.

Cluster 2: Students' perceptions of teachers' use of medical authentic

materials.

Cluster 3: The role of authentic materials in medical English terminology instruction.

Cluster 4: The types of authentic materials students find the most helpful for medical English terminology retention.

The questionnaire was piloted with 40 freshmen who had finished general English exam and were studying medical English. A reliability test with the Cronbach alpha of .75 reveals that the questionnaire was reliable enough to collect official data for the study.

FINDINGS

Students' perception of using authentic materials for medical English terminology retention

Different aspects of students' perception were explored including (1) students' perceptions of medical authentic materials, (2) their perception of teachers' use of medical authentic materials, (3) the role of authentic materials in medical English terminology instruction, and (4) the drawbacks of teachers' use of authentic materials for medical English terminology instruction.

For the students' perception of medical authentic materials, most students agree on the seven items in the questionnaire (see Table 1).

Table 1: Students' perception toward medical authentic materials (N = 250)

Item	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	No idea (%)
Medical authentic materials provide exposure to real language and relate more closely to people's health.	88.4	2.8	8.8
Medical authentic materials are tools related to real situations happening in the hospital.	83.2	6.4	10.4
Medical authentic materials are realia from the clinical practice room at school and hospital.	73.6	6.0	20.4
Medical authentic materials are photos taken from local hospitals.	55.6	14.0	30.4
Medical authentic materials are video clips recorded in the operation room.	48.0	16.4	35.6
Medical authentic materials are posters clipped from the foreign magazines.	41.2	23.6	35.2
Medical authentic materials are reading passages about a doctor's typical day.	39.2	22.8	38.0

The findings reveal that most of students have strong perceptions toward teachers' use of medical authentic materials for their instruction. Most students agree with the items which can be considered medical authentic materials. More specifically, among the seven items, *Medical authentic materials provide exposure to real language and relate more closely to people's health* received the most agreement, with 88.4% of participants. In addition, a large number of students (83.2%) agreed that *Medical authentic materials are tools related to real situations happening in the hospital*. Two other items which were agreed by many students as authentic

materials are (1) realia from the clinical practice room at school and hospital and (2) photos taken from local hospitals (73.6% and 55.6% respectively). Video clips recorded in operation room were agreed to be authentic materials by nearly half of participants (48%) while posters from foreign magazines and reading passages about a doctor's typical day were considered as authentic materials by a smaller number of participants (41.2% and 39.2% respectively). These findings reveal that students have a quite technical view toward authentic materials for medical terminology terms. Most of them believe that authentic materials must be something real rather than something which can be video-recorded or written about.

Regarding students' perception of teachers' use of medical authentic materials (see Table 2), most of the participants agreed that teachers' authentic materials contain topics of their interest and encourage them learn more medical English terminology (85.6% of agreement). In addition, a large number of respondents (84.4%) asserted that medical authentic materials are practical and real because these kinds of medical authentic materials provide valid linguistic data. Three statements receiving quite similar percentage of agreement include (1) *Teachers' authentic materials provide close contact with language used in the real context*; (2) *The video clips shown in the class help me retain more medical terminology*; and (3) *Teachers use photos taken from the hospital to teach me vocabulary about hospital jobs and departments* with 79.2%, 78.8% and 75.6% respectively. These results show that teachers at the medical college in the current study use authentic materials in their ESP teaching and students appreciated that.

Table 2: Students' perception of teachers' use of medical authentic materials (N = 250)

Item	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	No idea (%)
Teachers' authentic materials contain topics of interest to me and encourage me to learn.	85.6	5.2	9.2
Teachers' medical authentic materials are practical and real because they provide valid linguistic data.	84.4	3.6	12.0
Teachers' authentic materials provide close contact with language used in the real context.	79.2	5.2	15.6
The video clips shown in the class help me retain more medical terminology.	78.8	4.8	16.4
Teachers use photos taken from the hospital to teach me vocabulary about hospital jobs and departments.	75.6	9.2	15.2
My teachers give me opportunities to be exposed to clinical practice rooms for medical English terminology instruction.	58.8	15.2	26.0
My teachers usually use medical authentic materials in their instructions.	58.8	17.2	24.0

Regarding the third cluster, EFL students at the medical colleges are aware of the benefits that authentic materials can bring to them in medical English terminology retention (see Table 3). More specifically, 90% of participants perceived that they were able to retain medical English terminology thanks to teachers' materials;

89.2% of respondents agreed that authentic materials are beneficial to their acquisition of medical terminology and so will not deny the opportunity to interact with authentic materials. In addition, students believe that authentic materials helped them improve their motivation (88%), confidence (83.2%), and vocabulary retention (82.8%). Many participants agreed that they *will not deny the opportunity to interact with authentic materials* (80.8%) while about half of participants (53.6%) believe they *cannot learn medical English terminology well without exposure to authentic materials*.

Table 3: Students' perception of the role of authentic materials in medical English terminology instruction (N = 250)

Item	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	No idea (%)
I think that authentic materials help me learn useful medical vocabulary.	90.0	2.8	7.2
Authentic materials are beneficial to my acquisition of medical terminology.	89.2	2.4	8.4
I will not deny the opportunity to interact with authentic materials.	89.2	2.0	8.8
Authentic materials broaden my knowledge, understanding, experience of various situations in which English is used.	89.2	2.4	8.4
I feel more motivated in learning when my teacher uses authentic materials in class activities.	88	2.8	9.2
Authentic materials help me to build my confidence in using English for medical purposes.	83.2	5.6	11.2
Compared with English textbooks, authentic materials are more beneficial to my medical English	82.8	4.4	12.8

Item	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	No idea (%)
terminology retention.			
Authentic materials should act as supplement materials into medical English terminology instruction.	80.8	4.0	15.2
I cannot learn medical English terminology well without exposure to authentic materials.	53.6	13.2	33.2

The types of authentic materials students find the most helpful for medical English terminology retention

To help the researchers figure out the answer to this question, students were required to tick 3 out of 6 categories they find the most helpful for medical English terminology retention. These 6 types of authentic materials include:

- Articles and Photos from Newspapers, Magazines or the Internet
- Realia from the Clinical Practice Rooms
- Listening Recordings from the Radio Programs
- Video Clips related to Medical Programs
- Books and Application Forms
- Schedules, tickets or etc.

The results revealed that 203 out of 250 students (81.2%) find realia from the clinical practice rooms the most helpful for their medical English terminology retention (see Table 3). Most of them (77.6%) admit that video clips related to medical programs help them in vocabulary retention. The next highly surprising materials that students chose for their medical English terminology retention are articles and photos from newspapers, magazines or the Internet (75.2%) (see Table 4).

Table 4: The types of authentic materials students find the most helpful for medical English terminology retention (N=250)

Types of authentic materials	<i>N</i>	%
Realia from the Clinical Practice Rooms	203	81.2
Video Clips related to Medical Programs	194	77.6
Articles and Photos from Newspapers, Magazines or the Internet	188	75.2
Books and Application Forms	114	45.6
Listening Recordings from the Radio Programs	63	25.2
Schedules, tickets or etc	16	6.4

The results of the current study are in line with the hypothesis and results of the previous studies (Darwish, 2014; Gilmore, 2007; Liton, 2013; Zoghi, Moradiyan, & Kazemi, 2014). In other words, students highly appreciate teachers' use of authentic materials for teaching medical terminology and gain a lot of benefits from that. In addition, the current study reveals that students prefer authentic realia, video clips, articles and photos to others.

CONCLUSION

The current investigation with EFL students at a medical college in Can Tho City of Vietnam shows that they are well aware of the benefits of medical authentic materials for their medical English terminology retention. However, some of them still cannot recognize what teachers bring to the class is authentic material. Most of them have positive perceptions toward the role of authentic materials in their medical English learning process. In addition, the study results also reveal that the respondents find realia from the clinical practice rooms the most helpful for their medical English terminology retention. The findings hence suggest teachers for medical ESP

classes to bring more medical materials into their ESP class, especially realia from the clinical practice rooms. Video clips related to medical programs together with articles and photos from newspapers, magazines or Internet should be applied for teachers' instructions in the ESP classroom because they bring beneficial effects on students' medical terminology retention.

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SOME FACTORS AFFECTING THE ACQUISITION OF THE PASSIVE VOICE

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Abstract

According to the results of the research on second language acquisition, many factors, including internal ones such as age, personal characteristics, motivation, experience, cognition and mother tongue as well as external ones such as curricula, teaching methods, encouragement, culture, learners' status and approach to native language, affect second language acquisition. In this research, we are interested in the affects of gender, age and register on the second language acquisition of students in learning the English passive voice. This independent experimental research reveals that certain results are the same as the previous ones; however, some results are different from the statements of other research.

Keywords: *Second language acquisition, gender, age, register, affect*

INTRODUCTION

The second language acquisition is an old issue, but acquiring the passive voice is a new one. Linguistic responses were investigated in particular through the passive acquisition in graders 8 and students major in English. These linguistic responses will be very useful reference materials in linguistics, in general, and in small fields of linguistics, in particular, such as sociolinguistics, psychological linguistics, etc.

The second language acquisition is the central focus of this article. We conduct parallel research at two levels of learning: the acquisition of the passive voice in graders 8 (beginning to learn the

passive sentences) and the acquisition of the passive voice in the second-year students major in English.

In terms of teaching methodology, for graders 8, we conducted a survey methodology for analyzing students' errors through learning passive sentences and suggested corrective steps through encouragement and motivation. This method helps students learn passive sentences effectively. For sophomore English students, we conducted concept telling (traditional grammar) and concept checking methods introduced by British Council specialists around the world. Through learning and acquiring passive sentences, both the eighth-graders and the students in the experimental class had linguistic responses. However, these reactions share common points and differences due to the factors of age, gender, and register.

RATIONALE

Gender affects the acquisition of language

According to Anthony, C. Oha, the male and female use different language patterns. Compared to the male, the female are more talkative, more talkative, more polite, unresponsive, often complaining, nagging, asking more, supporting each other and cooperating easily.

According to the study by Csizer and Dorneyi (2005), in the experimental classes, male students are less motivated, while female students are more positive and active in their studies. The research uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to examine and identify gender differences in the various factors that influence motivation in learning a foreign language. Compared to girls, male students need more encouragement from teachers to be able to learn equally well.

Masoud Zoghi, Seyyed Ali Kazemi and Ali Kalani argue that gender is an important theoretical and pedagogical issue in learning a second language. Gender is considered a variable in the use of foreign

language learning methods. In the research female students are superior to male students in learning foreign languages. With specific data, the authors showed that the results of learning foreign languages of the girls is better than the boys'. Maccoby, a professor at Stanford University in the United States, in "Gender Differences in Psychology," argues that boys and girls have obvious gender differences in that schoolgirls are of better language ability. His research suggests that there should be solutions to balance differences in language teaching in the classrooms.

Piasecka (2005) suggests that there are gender differences: in many areas the male are better than the female, but in many ones the female are better than the male. In terms of language ability, girls often start speaking earlier than boys and use longer sentences. Girls' pronunciation and grammar are more accurate. So girls have more vocabulary than boys. Moreover, girls are better at spelling, reading and writing.

Through the research by Narendra Rathod (2012), female students are better foreign language learners. They are more sensitive to new linguistic forms and more willing to adopt them. Girls have a more positive attitude towards learning foreign languages and are more motivated.

Age affects the acquisition of language

Age significantly impacts on learner language acquisition. The reality is that both children and adults are in different needs of learning a foreign language. Adults naturally find that they need more complex languages and need to interpret ideas that are more meaningful. In other words, children lack the pressure and maturity in learning foreign languages.

Most people think that young learners are of certain advantages over older ones. Young learners learn a second language easily and quickly, compared to older learners (Ellis, 2008; Larsen-Freeman, 2008; Mayberry & Lock, 2003). The relationship between age and success in

the acquisition of language, although complex in nature, is associated with the critical period hypothesis. The decisive determinant, or "sensitive period," is defined as "the period when a child acquires the language quickly, easily, and completely without guidance" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p.145). The decisive period hypothesis is that there is a time between birth and time when a child enters adolescence, when language learning becomes quicker and easier than other periods, ie. after puberty. (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 2008).

Yamanda et al. (Cited in Singleton, 1989) studied 30 primary students aged 7 to 10. These students had not studied English before. In the study, they used 40 words to teach and recorded the results. The results show that older students are weaker than their younger counterparts.

Mark Patkowski (1982) also examined the English proficiency of 67 immigrants in the United States. His work shows that pre-teens acquire language better than students after puberty. He also outlined two other factors - the length of time and the volume of instruction - associated with the age factor.

In contrast, according to a study by Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle (1982) in the Netherlands, older people learn faster than children and have higher rates of language learning. Based on the analysis of age factors on the basis of critical time hypotheses and related variables, David Singleton (2003) also suggested that in the long run, young students' tendency to acquire better vocabulary when learning a foreign language is not right. According to the report by Lightbown and Spada (2008), learning depends on the characteristics of the learner and the environments. The results show that older learners are more capable of problem solving and more metaphorical abilities than younger learners.

Ekstrand (1982) studied and concluded that the age factor has a strong impact on learner acquisition levels through the quality and volume of foreign language teaching. According to him, the more brain develops, the more appropriate it is to learn a foreign language.

Stephens Krashen (1979) made three suggestions in the field of syntax and morphology:

- Adults learn syntax and morphology faster than children in early stage (when time and approach are the same).
- Older children acquire faster than younger children (when time and approach are the same).
- Students who acquire natural language during adolescence are likely to be more proficient than adults (Singleton, 1989, p. 117).

Anan Fathman (1982) studied the differences in learning phonology, morphology and syntax of English based on age differences. She studied and found that children aged 11 to 15 learn phonology, morphology and syntax in English better than children aged 6 to 10.

According to Mayberry (2003), young learners may not have the motive of the external environment and have no specific goals in learning another language. It is also noted that children and adults do not always have the same qualities and quantities of language input in both formal and informal contexts of learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2008).

Register affects the acquisition of language

According to Anthony C. Oha (2008), the location of students' living, studying and working will affect their language learning. First, the local language (dialect) will affect learners' language learning. Learners' Latin language will help them get used to the style of writing in English, whether they use French, German or Italian, etc. The pronunciation of different registers will cause Asian learners to speak English not as well as European ones. Moreover, remote locations cause disadvantages for learners to learn foreign languages such as lack of facilities, even lack of teachers and language learning is patchy. While teaching, teachers must pay attention to these factors to help level up the language acquisition gap among the learners.

When studying the English acquisition of students from many

countries around the world in a US classroom, Mark S. Patkowski (1982) found a little difference in the academic performance of students, although they are of the same age or gender. The geographic influence of different countries has made the English language acquisition of students uneven.

Surveying an English class in Tokyo, Yamanda and his colleagues noted students from different regions other than those born and raised in Tokyo. Their English acquisition is of slight difference. He and his team said that the geographic location of the students' past lives has influenced the learning of foreign languages, although this influence is very small.

FACTORS INFLUENCE STUDENTS' ACQUISITION IN THE EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS:

Gender

Through the survey of 10 eighth graders, including 6 girls and 4 boys, we found the effects of gender on students' language.

The effects on the English morphology

Through 10 students' assignments and by calling students to the board, we found that the error rate of morphology of male students was higher than that of female students.

The errors of inflectional suffixes:

Ex: English is speaked in the classroom. (Wrong)

English is spoken in the classroom. (Right)

When changing to past participle, students should not use the suffix ED as this is an irregular verb.

The errors of derivational suffixes:

Ex: The writor is sent a letter. (Wrong)

The writer is sent a letter. (Right)

The "write" verb takes suffix ER, not OR when it is converted to "writer".

Morphological errors		
	Derivational suffix	Inflectional suffix
Boys	50%	75%
Girls	16,6%	33,3%

The effects on the English syntax

In the study on syntax errors, male students also make more errors than female ones.

Ex: The books is put on the table. (Wrong)

The books are put on the table. (Right)

In the active sentence "He puts the books on the table", the verb "puts" is conjugated in the singular form in accordance with the subject "He", but in the passive sentence, the subject "the books" is in the plural form. Thus, the verb "to be" conjugated according to the new subject is "are", not "is".

Syntactic errors	
Boys	75%
Girls	33,3%

General comment on the effect of gender on language

In terms of morphology, the boys made 50% errors of derivational suffixes and 75% ones of inflectional suffixes, while the girls made 16.6% and 33, 3% respectively.

In terms of syntax, the boys errors made up 75%, while the girls made up 33.3%.

According to Susan M. Gass and Larry Selinker, male teenagers are more mature and cautious than female ones. Although their levels are the same, the girls are more elaborate and accurate. Therefore, the female students are less likely to commit morphological and syntactic errors.

Age

Most 8th graders (80%) are 14 years old, only two (20%) are 15 years old. We classify them into two groups for the survey.

Through the survey, although the difference in learning outcomes was very blurred between the two groups, we still have the following remarks:

Morphological errors

The 14-year-old group committed more morphological errors than the 15-year-old one. We believe that better life experience helped older students recognize morphological errors and avoid them. On the contrary, younger students with less experience are less likely to commit these errors.

Morphological error rate by age

Groups of students	Morphological errors	Rate
14-year-old group	5	85%
15-year-old group	1	15%

Syntactic errors

The group of eight 14-year-olds made four syntactic errors and the group of two fifteen-year-olds made one error. Both groups made the same syntactic errors. The error rate is the same between the number of errors and students.

Syntactic error rate by age

Groups of students	Syntactic errors	Rate
14-year-old group	4	80%
15-year-old group	1	20%

Register

In the group of ten 8th graders, all of them were born and raised in Ho Chi Minh City. However, there are two ethnic Chinese students in this 8th grader group. During their study, these two students learned better than the rest of the students. In terms of pronunciation, the students are equally capable. But in terms of agility, Chinese students show quicker reflexes and learn lessons better.

The following table shows that Chinese students get a higher average mean score than Kinh students:

	Kinh group	Chinese group
Marks	5, 6, 6, 6, 7, 7, 7, 8	7, 8
Mean	6.5	7.5

The average score of Chinese students, 7.5, is higher than the average score of Kinh students, 6.5. Due to the use of two languages when communicating, Chinese students are more experienced than Kinh students, who use only one language when communicating. This language advantage made it easier for Chinese students to acquire the passive voice better.

THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ACQUISITION THROUGH EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

Age

We conducted experiments in twenty-four students aged 17-24 and eight students aged over twenty-four years old. We call these two groups young and old. The group of young students actively participated in group activities and they attended the class more

often. The older group, on the other hand, were slower and more timid when they participated in group activities; moreover, they were not usually present in class.

Gender

The female students in the experimental class outnumber men. During the class, the female students participated in activities more actively. They specifically discussed concept questions more enthusiastically, and contributed more ideas to the answers. Moreover, the female students were rarely absent from the class while the male students were often absent for many reasons. After the course, the female students felt more satisfied and they wanted to study more.

Register

The students at Saigon University come from different regions throughout the country. The students from big cities will take more advantages when they learn passive sentences, while students from remote areas take more disadvantages such as ones in pronunciation, grammar, and ability to listen and speak English fluently.

Psychologically, in the experimental class we found that the group of young students was more active and dynamic than the old ones. Therefore, the young students were more motivated when they knew how to convert sentences with concept checking.

The effects of gender on students' language

Based on a survey of experimental students including 27 females and 5 males, we found significant effects of gender on students' language.

The effects on English morphology

Despite university students, who had studied English for seven years in high school, the students still made morphological errors. Through our surveys on 32 student papers, we found that the error rate of the male students was higher than that of the female students.

The errors of inflectional suffixes:

Ex: A mother birth feeds babies in the nest. (Active)

Babies are feeded by a mother bird in the nest. (Passive: morphological error of the verb)

Babies are fed by a mother bird in the nest. (Right)

Changing the verb to past participle, the students should not use suffix ED for “feed” because it is an irregular verb.

The errors of derivational suffixes:

Ex: The trainers were taught in a workshop. (Wrong)

The trainees were taught in a workshop. (Right)

The noun "trainer" has an ER suffix meaning "doer". The noun "trainee" has the EE suffix meaning "attende, learner". The students think the verb "train" will have the ER suffix like "learner", "player", "reader", and so on.

Mophological errors		
	Derivational suffix	Inflectional suffix
Male students	27%	36%
Female students	9,6%	19,2%

The effects on English syntax

Just like junior high school students, in the survey on syntactic errors, the male students also made more errors than the female students.

Ex: Ms. Smith took care of the children. (Active)

The children was taken care of by Ms. Smith. (Wrong)

The children were taken care of by Ms. Smith. (Right)

In the passive sentence "The children was taken care of by Ms. Smith", the verb "was" conjugated in singular form does not match the subject "The children". The verb "to be" should be conjugated "were" to match the subject "the children" in plural form. Therefore,

"The children were taken care of by Smith "is the correct sentence.

Syntactic errors	
Male students	18%
Female students	9,6%

General comment on the effect of gender on language

In terms of morphology the percentage of the male students who made errors of derivational suffixes was 27% and the one of inflectional suffixes was 36%, while the rate of girls who made errors of derivational suffixes was 9.6% and the one of inflectional suffixes was 19.2%.

In terms of syntax the male students who made errors make up 18%, while female students make up 9.6%.

According to Susan M. Gass and Larry Selinker, at teenage female students are more mature and more careful than male students. Although the levels of the students are the same, but the male students do their papers hastily and inaccurately. Therefore, male students commit more morphological and syntactic errors.

The effect of age on students' language

The second-year students at Saigon University are of relatively equal age, little different. According to statistics, we divided the students into two groups: group 1 comprised 83.6% of students aged 17-24 and the remaining group comprised 16.3% of students aged over 24.

When examining the errors of these two groups of students, we found that the students made the following errors:

Rate of students' morphological errors:

The group 1 students (17 to 24 years old) are less likely to make morphological errors. The rate was 7.2% of inflectional suffixes and 3.6% of derivational suffixes.

The group 2 students (over the age of 24) made more morphological errors. The error rate is 40% of inflectional suffixes and 20% of derivational suffixes.

Morphological errors		
	Derivational suffixes	Inflectional suffixes
Group 1 students	3,6%	7,2%
Group 2 students	20%	40%

Rate of students' syntactic errors:

On subject and verb concord, the group 1 students made up 3.6% and the group 2 students made up 20%.

The following table illustrates the syntactic errors of the students in two groups:

Syntactic errors	
Group 1 students	3,6%
Group 2 students	20%

General comment on the effect of age on language

In terms of morphological errors, the percentage of students in the first group who made derivational errors was 3.6% and the one of inflectional errors was 7.2%, while the percentage of students in the second group who made derivational errors was 20 % and the one of inflectional errors was 40%.

In terms of syntactic errors, the percentage of students in group 1 making errors was 3.6%, while the percentage of students in group 2 making errors was 20%.

According to Stephens Krashen [19], the acquisition of young learners is better than that of older ones. Although the age difference is small, language acquisition is different. The more different age is, the more different acquisition is. It is much better for young people and more difficult for old ones to learn a foreign language.

The effect of register on students' language

In the experimental class of Saigon University, students come from different provinces and regions. We conducted a survey of differences across tests because of the assumption that Vietnam's geographic and dialectical elements also partially affected the acquisition of English passive sentences.

Within a small class of 32 students, we divided the class into two groups: one student group living in Ho Chi Minh City and the other group of students from other provinces and regions.

The effects on English morphology

The students in the group from provinces and regions throughout the country committed more morphological errors than students in the Ho Chi Minh City group. Through a survey of 32 student assignments, we found that the morphological error rate was as follows:

Errors of inflectional suffixes:

Ex: The company has used a lot of means to control the business.
(Active)

A lot of means has been used to control the business by the company.
(Errors of subject and verb concord)

"Means" is an irregular noun with a zero inflectional suffix (unchanged) in plural form. Based on the morphological environment of "a lot of", this is a plural noun, so the verb must be conjugated accordingly:

A lot of means have been used to control the business by the company.

Errors of derivational suffixes:

The word "trainers" in the example "The trainers were taught in a workshop" is also a part of the passive sentence translation exercises

that the students from provinces did wrongly. Particularly, the students in Ho Chi Minh City did correctly in the case.

Morphological errors		
	Derivational suffixes	Inflectional suffixes
Students from HCM	0%	10%
Students from other places	19,8%	33%

The effects on English syntax

The students in the provinces made more syntactic errors than the ones in Ho Chi Minh City.

Ex: This factory makes a wide range of products. (Active)

A wide range of products is made by this factory. (Wrong)

A wide range of products are made by this factory. (Right)

"A wide range of products" is considered plural, so the verb in plural form will be appropriate. The "A wide range" element at the beginning of the noun phrase made students think that this was a singular noun phrase.

Syntactic errors	
Students from HCM	20%
Students from other places	50%

General comment on the effect of register on language

The percentage of the students in the provinces with morphological and syntactic errors is always higher than the one of the students living in Ho Chi Minh City. This is a proven practice in language learning to date on the high school graduation examinations. Due to difficult circumstances and poor learning conditions, the students in provinces, in general, are negatively affected when learning foreign languages, especially English.

CONCLUSION

The acquisition of the passive sentences of high school and university students is affected by many factors, especially age, gender and register. Due to their low basic background, the students can only acquire simple sentences. Particularly, the high school students of older age in the group absorbed better, but in the experimental class, the university students of higher age acquired less. On gender, in both classes of high school and university students, the female are always better absorbed. In terms of register, the high school and university students in the big cities are better than the ones in remote areas.

Gender, age and register factors significantly affect the acquisition of the high school and university students. These effects make some difference in foreign language acquisition. In order to create fairness in gender and to bridge the gap in foreign language learning outcomes of the regions, the Government and the Ministry of Education and Training should set the policies to support the students in the remote areas to learn better and invest in the gender research. The interesting thing here is to help the high school and university male students learn languages as well as the female ones.

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WRITING FOR PUBLICATION IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN VIETNAM: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Thuy Bui, Ph.D

Abstract

In this presentation, I will share my experiences as a young Vietnamese teacher researcher regarding writing for publication in applied linguistics. In particular, the presentation focuses on (1) a general format of a journal article or a book chapter; (2) steps of writing and submitting a manuscript; (3) how to deal with reviewers' comments; (4) possible areas for doing research in Vietnam, and (5) research collaboration. The presentation could benefit researchers, lecturers, teachers, practitioners, M.A and Ph.D students, and more.

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING SANDWICH FEEDBACK BY VIETNAMESE AND AMERICAN TEACHERS ON STUDENT'S LEARNING ATTITUDE

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Abstract

Giving feedback is not a new term in teaching foreign language. It is an indispensable part, benefiting both teachers in orienting students to the right track and students in improving their study. However, factors like mood, culture and specific circumstance sometimes turn feedback to be sensitive; the atmosphere in class, therefore, could be altered negatively under those comments. This research invests time and space to study about the culture of giving sandwich feedback in classroom of teachers from America and Vietnam. The author hypothesized that sandwich feedback is quite new in Vietnam and with Vietnamese traditional preferences of empowering, teachers would prefer to give a direct, long, hedging comment and American teachers, naturally, vice versa. However, the result of the research was surprised her when in fact, American teachers use hedging a lot in their comments and it is the flexibility in applying sandwich feedback, to some extents, affects positively to the learners. The research suggests some useful pedagogical implications and opens some new direction for further consideration.

Keywords: *sandwich feedback; criticism; cross-cultural communication; giving feedback*

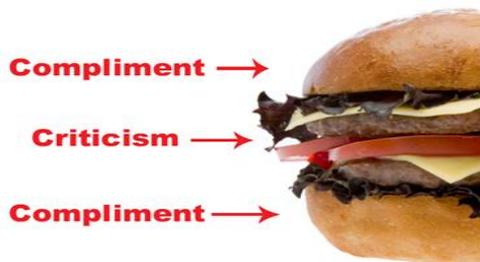
INTRODUCTION

Feedback in language teaching

For a long time in teaching history, feedback has been known as a useful connection between teachers and students to get wrong things corrected. Feedback is information that teachers or other learners give to learners on how well they are doing, helping the learners improve specific points, or supporting to plan their learning (“Feedback”, 2008). This part gives both teacher and students a reflection on what they have done before. A group of authors summarized that feedback to students can come in many forms, not just in writing, and may include oral comments, the use of audio and self- and peer-review processes (DCQE, 2012). Giving feedback not only greatly benefits students in correcting or editing their products but also be a challenge for teachers because giving comment on others’ work is inherently a sensitive case, requiring teachers to think and talk carefully in accordance with culture. In other words, understanding culture plays a crucial role for the message to be understood fully and politely. Without awareness of culture, communication can be negatively broken down and impacts to the relationship and vice versa. For instance, in America, after the presentation, when people hear good comments like “*You did an excellent presentation*”, they should set themselves understand that it is just a polite signal and possibly the performance is not as good as that praise. It would be a big problem if those styles of comment were applied in Vietnam where people trust all the words in the feedback they get and think of their performance as vivid as those words’ description. Hence, there will be no self - correction or development afterwards. The above example can be found anywhere in international companies and schools in Vietnam, inspiring the author to have a careful scan of this matter – giving feedback.

Though it is not new, *sandwich feedback* (SF) has not been widely known. According to the DCQE (2012), giving effective feedback, orally or in writing, may conform to the following structure:

- Start with positive comments ('the bread').
- Identify areas in which student could improve and explain how they might do this by making clear and specific suggestions ('the meat').
- End with positive comment that encourages and motivates the student and points the way towards future success ('the bread').



Sometimes, for the lack of time or the tiredness after the marking, teachers shorten their comments in a polite way by showing corrective comments on specific action and then giving advices for a better performance. This strategy is called Open SF. Because of the combination between the stating out of weaknesses and the suggestions for improvements, these final comments often quite long. The teachers use up combined structures with reference to the negative strategies, making the advices more polite and persuasive. In brief, SF can come in two forms: full SF with three steps (Praise-Criticism-Praise) and open SF (Criticism – Suggestions). SF, in any form, is an effective way of sharing supportive criticism.

Effect of culture

Another important factor to be noticed is the effects of culture to politeness strategies. In the scope of this short article, the author just focuses on Vietnamese culture. Vietnamese people often seek to avoid conflict in relationships; they prefer to speak about sensitive subjects indirectly ("Communicating with Vietnamese", 2008). In other words, they hedge a lot instead of coming straightly to the main point. Besides, Vietnamese culture seriously concerns with status (obtained with age and education). "The respect is the corner-stone of interpersonal relationships in Vietnamese society" is

the quote in many materials writing about Vietnamese culture (“Vietnamese cultural standards”). Teachers, even though they are young, enjoy great respect and prestige in Vietnamese society. Due to the recognition of status, teachers in Vietnam would stereotypically smooth their language choice to show the seriousness. The use of sandwich feedback for that reason may appear more than that in a classroom taught by Vietnamese teachers. Vietnamese teachers, in case they have to criticize students, will use a lot of complicated structures while American colleagues, on the opposite, would comment straightly on students’ errors without the fear of threatening the students’ face.

In position of a teacher, the author of these papers has a motivation to carry out the research to raise her own understanding of giving sandwich feedback, benefiting her in the way of giving assessment for students. Moreover, not only is this politeness limited to the use in classroom but also it can be applied in daily life among wise communicators which helps them a lot in work and other fields. With above motivation for researching, the papers focus to find the answer for the following questions:

- 1. How often do the teachers use the sandwich feedback in their assessment to students’ work?*
- 2. What may be the effects of sandwich feedbacks on students’ uptake?*
- 3. What are the suggestions for teachers in teaching English for Vietnamese students?*

METHODOLOGY

The study is conducted with the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. In this research, quantitative methodology helps the author have an objective view of the researching procedure. However, for the limitation of time and informants, the information collected may not be enough for a real-quantitative research, turning the result to be unpersuasive. Consequently, methods of qualitative

research should be applied to make valuable comparison and results. The most outstanding characteristic of this method is the open of result. The responses from the participants are flexible, giving the researchers a panorama view of the situation. Two situations will be given for observation and analysis. The first one is when teachers correct a writing draft with full of grammatical mistakes and the second one is the feedback given after an advanced oral presentation.

In order to achieve the objectives of the cross-cultural research, the main method of data collection is survey for this tool shows enough advantages to the researchers. After collecting the necessary data, the statistics would be shown on the graphs or charts which helps the author in leading a discussion and come up with the conclusion. The procedure could not be fulfilled without the consultation of both Vietnamese and American teachers and the interviews with students under those teachers' instructions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First, the frequency of using this strategy is different between two groups of teachers. The following chart about the frequency of using sandwich assessment makes this assumption clearer. While there is just a small number of teachers admit that they rarely apply the strategy (12,2% of SFC users), most participants used it. However, under the effect of habit and cultures, the distinction in frequency of using appeared in the percentage number.

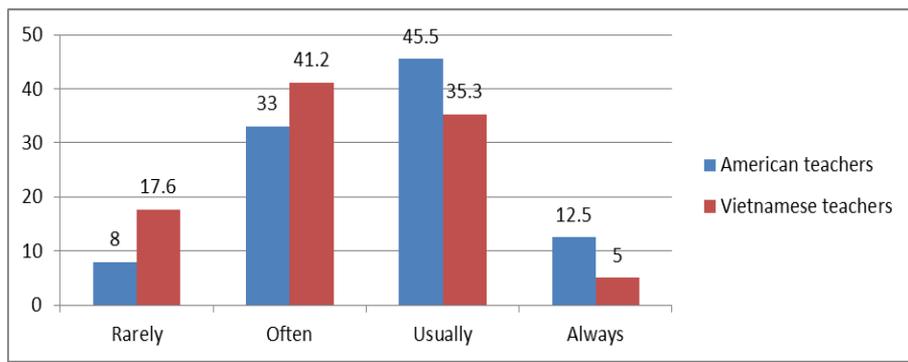


Fig 1: The frequency of using SFC in teaching

The highest number appears in the column of “Usually” with 45,5% of American teachers and 35,3% of the Oriental colleagues applying SF at this frequency. It is the high percentages of “Often” and “Usually” categories implies that teachers care about this technique but have not used it with all extents. The explanation may lie in different traditional methods of assessing students’ work or may the teachers be not familiar with the new strategy, thus flexibly combining it with others might be a safe option.

Another thing to be noticed is that the frequency of using SFC among Vietnamese teachers is definitely lower than Western colleagues. The percentage of Vietnamese teachers in column of “Rarely” and “Often” is higher than that of American ones, respectively 17,6% and 41,2%. It is possible that in Vietnam, for the reason of being in higher position with more power than students or for the conventional habits of commenting, the teachers may forget to praise their students before criticizing them and skip such a valuable strategy in their teaching.

STUDENTS’ LEARNING ATTITUDE

Situation 1

The situation requires the teachers to give comments on an elementary students’ writing which contains a lot of grammatical mistakes. The comments are written right after the students’ products. There are six most common strategies that the author filter from responses of participants:

- Intensifying interest to students in teacher’s comments
- Exaggerating the result in a positive way
- Stating the rules for students to follow
- Giving or asking for reasons like a suggestion for improvement
- Minimizing the impositions by using slight words
- Hedging

Some examples are illustrated in the following table:

No	Strategy	Examples
1	Intensifying interest to students in teacher's comments	<i>You have already finished the exercises, don't you?</i>
2	Exaggerating the result in a positive way	<i>I immediately impress with your beautiful slides</i>
3	Stating the rules for students to follow	<i>The over-lengthy of impromptu talk is restricted</i>
4	Giving or asking for reasons like a suggestion for improvement	<i>Why don't you change this part into a comic? I think it would be interesting.</i>
5	Minimizing the impositions by using slight words	<i>The only thing should be changed is the form of the letter</i>
6	Hedging	<i>More or less, you have to fulfill that assignment before I come back</i>

Vietnamese teachers love hedging and often state the rules when they assess students' works with 29,4% and 35,2% of each respectively. Unlikely, Western colleagues impress the readers with 33,3% of them exaggerating in their comments and the same number applies hedging signals in their evaluation. For American teachers, imposing a rule in the assessment is not common and this technique gets least concern of all (16,6%). Intensifying interest to hearer appears to be a foible of Vietnamese teachers when the use of vivid tense with the combination of present and past tenses, direct speech and tag questions get the least concern with only 11,7% of them said "yes" to the strategy. Other strategies like Giving or asking for reasons and Minimizing the imposition with words like "only", "just", "a little", etc., get nearly the same proportion for each among natives.

STUDENTS' REACTIONS

As students answered the survey and interview, the author can see the immediate reaction toward their criticized products. On reading the corrected papers, 70% of the learners feel “acceptable” with the note that they had already expected that there are mistakes in the writing and assess that the mark and comments teachers gave are reasonable. Although there is still 10% of them feel “shocked” and 5% feel “a bit sad” when reading the comments, it is undeniable that the number is just small and fall in uniquely sensitive students.

Through the observation and the results from comparing students’ first and second portfolios, there is big improvement seen. Although there are still grammar mistakes in the second writings, most of them get higher marks in later portfolios than in the first one, showing the improvement somehow. 7% of learners taught by American teachers and 10% of native teachers’ students still make the same mistakes in two writings are just acceptably small proportion from which we cannot generalize that SFC does not have good effects on learners.

Situation 2

In this second case, the participants were asked to give their oral feedback to advanced students with wrong intonation in their speaking presentation. After collecting the data, there are eight most popular politeness strategies are listed with high percentage of appearance.

- Noticing to the students’ mood and feeling
- Exaggerating the results in praises with strong adjectives or adverbs
- Seeking agreement by repetition and minimal encourages
- Avoiding disagreement
- Hedging
- Joking to ease the criticisms
- Asking or giving questions

- Minimizing the imposition.

It is outstanding that exaggerating and hedging are applied most often in American teachers' SFC strategies with 33,3% and 41,6% respectively. They use a lot of strong words in the opening and closing praises to persuade that the performance is so impressive like *wonderful, great*, etc. Indifferently, the column "Hedging" of Vietnamese teachers witnesses a number that equals to a half of American colleagues' statistics.

Besides, Western teachers are in favor of avoiding displeasure in classroom by using pseudo agreement (partly agree with the point students give) or saying white lies, making students happy and ease listening to those words. While avoiding hurting student's feeling, 29,1% American teachers often seek for agreement for their comments with the use of minimal encouragers (*yeah, that's true*, etc.). Joking and noticing learners' wants are mentioned as well, but the number of instructors in this survey use them is limited.

Having a slight difference in the choice of techniques to give assessment, but Vietnamese teachers are also advocate over-praising the good points and avoiding disagreement (both of this count for 29,4% in the responses). Instructors from Vietnam hardly joke when they talk to learners and they also do not have intention to minimize the imposition putting on students with percentage of 5,8% and 17,6% respectively for those strategies.

Students' improvement

This second situation is totally different with the first one in the fact that the comments are given by speaking right after the performance. The comments are the combination of teacher's voice and intonation, teacher's attitude and the criticism. Hence, these factors together have impacts on students' attitude. Most students admit that the first impression from the teachers' facial expression eases them a lot. With this situation, the author recognizes that in the later presentations, students appear to have better preparation and notice

more about their intonation. 75% students of American guiders admit that they are motivated by the feedbacks and have the clear orientation to correct their wrong intonation in daily life. Their check lists of mistakes commented by other students and teachers prove this assumption. Just a little lower but number of students taught by Vietnamese teachers that make progress is optimistic as well: 62%. These students, although sometimes make confusion with the raising in the ending of the sentences, they shows their trying in improving it according to the teachers' comments. Over 90% of interviewers agree that they do not feel hurt or ashamed getting those feedback. As a result, to some extent, the SFC shows it advantages to advanced students.

DISCUSSION

Those above analyses play the crucial role in answering the research questions that are put out from the very beginning of these papers. From the statistics, there are some points can be generalized.

The first thing can be retrieved from the data analysis results is that teachers, to some extents, have conception and awareness of using SF in their daily teaching, showing the up-to-date knowledge and attention of teachers in finding the best way to give their students assessment. This can be due to the increase in number of cultural researches recently and a better teacher education system which heads for the practical purposes of perceiving new languages. It is motivated to see the high percentage of Vietnamese teachers involving in this modern method, improving the ways that people often see about serious relationship between teachers and students in traditional thinking where teachers order students to follow.

Another finding of the study is the effects of sandwich feedback comments and students' reaction to those feedbacks. People's normal psychology is secured and do not want to be offended even they make mistakes. Students, with their complicated psychology of young age, are vulnerable under the strictness of teachers.

Consequently, they seem to react positively and make improvements in their next presentation in case the teachers use SF to assess their products/ presentations. This phenomenon is easy to understand and observe, establishing the foundation for teachers to have suitable ways dealing with this sensitive circumstances in class.

In short, the answers for research questions are found with the frequency of using SF, the differences among Vietnamese and American teachers in application of the strategy, the reactions and improvements of students. Basing on these information and discussion, the author suggests the name for some further researches and recommends teachers with some pedagogical implications in next part.

CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATION

For the limitation of time and participants, the results of the study cannot be used to over-generalize for larger samples; still, they suppose the author some considerations for application of strategy in teaching.

First, the SF undeniably shows teacher's cleverness and brings good effects to students' uptake. It is necessary that those who deliver lectures everyday raise more awareness about this new but interesting method, then make it more applicable and helpful with various rank of strategies and forms. Teacher can combine comments from other students to get a full view of the writing/performance, making the feedback more perfect and persuasive. It is a good idea as well when the praises are given in oral forms and criticisms are wrote in another piece of writing, which can avoid the lack of time and not causing shame for listeners. It should be noticed that time management and levels of students are important factors when giving SF, not turning it into a lengthy and boring strategy of politeness.

Moreover, there is a lesson for foreign teachers living in Vietnam to have a deep knowledge of Vietnamese culture and get the adaptation in dealing with native students. The cultural conflicts and

overwhelming can happen anywhere in a class in which teachers and learners come from different backgrounds. The instructors, thus, should know how to apply the modern ways of comment intelligently, avoiding causing shock to students who may be familiar with the traditional grammar-translation method. On the other hand, the teacher's own way of giving sandwich feedback should be kept at a suitable level. It is crucial to create a new environment in classroom with new method and not let native students have great reverse effects on teacher's style.

Last but not least, the application of SFC is not as narrow as in classroom boundary but intelligent teachers can apply it in their daily life when evaluating other's characteristics. It leaves the lessons for people to give and receive feedback in a polite way, avoiding the breaking down of communication by minor displeasure.

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REVIEWING EFL OBJECTIVES FOR HUST TECHNICAL UNDERGRADUATES: EMPLOYERS' PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

An effective English as a Foreign Language (hereafter named EFL) course should reflect employment's requirements of language skills, knowledge, and values expectant employees should meet to complete tasks assigned at work, to develop their professions, and to promote self-studying culture. In that context, this case study reports on those actual requirements at eight technical companies in Vietnam through focus-group interviews with their recruiters and engineers who have graduated from technological and technical faculties at Hanoi University of Science and Technology (hereafter named HUST). The interviewees' opinions help to externally and informally review the existing EFL syllabus for HUST technical students in general and its objectives in particular and to make pedagogical implications of how to adapt the EFL objectives so that institutional graduates may accommodate the demands of using English at workplaces in the globalization environment.

Keywords: *English as Foreign Language syllabus, EFL objectives, Technical undergraduates, Employment perspectives.*

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INTRODUCTION

As a fact, English has emerged as means of communication within multinational corporations and among companies doing businesses in cross-cultural settings. This urges those economic sectors to be ready for their long-term development strategies. Furthermore, under such outsourcing conditions, language standards for general purposes and specific purposes at work are a key to creating harmony and efficacy in the businesses.

In a wider context of ASEAN-community integration and globalization, Vietnamese graduates have been under increasingly high pressure to be proficient in English for their employment gain and task completion at work. In fact, however various the language requirements are for technical engineers; in this case, mainly reading skills are useful and integral for their work in technical companies and industries. For the past decades, the demands for high-level English proficiency have discriminated the existing employees in their career prospects and challenged those senior students and new hires. This trend has reflected back to the training institutions, requiring them to review their EFL syllabus and redesign it practically and effectively for the sake of their undergraduates in employment opportunities together with other infringed benefits.

EFL TEACHING FOR HUST TECHNICAL UNDERGRADUATES: OVERVIEW

Before 2008, the EFL teaching for technical students at the university maintained for over 20 years faced many criticisms and obstacles such as focus on grammar and reading comprehension without real communication skill development, large class size (of 40 – 90 students each), lack of facilities, and insufficient, inadequate professional development activities. In fact, graduates have been claimed to be ineffective foreign language communicators at work. Afterwards, TOEIC-orientation courses have been formally introduced into the engineering curriculum as conditional credits for

admission of doing graduation paper with the aim to improve the institutional students' average level of English proficiency up to local employment requirements.

As such, the freshmen sit for a mock TOEIC placement test of Reading and Listening sections with the results used to classify proficiency levels for pass and not pass groups. The former is those with at least 450/990 points of institutional TOEIC scores and without further formal EFL learning, whereas the latter consists of two subdivisions: lower than 250 and between 255-445, and equivalent learning courses are offered for beginners and pre-intermediate levels. Additionally, the latter need to achieve target score after each academic year, for example, completing the first year, they have to achieve at least 250/990 points of mock TOEIC score scale, or second year 300/990. However, these courses together with the whole standardized-test-oriented EFL syllabi need reevaluating as the learners cannot use the language for communication confidently despite high scores on standardized tests.

RESEARCH BRIEFS

This case study, although small-scale and not large enough to offer the whole scene of EFL proficiency levels and language uses of employees in the Vietnamese technical working environment, initially reflects the gaps between EFL requirements of technological companies where technical HUST graduates have been working and the institutional capacity to meet those changing needs through the focus-group interviews of the recruiters and engineers at some major corporations operating in Vietnam over the last two decades such as VNPT, VNS, FPT, Panasonic, Molex, Canon, and GE.

Theoretical background

Curriculum evaluation (hereafter abbreviated CE) is an internal continuous process for the benefits of both insiders and outsiders with two main types: accountability-oriented one for those sponsors

like employers, consultants, administrators and policy-makers, and the other development-aimed for those like designers, teachers, students and institution administrators to make sure that the planning and implementation of curriculum is at an acceptable level of efficiency and effectiveness (Asgari, 2010) to facilitate decision making (Popham, 1975; Jarvis & Adams, 1979, cited in Richards, 2001).

As Richards (2001) suggests, such factors as mastery of objectives, performance on tests, measures of acceptability, retention rate and curriculum efficiency, help to evaluate the effectiveness of a curriculum with consideration of class size, teaching methods, material nature, and time schedule. In essence, goals and objectives should properly reflect or adapt to the social and educational changes; thus, despite the other criteria met already, the curriculum has not yet to be socially productive. Obviously, a course should be properly based on the balance between the objective gain and the learners' test performance at an acceptable level. In addition, O'Dowd (2002, as cited in Beretta, 1992) and Kern, Thomas, Howard and Bass (1998, as cited in Leist, n.d.) emphasize the importance of all stakeholders in curriculum evaluation. Furthermore, Paris (1998) states that industries and businesses can provide input and update current practices to curriculum design; student assessment and workplace skills exemplify academic concepts at work through employment requirements or standards and offer on-site internships for students to practice their skills for future jobs and externships for teachers to realize theories into practice and incorporate workplace skills into syllabi or programs.

Besides that, Porter (1998, as cited in Paris, *ibid.*) believes that education institutions should accomplish the integration of school-to-work curriculum to accommodate both students' personal needs and those of the community by appointing a designing group consisting of institution authority, teachers, parents, and employers. In fact, the group's first-hand experiences at work offer good opportunities for educators to identify the skills students need and to realize the

requirements and standards of the expectant employers.

In reality, the analyses of interview data in this study reveal no close connections between the human resource providers and the employers in Vietnamese contexts. As a result, the investment in human resources has yet to be cost-effective and profitable; and normally it is considered a waste of the society's resources. Specifically, employers can offer some standards for the university to observe in the curriculum implementation. Otherwise, they have rights to direct their investment into other training institutions domestically and abroad. Obviously, the university will lose its financial gains and other infringed benefits. In this illustration, businesses and industries have positive and active effects on the expectant employees, completing the closed-loop of demand-supply and creating harmony in the societies (Friedenberg, et. al., n.d., as cited in Westerfield, 2010).

In short, companies' requirements should be reflected in curriculum design and evaluation; thus, graduates can accommodate those standards to obtain employment opportunities. In other words, the literature review restates the importance of employment's voice in developing any demand-based EFL courses.

Research objectives

The case study is to find out the gaps between the practical corporate EFL requirements for the technical HUST graduates and the English curriculum. Additionally, it is aimed to suggest how to adapt the existing EFL course objectives to better preparing undergraduates with language and professional skills for their future careers.

Research methodology

The study takes a constructivist position which means that "social phenomena and their meanings are continually accomplished by social actors" (Pham, 2013: 6). Therefore, it bases on the employment perspectives about English knowledge and skills necessary for technical HUST new hires to perform at work from

their positions of research participants and with their various experience as the institutional graduates, corporate workforce, and diverse social and historical background, thus playing the role of the “social actors” – with multi-angled views of an incurrence (Creswell, 2009: 8, as cited in Pham, 2013: 6).

Moreover, this study uses interpretivism as the research epistemology or paradigm that is about exploring the subjective meaning of any social action (Bryman, 2012), or specifically the views of the employers and employees as the major research data, with adequate reference to those of curriculum coordinators. A case study, which is the predominant methodology of this paradigm (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006), was chosen as the research methodology. Data were collected from focus-group interviews with eight selective employers and employees working in IT and technical-related companies in Hanoi, either state or non-state run, using unstructured and semi-structured sets of questions, and data analyzed in themes to interpret the meanings and make findings (Creswell, 2008: 4) of the research, and implications made to do similar research. In literature, in-depth interviews can generate data from individuals who share a common experience on a specific issue (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2008; Lichtman, 2010; Litosseliti, 2003). Indeed, it is not necessary and inapplicable to interview a large number of participants in qualitative research, as recommended by Litchman (2010), regardless of careful consideration of other factors like time, budget, and participants’ availability.

Data analysis

As a foundational method (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and one of the most common approach (Boyatzis, 1998; Bryman, 2012) for qualitative analysis, thematic analysis was used to provide a rich, detailed and complex account of the focus-group interview data. We followed Braun and Clark’s model (2006: 87) with four phases to carry out the process of analyzing data.

Phase one includes transcribing data, reading and rereading data, and

noting down initial ideas (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Interview data were transcribed verbatim and translated from Vietnamese to English. In phase two, initial codes were generated manually from the data set. Next, we sorted the codes into themes and arranged all of the relevant coded data segments into the suitable themes. In order to make it clear, we put all the themes into a map form with the themes identified. Finally, we reviewed and refined the themes. Conclusively, we had two following official themes: (1) Employment's perceptions on technical HUST graduates' and new hires' English proficiency levels, and (2) Employees' sharing of what students should prepare besides language skills at the workplace, making implications to adapting EFL curriculum objectives for technical HUST undergraduates.

Findings

Employment Perspectives on HUST-graduate Employees' Language Proficiency Levels

All the interviewees agreed that at IT and technical-related working places, almost all of the HUST engineer employees use English as means of instruction rather than communication when mainly updating technology and knowledge in English through reading and sometimes listening skills rather than productive skills, especially speaking one. Actually, they may email their international partners to exchange terms, provisions, supports and consultations in English; nevertheless, they rarely use English except for those in leadership positions communicating in periodical professional development training or on business trips abroad. Insightfully, technical HUST graduates struggle to read their specialized documents for their work and professional development using their basic reading strategies obtained in the TOEIC 450 preparation courses offered at HUST although the two reading sources are typically different. Thus, they seem to apply trial-and-error methods to understand written texts.

At the university, in fact, like any learners of this traditional pass-on education system, new hires and graduates themselves have always

tried to pass any formal tests not for their own sake, but to earn the acceptance of doing a graduation paper. Thus, mock TOEIC 450 point holders cannot express their ideas persuasively in communicative settings or meet employers' language requirements.

Luckily, new hires whose specialized knowledge and soft skills initially meet the job requirements can fundamentally use the English language for their work. They can update information, exchange ideas and viewpoints with their business partners, and deal with work incurrence using the language as a means of communication. In the example, the IT and electronic engineers have to process English documents in the curriculum. Sometime, they must complete programming procedures using English commands.

Employees' sharing of what students should prepare besides language skills at the workplace

However quickly and closely exposed to written English, new hires and graduates have not usually attended formal training courses of professional skills such as emailing, presentation, reporting, and technical writing skills; hence, they may fail to process the work procedures up to international standards even in such multi-national companies as GE, Panasonic or Molex. In addition, the employees are not able to linguistically and culturally socialize with those from different countries due to little exposure in cross-cultural situations, possibly shadowing the images of real powerful hi-tech specialists and restraining their opportunities and prospects in some cases.

Apart from that, despite the corporate recruitment language and specialization requirements, employees find it harder to maintain the language improvement, except for a limited number of elite IT engineer team at VNPT or software engineer teams at FPT. Actually, being aware of prosperity and promotion opportunities achieved with high language proficiency in globalization trends, some employees have self -studied for better performance at work. This personal investment should also be under the corporate guidance and regulations for sustainable human resource development.

In summary, the HUST case study with the qualitative data collected from the interviewees working in local technical companies has revealed that EFL course designers at university should make reference to the employers' recruitment requirements. Accordingly, the course designers can maximize undergraduates' opportunities to accommodate those requirements. Likewise, the study makes implications of adapting EFL course objectives to enhance such accommodation.

IMPLICATIONS OF HOW TO ADAPT EFL COURSE OBJECTIVES FOR TECHNICAL HUST STUDENTS

Based on the findings and literature reviews proposed by Sanders (1992) and Weir & Roberts (1994) (as cited in Richards, 2001) on evaluating various aspects of an EFL course, within the limited study scope, several suggestions are made for improving HUST English teaching and studying quality, as follows:

First, the outcome of the EFL courses should be realistic and demand-oriented: facilitating basic language skills and providing professional skills necessary for expectant employees such as emailing, technical writing, reporting, and presentation. In other words, depending on target needs analysis of industries potential and available for technical HUST graduates to work, specific soft skills including English-language communication ones should be integrated in the EFL curriculum rather than massive language education programs.

Secondly, curriculum designers should build the frameworks to formulate objectives of each syllabus as below:

- Screening the potentiality and feasibility of the goals and objectives by using the four-part scheme of goals and objectives from the Australian Language Levels proposed by Graves (2000: 79): broad goals → specific goals → general objectives → specific objectives;

- Writing objectives following the four elements in the A.B.C.D. formula given by Heinich, et.al. (2002) with the clarity of the Audience (which is normally the learner), the Behavior (which is expected to be performed and is measurable in some ways), the Condition (which is what the learner has known about the issue taught), and the Degree or mastery (which is the amount of the learner's achievement);
- Applying Bloom's Taxonomy in writing the Behavior in ABCD formula: using given verb actions for a specific reason in order to achieve a strong and accessible outcome;
- Investigating the feasibility of the objectives and indirectly the goals set in relation to the appropriateness of teaching methods, availability of materials and references and degree of ease to evaluate the learner's achievement of the objectives.

Imperatively, those performance objectives help to optimize studying opportunities for technical HUST students with varied and balanced materials between commercial and home-made ones. The former is attributed to the language learning and teaching processes, due to their advantages recommended by Phillips and Shettlesworth (1978); Clarke (1989); Peacock (1997) (as cited in Richards, 2001): a source of motivation, a provision of cultural traits about the target culture, a good sample of original, natural native language, a preparation for learners' real needs, and a resource encouraging teachers' creativity. Meanwhile, the latter, home-made materials, should be on a graded, measured scale for language developmental degrees relevant to the learners' needs, motivation and proficiency levels. Obviously, materials are the other end of a curriculum, representing the goals, and underlying methods, skills. What's more, program design should be on-going processes involving all the stakeholders from designers, teachers, students, administrators and businesses, so that the processes reach end-to-end. Actually, this process takes periodical review, adaptation, and redesign as the learner body differ in needs, motivation degree, background knowledge, experience, language use

opportunity, and learning styles.

Thirdly, there should be a neutral approach towards adapting performance objectives of combined EFL curriculum of primarily basic language and professional skill components. The curriculum should reflect life-long learning and generate an action plan to achieve the goals and objectives already set. To illustrate, the learners need attend university courses to develop their thinking styles like English users and thrust them into self-studying.

Next, an open online site also helps to enhance learners' self-studying and various 21st-century skills like digital, visual and critical thinking with consideration of such limitations as low face-to-face interactions, restricted rapport establishments and maintaining, education quality control problems, plagiarism, copyright and others.

Furthermore, assessment should be authentic, in which the students are to realize what goals and objectives in language knowledge and skills they need to achieve in each course and the whole curriculum. This stage should be pedagogy-directed rather than outcome-oriented with both summative assessment using standardized tests like TOEIC and formative assessment effective in assessing learners' progress and achievements at some periods of courses and at the end of curriculum. Garrison and Ehringhaus (2007) recommend that to gain balance, summative and formative assessments should provide comprehensive assessments of student learning at some points for educators to adapt the teaching methods, materials and other factors, and at the end of program / curriculum for all stakeholders to evaluate the degree of achieving the goals and objectives set.

Westerfield (2010) considers the involvement of all stakeholders in the stages of curriculum or program design is the key to success. Depending on given situations, effective curriculum developer will have a comprehensive view of the learners' current skills and work out target skills, immediate and delayed training needs. They can gain vital supports for the curriculum/program from the key

stakeholders listed below:

- Current and target learners,
- Content experts who work or study in the field and are familiar with the tasks the learners need to perform,
- Alumni who have knowledge of the skills needed, sample written or oral texts relevant to the field such as textbooks, training manuals, DVDs, videotapes, business correspondence, employers, supervisors, and colleagues.

To gather the information to adapt target objectives of an EFL course, curriculum designers and evaluators can employ such data collection methods as Questionnaires, Examining samples of written or oral texts, Discussions, structured interviews, and observations (“shadowing” people in courses or on the job).

All in all, maintaining the close rapports with businesses and industries is a key for any educational institutions to develop an effective curriculum, and vice versa. The university should do their tasks at the fullest and best to provide high-quality workforce up to the society’s standards.

CONCLUSION

This research has been a crucial kickoff of a longer-term and at larger-scale one to link the two ends of a continuum: the investors/employers and educators/implementers. For years, though we have realized the importance of employers and businesses in the curriculum design and evaluation, we have rarely had enough resources to carry it out fully. In this sense, the program development is taken for granted to be in the university’s charge, whereas the technical companies where HUST graduates have been working often provide more practical and hands-on skills for new hires and other staffs. Hopefully, the resource allocation in the society will be more appropriate, and investment will be done end-to-end, i.e. industry-to-university.

The study also helps technical companies to participate in human resource education procedures. At this point, they will be more responsible and active in setting up standards of recruitment and employment at their workplace.

In terms of economics, the investment on education at university will be optimal when graduates can do what businesses and industries require, and the workplace saves a large amount of time and finance training and retraining new hires. Obviously, all the stakeholders benefit from the changes in organizing and implementing the curriculum this way.

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INVESTIGATING SOME ELEMENTS AFFECTING THE READABILITY OF TOEIC TEXT- PRIMARY LEVEL

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Abstract

Teaching and learning TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) has been popular in Asian countries and especially in Vietnam recently. However, selecting documents for teaching and learning as well as building exam questions banks often has qualitative tendency in Vietnamese classrooms. Therefore, building up a quantitative measurement is sorely needed in this case. It will help teachers conduct their textbooks and curricula effectively, and save their time and effort as well. Within the scope of this paper, we surveyed and analyzed two components: words and sentences in the readability of some TOEIC books at the basic level which are currently published in Vietnam. We, first, want to find out some elements affecting the readability of the TOEIC texts. Then, the corpus is assessed by FLESCH, one of the most widely used, and the one most tested and reliable to suggest the practical findings. The conclusion will assist teachers and editors in selecting documents, reforming syllabus, and building exam question banks for TOEIC at the primary level (easy) efficiently.

Keywords: *readability, elements, TOEIC books, primary level.*

INTRODUCTION

One of the key requirements for the test takers in TOEIC is that all of them must be able to comprehend texts of steadily increasing complexity as they progress through test practice. Thus, it is essential to increase the learners' reading levels as well as select the reading texts to match with the learners in teaching and learning TOEIC or assessing their level. When materials developers want to simplify texts to provide more comprehensible input to second language (L2) learners, two popular approaches have been applied: a structural or an intuitive approach (Allen, 2009). However, in practical teaching and learning TOEIC in Vietnamese classrooms, it shows that teachers have often tended to select the reading texts for their lessons or assessments by their institution, a qualitative selection; they often choose the reading texts from the already grade level TOEIC books or related materials and take a lot of time to decide whether the texts match with the readers or not. Therefore, in this case, a quantitative way to support them to save time and labor is sorely needed, and readability measurement is one such tool that authors can use when evaluating text comprehensibility.

RELATED WORKS

Matching a text with readers depends two main directions: Comprehensibility and the Complexity of the Text. Comprehensibility focuses on discovering all factors of a single reader that affect his/her ability on understanding the text, a reader of a text, such as his/her prior knowledge; his/her reading skill; his/ her interest; his/her motivation, etc... while the complexity of the text does more on discovering features of a text affect the comprehensibility a group of readers, a text of a group reader, such as the factors related to the text's content; the style of expression; the level of readability; the text's designed; the text's organization and navigational aids (Dubay,2007).

The complexity of the text has been subdivided into two principle

directions: the visual presentation of the text and the content of the text. The first direction focuses on printing characteristics of text such as: typeface, font color, font size, background color, graphics, charts, etc..., and this is also called by another term – “Legibility”. The second one – the text difficulty, mainly examines the factors that interact to influence the text difficulty, such as: words usage, sentences usage, ideas organizing, etc..., and generally, this is also called “Readability”.

There are many different definitions about Readability. According to George Klare (1963), readability means “the ease of understanding or comprehension due to the style of writing”. According to Mostafa Zamanian and Pooneh Heydari (as cited in Brown Richards et al, 1992) readability is “how easily written materials can be read and understood. This depends on several factors including the average length of sentences, the number of new words contained, and the grammatical complexity of the language used in a passage”. The SMOG readability formula’s author, Harry McLaughlin (1969) defined readability as “the degree to which a given class of people find certain reading matter compelling and comprehensible”. Edgar Dale and Jeanne Chall’s definition (1949) may be the most completed definition: “the sum total (including the interactions) of all those elements of all those elements within a given piece of printed material that affect the success a group of reader has with it . The success is the extent to which they understand it, read it at an optimal speed, and find it interesting.”

The studies about text readability have begun since the early of the 20th century and continue to be investigated due to its validity. These studies have shown many findings and applied tools, and one of them is readability formula. Readability formulas have been used to select reading texts in various social fields like military, media, literature, health care, and especially in education. Before 2000, there are nearly 1000 readability formulas of different languages, among them the most popular formulas are the Flesch formulas, the Dale–Chall formula, The Gunning fog formula, Fry readability graph,

McLaughlin's SMOG formula, the FORCAST formula, Readability and newspaper readership, the George Klare studies, Measuring coherence and organization, the John Bormuth formulas, Advanced readability formulas, the Lexile framework, ATOS readability formula for books, and CohMetrix psycholinguistics measurements. A research about "Readability" from en.wikipedia.org (2017, March 28) shows that the Flesch Reading Ease formula became one of the most widely used, and the one most tested and reliable. In 1951, Farr, Jenkins, and Patterson simplified the formula further by changing the syllable count. The modified formula is:

$$\text{New reading ease score} = 1.599\text{nosw} - 1.015\text{sl} - 31.517$$

Where: nosw = number of one-syllable words per 100 words and
sl = average sentence length in words.

In 1975, in a project sponsored by the U.S. Navy, the Reading Ease formula was recalculated to give a grade-level score. The new formula is now called the Flesch–Kincaid grade-level formula (Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Readability>)

Within the scope of this paper, we surveyed and analyzed two components: words and sentences in the readability of some TOEIC books at the basic level which are currently published in Vietnam. We, first, want to find out the elements affecting the readability. Then, the corpus is assessed by the Flesch–Kincaid grade-level formula to suggest the practical findings.

CORPUS

The corpus were collected from three of the TOEIC books for primary level as follows: (1) Lori. (2011). Introductory Course TNT TOEIC: Volume One. Publisher Tong Hop TPHCM; (2) Lougheed, L. (2006). Longman Preparation Series for the New TOEIC® Test: Introductory Course - Fourth Edition. Pearson Education ESL; and (3) Taylor, A. & Malarcher, C. (2006). Starter TOEIC® (third edition). Compass Publishing.

When all of the documents have been already collected, we firstly pre-processed them to make all of them consistent like Text Extracting, Spelling correction, Document filtering. Then we saw that many documents are a few sentences and questions or charts so we reselected the documents and the remaining corpus contained 220 texts- including TNT TOEIC: 18 Texts; Longman TOEIC: 102 texts; and Starter TOEIC:100 texts. They are the texts about the themes about educations, business, entertainments, sports, etc... (See Appendix).

Finally, the selected corpus was processed to find the elements affecting the readability at the primary level of TOEIC documents and the corpus was also tested the difficulty levels by the Flesch-Kincaid grade level formula, see the details of the extracted statistic as follows:

Table 3.1: the statistic of the elements affecting the readability of TOEIC reading texts at primary level

file_name	char_count	notdalechall_count	polysyblword_count	sent_count		
Doc 1.txt	632	15	2	19		
Doc 10.txt	306	12	4	7		
Doc 100.txt	956	48	15	16		
Doc 101.txt	1012	37	16	21		
Doc 102.txt	802	36	8	18		
Doc 11.txt	319	12	4	7		
Doc 12.txt	265	6	4	5		

sybl_count	word_count	avg_char_per_sen	avg_syl_per_sen	avg_word_per_sen	fleschkincaid_score
173	148	33.26315789	9.105263158	7.789473684	1.24113798
88	70	43.71428571	12.57142857	10	3.144285714
288	210	59.75	18	13.125	5.711607143
304	217	48.19047619	14.47619048	10.33333333	4.970875576
230	173	44.55555556	12.77777778	9.611111111	3.846194605
90	70	45.57142857	12.85714286	10	3.481428571
74	54	53	14.8	10.8	4.79237037

FINDINGS

The purpose of this article initially investigated the elements of words and sentences affecting the readability of reading texts in TOEIC books, so we mention the following elements: (1) character count; (2) no Dalechall count; (3) polysyllabic word count; (4) sentence count; (5) syllable count; (6) word count; (7) average character per sentence; (8) average syllable per sentence; and (9) average word per sentence. In addition, we also tested this corpus by the Flesch-Kincaid grade level formula.

Based on this statistic, we will be able to quantify the number for the elements of readability in teaching and assessing reading texts in TOEIC at primary levels and this is showed in the following Table:

Table 4.1: Elements affecting the readability of TOEIC reading texts- primary level

No	Elements affecting the readability	Number (from- to) Longman TOEIC	Number (from- to) Starter TOEIC	Number (from- to) TNT TOEIC	Number (from- to) Total
1	Character count	190 - 1189	370 - 1641	349 - 1407	190 - 1641
2	No Dalechall count	6 -62	11- 98	17 - 81	6 - 81
3	Polysyllabic word count	1 - 27	0 - 27	5 - 31	0 - 31
4	Sentence count	4 - 27	6 - 34	5 - 21	4- 34
5	Syllable count	57 - 352	106 - 456;	95 - 415	57 - 456
6	Word count	36 - 261	74 - 331	66 - 317	36 - 331
7	Average character per sentence	19.761904 76 - 109.5	24.666666 67 - 90	36.052631 58 - 96	19.761904 76 - 109.5
8	Average syllable per	5.375 - 31.111111	7.0666666 67 -	9.6842105	5.375 - 31.111111

	sentence	11	22.875	26 - 29	11
9	Average word per sentence	4.1875 - 21.77777778	4.93333333 33 - 17.625	6.5789473 68 - 18.428571 43	4.1875 - 21.77777778

According to the statistic, the number of the character count at this level is from 190 to 1641. The words are not in the Dalechall list is from 6 to 18; the polysyllabic word count is from 0 to 31; the sentence count is from 4 to 34; the syllable count is from 57 to 456, and the number for the word count is from 36 to 331; the average character per sentence is about from 20 to 110 (19.76190476- 109.5); there are about from 5 to 31 syllables (5.375- 31.11111111) in a sentence; and the average word per sentence is from 4 to 22 (4.1875- 21.77777778).

COMMENTS

Primarily, investigating nine of the elements affecting the readability of reading texts in the TOEIC books: character count; no Dalechall count; polysyllabic word count; sentence count; syllable count; word count; average character per sentence; average syllable per sentence; and average word per sentence, we initially identify these elements about the quantitative side.

In addition, after being tested by the Flesch-Kincaid grade level formula, this corpus shows the score level for the TOEIC beginners is from about grade 1(0.736098361) to over grade 10 (10.39869565). Obviously, applying the Flesch formula can help the teachers and compliers select the suitable text for their purpose efficiently and economically.

However, the statistic also shows that there are differences among the elements as well as the grade levels in three of these books, such as grade level in Longman TOEIC: 1.189393657- 9.796969697;

Starter TOEIC: 0.736098361- 7.895; and TNT TOEIC: 4.254848485- 10.39869565. It seems that the lowest grade level book is Starter TOEIC book and the highest grade one is TNT. Therefore, it is necessary to get more studies with a larger corpus at primary level as well as intermediate or advanced one to make more precise and convincing conclusions.

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APPENDIX

1. Longman TOEIC

Letter

624 South Wells Street Reno, Nevada 9400

Mr. Norm Thompson 97 Vine Circle Reno, Nevada 89400

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I want to rent an apartment. My friend says that you are a good landlord and that you own apartments in different parts of the city. Can I rent an apartment from you? My family needs a new place to live. We love our neighborhood. It's quiet, and it's close to my job. However, our apartment is too small for us. There are four of us: my wife, our two children, and me. We need a larger apartment. We are looking for one with three bedrooms and a large kitchen. We live near Plumas Pass, and we would like to stay in this area. If you have an apartment in Plumas Pass that is available now, please let me know. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Fabian Ricardo

2. Starter TOEIC

Mr. Albert Di Beni,

333 Spring Road

Penshurst Kent

Dear Mr. Di Beni,

The Penshurst Medical Practice invites you to make an appointment for a medical examination. After the age of forty, we recommend that you have a full physical every year. Our records show that you recently have celebrated your fiftieth birthday. However, it is over seven years since your last appointment with our clinic. If you contact the Pens Hurst Medical Practice before September 15, h, you will be able to take advantage of a free check-up. In this medical we will check blood pressure, blood cholesterol, and blood sugar. For a small extra charge, it is possible to have a more detailed examination. If you are interested in this offer, please call the Medical Practice at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Penshurst Medical Practice

3. TNT TOEIC

People can be assured that they will get peace of mind by using most confidential and secure means of document destruction. We are committed to protecting the privacy of our customers businesses by providing them with the highest level of data and document destruction. We operate a fleet of on-site shredding vehicles that are capable of shredding \$5000 per hour.

We service all sizes of businesses, ranging from thousands of employees to one-person offices. Residential service is also available. Containers are provided, and there are no rental fees for containers. The shredding process is really simple. Locked security containers will be placed at your facility and collected every 2 weeks by one of our representatives, who will transport the containers to a shredding truck without touching or seeing the materials. And all the shredded paper will be recycled into newspaper product.

A STUDY ON SPEAKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN THE LIGHT OF BEHAVIORISM

Vo Duy Duc

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Abstract

VOA special English programs have been used as language resources for language learning and teaching practices all over the world with the biggest number of users in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East (Underwood, 2000). Likewise, English video clips have been popularly used not only for entertainment but also for English learning purposes in the countries where English is the target language. The paper examines the extent to which VOA special English programs and English video clips can help students improve their speaking skills and investigates the learners' attitude to these learning resources. A total of 160 second-year English majors in their first semester randomly organized into two groups – experimental group and control group, participated in the study for a period of 15 weeks. The study draws on the theory of Behaviorism and applies the quantitative method to analyze the data collected from pre-test and post-tests, and surveys. The findings show that there is a significant improvement in the participants' speaking skills and that the participants show great interest in the learning resources. However, some considerations should be taken into account if the use of these language resources is added to the speaking syllabus.

Keywords: *VOA Special English, behaviorism, speaking skills, attitude, video clips.*

INTRODUCTION

Everything is changing in the changing world, and so is language learning. Traditionally, language learning just takes place in the classroom where the teacher plays a centered role and textbooks are the only language resources for language learners. Nowadays, language learners can get accessed to online resources, which make the learning easier and more effective. With such rich resources at their disposal, language learners can study the language without any spatial or temporal constraints. The question now is not whether there are sufficient learning materials or not, but rather how to use them effectively. The two language resources discussed in the paper are VOA Special English (VOA SE) and English video clips. The study is aimed at shedding light on the extent to which they help students improve their speaking skills and the students' attitude to these learning resources.

VOA SPECIAL ENGLISH AND VIDEO CLIPS AS LEARNING MATERIALS

VOA Special English (VOA SE) has been used as a practical tool in English learning and teaching practices in many countries in the world, especially in Asia, Africa and Middle East countries (Underwood, 2000). Dickey (1998) states that VOA SE is seen as the language resource useful for teaching listening skills and friendly to teachers of English in Asia. VOA SE is increasingly popular in English learning and teaching practices probably because (1) its contents are varied; (2) it is a rich source of vocabulary, (3) it is always updated; and (4) it is free to language learners. According to Wikipedia, VOA SE program has been broadcasting a variety of news reports such as news on education, health, and environment since its first broadcast on October, 19th 1959. The program is intended for English learners from pre-intermediate level. The number of core vocabulary in VOA SE is about 1500; its news reports are read at a speed 1/3 slower than normal speed. There is a growing popularity in the use of VOA SE in English learning and

teaching; however, there is not much empirical research both internationally and domestically dealing with how VOA SE helps English learners learn the language.

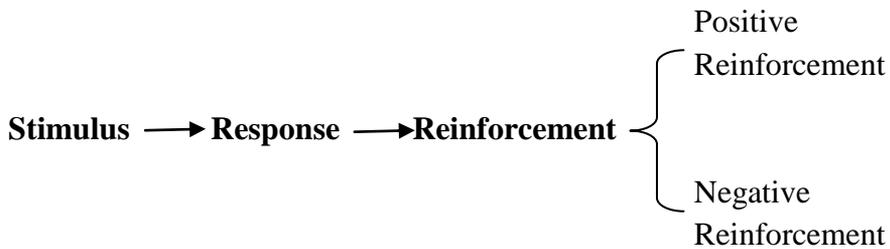
English video clips are another language resource popularly used in English learning and teaching practices. In comparison with VOA SE, video clips get more attention from language researchers for pedagogical purposes. Most of the research has been done on how video clips help learners improve their listening skills at different levels, especially tertiary level (see Ginther, 2002; Gruba, 2006; Suvorov, 2008). The reason for their popularity probably lies in the fact that video clips can communicate with language learners “at a deeper level of understanding by touching their emotion” (Berk, 2009, p. 3). Video clips are also compared with other learning tools in terms of how much they can help language learners acquire the language. Khaghaninejad and Chahibakhsh (2015) investigate which of the two language resources - video clips or novels are more effective in improving narrative intelligence and English proficiency of advanced EFL learners in Iran. The findings indicate that the former serves better as a source of language input to the learners. In the present study, video clips are used along with VOA SE as language resources for second year English majors of a university in Central Vietnam. The aim of the study is not to make comparison of the two, but rather to find out how they can work in the creation of rich engaging language resources and the extent to which they can help language learners improve their speaking skills and pronunciation.

The motivation behind the current study is rooted in Vo (2015). He conducted a research on the effect of using VOA SE on the improvement of students’ speaking skills and pronunciation. The study shows that the students’ speaking skills and pronunciation were significantly improved; however, the findings indicate some drawbacks that should be put into consideration if the language resources are added to the speaking syllabus. Firstly, the students were overloaded with the number of the news reports used in Vo

(2015). The students were asked to listen and repeat 100 news reports and summarize them within a period of 15 weeks, which is time-consuming and tiring to them. Secondly, the repetition of the reports was rather boring to the students. This activity made some students passive and bored. Thirdly, the students, to some extent, lost motivation for the program because VOA SE was not included in the end-of-semester test. It is hypothesized that if the number of news reports is reduced and the activities are varied, students will be motivated to study, hence the effect on the improvement of students' skills will be better. In the present study, the number of VOA SE news reports was reduced by half; the participants were also instructed to write news reports themselves and video their own news reading. In addition, they acted the characters they had watched in the video clips. All of these activities added a variety to the speaking lessons. The research was conducted in the light of Behaviorism, Systemic Functional Linguistics and Text-based Language Teaching as the frameworks of the study. The theoretical frameworks are presented below.

BEHAVIORISM, SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS, AND TEXT-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING

The main theoretical framework for the study is Behaviorism developed by an American psychologist B. F. Skinner. Skinner (1974) states that language learning is a process of forming a habit through conditioning. Behaviorism is a theory for the arrival of Audiolingual Method, also known as The Army Method. This teaching method is a product of five American universities ordered by American Government to teach the soldiers in World War II to speak German, French, Italian, Chinese, Japanese and other languages fluently in the shortest period of time (Richards & Rodgers, 1987). Theoretically, language is learnt by repetition through drills with an emphasis on the learners' pronunciation. Learning process in the light of Behaviorism presented in a book by Skinner, entitled *Verbal Behaviour* is illustrated in the diagram below.



In the diagram, Stimulus is the language input that the learner receives from the teacher or other sources. Upon the reception of the input, the learner produces a response and then is given feedback from the teacher (Reinforcement) on the learner's response. If the response is incorrect, the learner will be given negative feedbacks in forms of criticism and the incorrect response will be corrected. If the response is correct, the learner will be given praise from the teacher. Repeatedly, the learner's language habits are formed. Learning by conditioning has been applied in Vietnam to learn vocabularies, structures as well as dialogues. However, since its arrival, Behaviorism has received a lot of criticism from scholars whose approaches to language learning are different, especially Noam Chomsky, the founder of Generative Grammar. Chomsky argues that language cannot be a form of habit, but rather a rule-based system. Accordingly, learning a language is not a process of forming a habit, but it is a process of learning the language rules. Thanks to the knowledge of the rules, language learners are able to make countless sentences that they have never listened to or repeated before.

Another theory used as the framework for the study is Systemic Functional Linguistics by M. A. K. Halliday, an internationally recognized linguist, and Text-based Approach to language teaching. Halliday (1985) states that language is a meaning making source and that language appears in the form of a text tightly adhering to the social context where the text is produced. Language learners learn a language through texts and text-based approach to teaching and learning English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) has been widely applied in Australia and New Zealand for more than two decades (Feez, 2002). One of the reasons for texts to be popularly

used in foreign language teaching is that text serves as a vehicle for transporting information to the learner rather than just a linguistic object (John & Davies, 1983). From this point of view, it can be seen that learning with texts is interesting as it brings the learners feeling that they are receiving information rather than being crammed with dull linguistic knowledge. In the present study, the participants worked with VOA SE news reports in forms of audiovisual texts. The section that follows deals with the participants and research methodology in detail.

PARTICIPANTS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The subjects of the study were 160 second- year English majors of Quy Nhon University. They were randomly arranged into 2 groups – Experimental group and Control group with 3 classes in each group, namely A, B, C and D, E, F, respectively. The intervention lasted 15 weeks. The speaking material used for both groups is *Say It Naturally*. It is a book designed to practice language functions such as asking for direction, apologizing, thanking and responding to thanks, and so on. The control group studied with this textbook only, whereas the experimental group, apart from studying with this book, was provided with 50 VOA news reports in forms of subtitled YouTube. Thanks to the audio-visual format, the participants could listen to native news readers, repeat and as a final step, summarize the reports. They were asked to practice reading the reports at home. Fifteen minutes prior to each speaking lesson, about 5 students were invited to read one of the 50 news reports randomly chosen by the teacher. The 50 reports were given to the students at the beginning of the semester so that they could have enough time to practice them. At the end of the semester, the students were asked to write a news report (in groups) and video their news reporting. In so doing, the students could develop their speaking, listening and writing simultaneously in a fun way.

Apart from working with VOA SE, the experimental group, monthly, chose an English video clip of their interest, watched the clip, and

acted out the clip. While the experimental group was involved in a variety of activities and exposed to different language resources, the control group just studied with the textbook – Say It Nationally. The primary aim of the study was to see the extent to which VOA SE and video clips can help students improve their speaking skill. For this purpose, a pre-test and a post-test were administered to both the Experimental group and the Control group and the difference in mean cores between the two tests could arguably indicate the effect brought about by the use of VOA SE and video clips. The study was also aimed at investigating the students’ attitude to these two language resources by the administration of surveys. On the basis of the findings, some suggestions would be offered to make speaking practice more effective and interesting, helping students to improve their speaking skill and pronunciation.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The effect of VOA SE and video clips on improving students’ speaking skills and pronunciation

In order to see how different the participants’ speaking performance would be after the intervention, the study examined the students’ mean scores in the speaking tests at the end of the second semester of their first year and at the end of the first semester of their second year as pre-test and post-test, respectively. The difference in the students’ mean cores between the two tests and between the two groups would arguably indicate whether or not the intervention could make any change to the students’ speaking performance. The mean scores of the two groups before and after the intervention are presented in the following table.

Table 1: The students' mean scores before and after the intervention

Class	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP			CONTROL GROUP		
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Pre-test	5.8	5.4	5.2	5.5	5.6	5.3
Post-test	6.3	5.6	6.3	5.7	6.0	5.4
Difference	0.5	0.2	1.1	0.2	0.4	0.1
Mean	0.6			0.2		

It can be seen that the mean scores of both groups increase and that the rise of the experimental groups is slightly bigger than that of the control group. The findings are compatible with the findings of Vo (2015). There are some possibilities for the fact that the intervention just brought a small difference in the students' score. Firstly, VOA SE as well as video clips may not have really good effect on improving students' speaking performance. Secondly, the experimental group couldn't possibly use what they had learnt from VOA SE and video clips for their exam because these were not part of the exam, whereas a lot of time had been spent on them. However, it should be noted that the mean score of the experimental group was still higher than that of the control group even though the control group just focused on the textbook, practicing role plays with their partners during the semester, meanwhile the experimental group spent a lot of time on reading news reports and working with video clips. This suggests that the intervention made quite positive changes to the students' speaking performance. The surveys on the participants' attitude to VOA SE and video clips shed more light on the benefit of using the language resources in speaking lessons.

Participants' attitude to VOA SE and video clips

Likert is a 5-level scale developed by an American psychologist, Rensis Likert, commonly used in measuring the attitude of research

participants. In this study, it was used to investigate the students' attitude to VOA SE and video clips and the way they were used in speaking lessons. Some comments about the language resources were made and the participants (from the experimental group) were asked to show their attitude to these comments by circling one of the options in the continuum: totally disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or totally agree. The points they got for their choice are 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, respectively. The results are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Students' attitude to the use of VOA SE and video clips in speaking lessons

Comments	Mean
<i>- I found VOA SE & video clips useful for my speaking and pronunciation.</i>	4.7
<i>- I learned a lot of vocabulary in contexts from VOA SE and video clips.</i>	4.3
<i>- My pronunciation is much better now.</i>	4.6
<i>- Making our own news reporting is fun.</i>	4.0
<i>- I like acting. It is fun and good for my speaking skills and pronunciation.</i>	3.9
<i>- Reading news reports and summarizing them are time-consuming.</i>	5.0
<i>- Reading news reports and summarizing them should be part of speaking tests.</i>	5.0

As shown in the table, the students took a positive attitude to VOA SE and video clips and the way they were used in the speaking classes. Mostly, they found these language resources useful for their speaking skills and pronunciation, saying that their pronunciation was improved a lot after the intervention. In addition, the students agreed with the comment provided in the survey that VOA SE and

video clips are good sources of vocabulary in real-life contexts. They also enjoyed making their own news reporting and acting. However, high time consumption was also found in reading the news reports and summarizing them. The mean score the students had for the comment concerning time consumption of working with news reports is up to 5 out of 5. This finding is compatible with the results of Vo (2015) even though the number of the news reports was reduced by half in this study. That the participants spent a lot of time working on VOA SE but the tested items in the end-of- semester exam were by no means related to VOA SE might be the reason why all of the participants agreed that VOA SE should be added to the exam.

CONCLUSION, PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study is an action research whose aim was to investigate the extent to which students' speaking skill is improved by the use of VOA SE and video clips and the learners' attitude towards the way these language resources are used. It is a further research of Vo (2015). The study was conducted on the ground that language is a form of habits and learning a language is a process of forming the habits through drills. In the study, apart from the main speaking textbook – *Say It Naturally*, the participants were instructed to watch VOA SE news reports and repeat them; likewise watch video clips and act out the clips. The findings suggest that the language resources are beneficial to language learners. By the reduction of the number of news reports by half in comparison with the number of reports in Vo (2015) and the addition of other activities like making news reports, watching video clips and acting, the students were found to be more motivated to study. The study offers some pedagogical implications and suggestions as follows.

Firstly, as the effectiveness of VOA SE in improving students' speaking performance has been confirmed, the language resource should be added to speaking syllabus in the first years so that

students have a chance to be exposed to native speakers' accents. This is useful indeed at schools where there are no native teachers of English. However, students should not be overloaded with news reports. Also, the VOA SE used in the teaching program should cover a wide range of topics so that students can build up their rich vocabulary. Importantly, reading VOA SE news reports should be officially part of the end-of-semester oral test so that students get motivated to study.

Secondly, video clips should be used along with VOA SE news reports to bring relaxed moments to students. Student should be motivated to work with video clips as repeating news reports over and over again is definitely a dull and tiring task. If video clips are chosen for teaching purposes, it is highly recommended that they be not only entertaining, but also rich in culture so that students can learn the language in an amusing way and simultaneously get to know the culture of the target communities.

Thirdly, despite the fact that studying English with VOA SE by listening and repetition has been proved effective, language instructors need to create a variety of activities for students to develop other important skills such as communicative skills, critical thinking skills and cognitive skills. The criticism on Behaviorism theory by Chomsky previously mentioned is an issue that needs considering when a speaking syllabus as well as teaching methods is designed in the light of Behaviorism.

Lastly, although the study was conducted with a sound theoretical framework and an appropriate research method, there are still shortcomings. Specifically, the results of the pre-test and post test were not totally accurate due to the examiners' potential subjectivity in testing. Accordingly, a tool like Voice Recognition should be used to evaluate learners' pronunciation more accurately.

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ROLE PLAY IN AN ESL CLASSROOM THROUGH MOVIE SEGMENTS

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to examine how English as a Second Language (ESL) learners practice communicating in different roles through the situation from movie segments. The participants were five groups of students in Vietnam – Australia School, Hanoi, who now reach A2 level in English language proficiency. They watched film segments in which the situation to be role played is obvious. Before doing the role play activities in groups to the whole class, they were provided with vocabulary and sentence structures necessary for the role play situations. Data collection instruments consist of class observations, video recording during role play, and questionnaires after the application of role play activities. The results showed that students enjoyed assigning roles in groups, making up dialogues and presenting to the class after understanding the situation deduced from movie segments. In addition, they were able to learn vocabulary and sentence structures quickly in the context of the dialogues they invented by themselves. The outcomes also revealed that role play tends to encourage fluency rather than accuracy. The results of the research make a contribution to the improvement of teaching speaking skills for ESL learners, especially teaching young learners in the context of Vietnam where student-centered learning is still the main focus of attention.

TEACHERS' QUESTIONS IN READING CLASSROOM AND STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Critical thinking has been claimed to have an important impact on learners' reading comprehension because it can help them analyze, evaluate, construct their thinking, solving problems and reasoning (Ennis, 1989). The current case study aims mainly to investigate in depth the teacher's questions and students' critical thinking in high school EFL reading classrooms in the Mekong Delta context. The first purpose was to explore the common features including frequencies of teacher's questions and the second one was to ascertain whether the teacher's questions could facilitate students' critical thinking. Classroom observations and the cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy were adapted as the instruments of the present research. The study results reveal common types of questions that high school teachers often use in reading lessons in a high school for the gifted in the Mekong Delta. Suggestions are made on types of questions that teachers should use more in their class in order to enhance students' critical thinking.

Keywords: *Critical thinking, teachers' questions, teaching reading*

INTRODUCTION

Recently, developing students' thinking, especially critical thinking (CT), has become a hot issue. It is known that CT is an important ability which contributes to the development of the human being. It helps learners analyze, evaluate, construct their thinking, solving problems and reasoning (Glaser, 1941; Ennis, 1989). With regard to reading comprehension (RC) which is viewed as "the most important skill in a foreign language" (McDonough & Shaw, 2003, p. 89), CT ability is one of the influential factors which can influence RC (Richek, Caldwell, Jennings & Lerner, 1996).

In the classroom, question-and-answer activity is viewed as the most common form of communication between students and teachers. A question proposed by teachers can promote students' learning, participation and thinking, especially CT (Wilén, 1991). The functions of different types of questions have been specified more clearly and good questioning strategies have been proposed. However, most of them mainly focused on the influence of teachers' questions on classroom interaction and learners' oral output (Hu, 2004; Shomoossi, 2004; David, 2007; Lu, 2007). It is also noticed that little to no empirical research on the use of teachers' question types in students' CT in Vietnamese has been documented. Therefore, I conduct this research to gain more insights into the addressed matter in the context of a high school in the Mekong Delta. I also hope to offer teachers of English an effective and fruitful instructional technique to improve their learners' motivation in learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers' question types

In order to understand the teachers' question, it is prerequisite to make clear the notion question. By common sense, question is a command or request for information. Different researchers (Ur, 1996; Lynch, 1991; Tsui, 1992; Janssen, 2008) have their own ways in expressing

what a question refers to, but in essence they share roughly the same thing. According to Ur (1996) question in the context of teaching can be defined as a teacher utterance which has the objective of eliciting an oral response from the learner. Lynch (1991) characterizes a question as an utterance with a particular illocutionary force, and Quirk et al. (1985) define a question as a semantic class used to seek information on a specific subject. In terms of teacher-questions, Tsui (1992) claims that teacher-questions are all types and structures of utterances classified, either syntactically or functionally, as questions asked by teacher before, during, and after instruction in order to elicit responses from the students (Janssen, 2008). Without questions, there is no processing information.

There are many ways to classify questions. Although researchers offer a variety of ways to name the types of question, they share much in common in terms of purposes of the questions. For example, Wilen (1991) classifies questions into two categories: convergent and divergent. The purpose of convergent questions is to check students' comprehension and prepare students to apply what they have been taught. Divergent questions engage students in critical thinking process. Correspondingly, Tienken, Goldberg and DiRocco (2009) synthesize the works of other researchers and categorize questions as either productive (the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, also known as high order questions) or reproductive (recall, comprehension and application, also known as lower order). Long and Sato classify questions into display questions and referential questions. "Display questions are those to which the questioner already knows the answer and is merely testing the respondent's knowledge or understanding, while referential questions are ones to which the questioner does not know the answer and is genuinely seeking information" (Long & Sato, 1993, p.79). Thompson (1997) categorizes questions from three angles: form (yes/no questions or why-questions), content (fact or opinion) and purpose (display or communicative).

However, based on the scope of this case study, the writer would like to use the cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy when classifying

teacher's question types. The cognitive domain includes six levels: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, which mainly focuses on intellectual skills. In the cognitive domain, the first two levels, knowledge and comprehension, are often regarded as lower-cognitive levels in that they are limited to memorization with the information being recalled upon demand. Meanwhile the four levels of application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation are deemed as higher-cognitive levels in that they require higher-order thinking involving intellectual processing or the connecting or transforming of ideas of students (Bloom et al., 1956). With regard to these types of questions, McNeil (2010) summarized that questions with higher-cognitive level can increase literacy levels, develop thinking skills and lead more target language production than ones with lower-cognitive level. In other words, higher-cognitive questions require students to engage in independent thinking, for instance problem solving, analyzing or evaluating information (Gall, 1970).

Critical thinking and reading comprehension

The idea of CT originated from the Socratic Method of Socrates over 2,500 years ago. The method established the need to seek evidence, analyze basic concepts, scrutinize reasoning and assumptions, and trace the implications not only of what is said but of what is done as well: "Knowledge will not come from teaching but from questioning". In 1909, the famous American philosopher, psychologist and educator, John Dewey, is widely regarded as the "father" of the modern CT (as cited in Fisher, 2001), conceptualized CT as "active, persistent, and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds which support it..." (as cited in Fisher, 2001, p.2). Dewey also emphasized the key element in CT, that is, skillful reasoning. McPeck (1981) defined CT in another way. For him, CT refers to the thought processes which include problem solving and active engagement in certain activities, for example the process of evaluating statements. McPeck's definition is regarded as the specific one since he

described certain activities involving in CT.

In light of the theoretical framework of the present study, the last four levels in the cognitive domain are related to CT skills. Bloom and other researchers indicated that questions belonging to these levels can facilitate students' CT skills because they can help students to utilize CT skills, for instance, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating, rather than direct recalling (Bloom et al., 1956; Sellappah et al., 1998; Nagappan, 2001; Myrick & Yonge, 2002; McNeil, 2010). In the present context, therefore, CT is likely to take place when students are required to perform in answering application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation questions.

With regard to the relationship between students' CT and reading comprehension in the classroom, numerous researchers (e.g. Facione 1992, Stapleton 2001; Richard Paul, 2004; Facione & Facione, 2010; Fahim, Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010) emphasize that CT plays an integral factor in the development of reading comprehension. In other words, critical thinking and comprehension both are cognitive abilities having cognitive skills in common, thus, improving the former can contribute to the improvement of the latter and vice versa.

Students' critical thinking and teachers' question types

In terms of teachers' question types and students' CT, most scholars have concluded that the level of students' thinking is strongly influenced by the level of questions which are asked in class. Teachers' thoughtful questions play a crucial role in inducing students' higher level cognitive processes. Unfortunately, a majority of teachers' instructional time is spent asking students questions (Dillon, 1982), but not all teachers ask higher order questions to promote students' CT. Most questions asked in a classroom context seem to be at the lower level of cognitive processes (Guo 2002; Ambrosio, 2013; Chafi and Elkhousai, 2014). Traditionally, EFL teachers tend to emphasize covering text material over engaging students in independent thinking because they do not fully appreciate the role of questions in teaching content (Elder & Paul, 1998).

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research questions

In order to investigate the effects of teachers' questioning on students' critical thinking in English reading, this study attempts to find out the answers to the following questions:

- 1. What are the common types of questions generated by teachers in reading classes?*
- 2. To what extent do these types of questions facilitate students' critical thinking?*

Participants

The subjects involved in this study were 6 teachers who are in charge of the English reading classes for grade 10th and 11th at a high school for the gifted in Mekong Delta. The teachers, non-native speakers, have been teaching English for more than four years. Their age ranges from 29 to 35, with the average age of 30. All of them had a M.A. degree of Education in TESOL. Their reading classes are chosen to be observed with the use of audio-recording to capture what common types of questions that they frequently use in their classroom.

Research instruments

In order to answer the two research questions, the study used (1) classroom observation to recognize what types of questions that teachers frequently use in the reading classes; and (2) theory of Bloom's Taxonomy to gain more understandings of to what extent these types of questions facilitate students' critical thinking in English reading. These research instruments were described in detail in the sections below:

Classroom observation

Classroom observation refers to a systemic procedure during which classroom events are recorded in such a way that it can be studied later (Allwright, 1988). It involves the researcher observing,

recording and analyzing events that happen in the classroom. It was the main instrument for collecting data in the case study.

The reasons why classroom observation is employed are that observation can provide the opportunity to record information as it occurs in a setting and it is fruitful and workable to reveal the classroom teaching and learning strategies (Chesterfield & Chesterfield, 1985; Creswell, 2005). Therefore, the common types of questions generated by teachers in reading classes could be observed when it occurred by using classroom observation (with the use of audio – recording). There are two types of classroom observation: participant and non-participant observation, which are distinguished by whether the observer participates in the observed activity in the classroom. In the case study, the researcher adopted non-participant classroom observation which meant the researcher was mere an observer rather than a participant in the classroom activities.

Theory of Bloom's Taxonomy

In the current study, the cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy was used to classify teacher's question types. According to Bloom (1956), questions can be classified into two levels: lower and higher level questions. Lower-level questions are those at the knowledge, comprehension, and simple application levels of the taxonomy. Higher-level ones are questions requiring complex application (analysis, synthesis and evaluation skills).

Bloom's Taxonomy was used in analyzing the impact of teacher's question types on students' CT for the two reasons. Firstly, many researchers have proposed different classification systems used to analyze teachers' questions (Adams, 1964; Aschner, 1961; Bloom et al., 1956; Carner, 1963; Clements, 1964; Gallagher, 1965; Guszak, 1967; Barnes, 1969; Long & Sato, 1983); however, Bloom's taxonomy is viewed as the best-known and most widely used paradigm in education to categorize and analyze the types of questions (Bernadowski, 2006).

Most importantly, the purpose of the current case study was to explore to what extent students' CT can get improvement with the help of the teacher' question types. With respect to Bloom's taxonomy, Jacobsen, Eggen and Kauchak (1999) pointed out that the domain which has the most impact on the CT issue is the cognitive domain. This is because cognitive domain is concerned with imparting knowledge and thinking skills (Moore, 1998); moreover, higher-cognitive levels in the cognitive domain focus on promoting learners' CT. Therefore, the cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy is relatively appropriate and practical for the purposes of the case study.

FINDINGS

Common types of teacher's questions

To answer the first research question, data from classroom observation were used. A total of 423 content-related questions were used in the reading classrooms in the current study. These questions belong to both lower-cognitive and higher-cognitive levels. The samples of questions asked by the teacher are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Samples of Questions Asked by the Teacher

Types	Examples
Knowledge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the two things that make humans different from other animals? 2. Where does he collect the stamps?
Comprehension	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why does the writer admire his uncle? 2. Translate these phrases into Vietnamese please.
Application	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A foreigner friend is visiting Viet Nam. You introduce the Asian Games to him / her. What are you going to talk about? 2. What would you do to save energy in your family?
Analysis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think of the music in the second picture?

Types	Examples
	2. What inference can you make from the two sentences?
Synthetic	1. Which of the options is the best title for the passage? 2. Can you predict the alternative sources of energy in the near future?
Evaluation	1. In your opinion, which of the roles of music is the most important? 2. Which source of energy do you think has the most potential?

Table 1 reveals that the teachers asked knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation questions respectively in the reading classes. In other words, both lower-cognitive questions (LCQ) and higher-cognitive questions (HCQ) were raised by the teacher.

In terms of the frequency of each type of questions, Table 2 shows that the number of LCQ was much higher than the one of HCQ. In other words, during 10 periods of English reading, the teacher asked more LCQ (79%), in particular knowledge questions (43.5%), than HCQ (21%).

Table 2. Frequency of Each Type of Questions

Levels	Types	Frequencies (%)
Lower-cognitive	Knowledge	184 (43.5%)
	Comprehension	150 (35.5%)
Total		334 (79%)
Higher-cognitive	Application	14 (3.3%)
	Analysis	6 (1.4%)
	Synthetic	7 (1.6%)

Levels	Types	Frequencies (%)
	Evaluation	62 (14.7%)
Total		89 (21%)
Grand total		423

As Table 2 presents, the teacher asked 184 (43.5%) knowledge questions, 150 (35.5%) comprehension questions, 14 (3.3%) application questions, 6 (1.4%) analysis questions, 7 (1.6%) synthesis questions, and 62 (14.7%) evaluation questions. Furthermore, with regard to each type of questions, the numbers of either knowledge or comprehension questions in lower-cognitive level are higher than each type of questions in higher-cognitive level. In terms of lower-cognitive level, it is evident that the number of knowledge questions is higher than that of comprehension ones. As for higher-cognitive level, it is interesting to see that the number of evaluation questions is the highest while that of analysis ones is the lowest.

With respect to the cognitive levels, the teacher asked more LCQ (79%), particularly knowledge questions, than HCQ (21%). Additionally, the results are in line with those in studies of Sellappah et al (1998), Guo (2002), Ambrosio (2013), Chafi and Elkhouzai (2014) in that all of them also found teachers under observations were always inclined to ask more LCQ than HCQ in the classes.

Effects of teacher's question types on the development of students' CT

To answer research question 2, data from classroom observation and the cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy were utilized.

From the record of classroom observation, the teacher asked plenty of LCQ in the classrooms. All of these questions mainly focused on vocabulary, sentence structures and understanding on the specific contents of texts, which always required students to locate answers from memory or textbooks directly, instead of the process of higher-order thinking. It was mentioned in Bloom's cognitive domain that

questions belonging to lower-cognitive level can require students to simply recall or memorize the previous knowledge from memory, concentrating on factual information, while questions belonging to higher-cognitive level require learners to be engaged in higher-order thinking, in particular CT, for example problem solving, analyzing and evaluating information (Bloom et al., 1956; Bernadowski, 2006; McNeil, 2010). Therefore, these questions could not make students be engaged in higher-order thinking; that is processing or manipulating knowledge. Unquestionably, it can be concluded that excessive use of LCQ could not facilitate students' CT, because students' CT did not take place when they answered LCQ.

Besides, according to the data, the teacher also asked a few HCQ (21%) which mainly focus on application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation questions. All of these questions were related to CT skills. However, from the records of classroom observation, the misuse of HCQ was identified. Below is an example for such a case.

T: "The disadvantage of nuclear energy is that it is very dangerous". What do you think about the answer?

SI: It's correct.

T: Are you sure?

SI: Yes.

T: OK. Thank you

The above example presents a question-and-answer chain between the teacher and students. Based on the analytical framework, the first question of teacher (*What do you think about the answer?*) was categorized as evaluation question since it required students to judge their friend's answer and express their opinions. Sellappah et al. (1998) suggested that questions were required to be asked in a logical format to facilitate a chain of reasoning so that they could prompt the development of CT. However, obviously, there was no chain of reasoning in this example. The teacher moved to another checking

question (*Are you sure?*) instead of requiring students to justify their answers. Although this question was categorized as higher-cognitive one, its role played in the class was similar to LCQ. Therefore, it comes to a conclusion that some teachers' HCQ might not facilitate students' CT under investigation.

CONCLUSION

Most educators agree that the skill to think critically is becoming increasingly important as classes become more diverse and global. Furthermore, critical thinking is best taught when teachers give questions that would entail the student to solve problems or discover new information (Acker, 2003).

The findings of the present study indicated that the teacher asked more LCQ related to recalling facts or grasping main contents of materials, especially knowledge, than HCQ. The results also revealed the limited use of HCQ would limit the development of students' CT. Therefore, the case study recommends that teachers are expected to pay more attention to HCQ after asking a series of LCQ in order to provide an environment rich in opportunity for enabling CT. Additionally, teachers should be trained how to ask questions appropriately and effectively, especially HCQ. As such, teachers need the ability to “draw on communicative moves to discern whether the students need more scaffolding to further prepare them to answer questions that elicits higher order thinking” (McNeil, 2012, p. 403) in order to keep the discussion continuous and productive.

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-EFFICACY AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS

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Abstract

The current paper reports on an investigation into the relationship between self-efficacy and oral presentations for EFL learners at higher education institutions in the Mekong Delta. In academic settings, self-efficacy has a significant impact on learner s' choices of activities, effort, persistence, and effectiveness of problem-solving (Bandura, 1997; Maddux, 2005). Oral presentations offer students various effects which can directly or indirectly influence their learning and social activities (Girard, Pinar, and Trapp, 2011). Nonetheless, there has been relatively no research about the nexus between oral presentations and self-efficacy. Therefore, the current study was conducted to examine the level of students' self-efficacy; simultaneously, to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and oral presentations, as well as to find out whether there is any difference between males and females on self-efficacy. A quantitative method, including questionnaires was utilized. Eighty-eight third-year English-majored students including 43 males and 45 females from higher education institutions in the Mekong Delta were invited to participate in the study. The findings demonstrated that self-efficacy levels of most of the students are rather high ($M= 7.27$). Additionally, the more numbers of presentations students delivered, the higher self-efficacy level they have. Simultaneously, there is a statistically significant difference in terms of self-efficacy between males and females.

Keywords: *self-efficacy, oral presentations.*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of self-efficacy was first introduced over 30 years ago by Bandura (1977), and it has received much attention from educational researchers (Friedel, Cortina, Turner, & Midgley, 2010; Lennon, 2010; Liu & Wilson, 2010; Shkullaku, 2013; Su & Duo, 2012). It refers to the beliefs about one's capabilities to learn or perform behaviors at designated levels (Bandura, 1986, 1997). In academic settings, beliefs about self-efficacy have a significant impact on an individual's choices of activities, effort, persistence, goal setting, and effectiveness of problem-solving and decision-making (Bandura, 1997; Maddux, 2005).

In academic context, oral presentations are assumed to have an effect on self-efficacy in domains: self-efficacy for academic achievement, self-efficacy for self-regulated learning, self-regulatory efficacy to resist peer pressure, self-efficacy to meet others' expectations, social self-efficacy, and self-assertive efficacy.

Oral presentations may affect self-efficacy for academic achievement since students' capabilities to master different subject matters can be enhanced by oral presentations. Oral presentations give opportunities for learners to practice speaking, listening, reading, writing skills in a naturally integrated way (Jing, 2009) and to learn new vocabulary, expressions in English (Choi et al's, 2008). Through presentation on various topics, students can acquire knowledge about cultural, social economic, linguistic matters from the research they and other students perform (Girard, Pinar, & Trapp, 2011). Oral presentations are also ideal tools for students to experience the use of technology such as computer, projector, overhead, Powerpoint software, and so on (Joughin, 2007).

Individual's capabilities to structure environments conducive to learning and to plan and organize academic activities can involve oral presentations. For this reason, oral presentations are hypothesized to have an effect on self-efficacy for self-regulated learning. When preparing and delivering the presentations, students

take an active role in the process of their learning and are considered as active and autonomous learners (Chivers & Shoolbred, 2007; King, 2002). They have to plan and organize their work themselves and be interactive, dynamic, reflective, and independent (Al-Issa & Al-Qubtan, 2010). They have to take responsibility for delivering an outcome of their work and finish the presentation assignments by deadlines (Thurneck, 2011). Oral presentations are also chances for learners to practice their critical thinking (Jing, 2009).

Self-regulatory efficacy to resist peer pressure is hypothesized to relate to group presentation. Whenever a group of people is assembled to achieve a goal, at least some conflict is likely to occur. Contrasting personal styles can make some members have difficulty accepting ideas that differ from their own (Joughin, 2007). Loss of individual control over the style and the content of the presentation can also be a consequence of group work. Peer pressure can also appear in a team when a member goes against his or her better judgment to escape the anger of other members or to facilitate the completion of a project. Some group members may attempt to let down other members and the group may generate conflict which hurts people's feelings and otherwise weakens their relationships (Joseph, 2012). Consequently, group presentations can be the opportunities for students to develop and practice skills in problem solving, and teamwork (Haber, 1997; Ivey, 2010; Williams, 2008).

Oral presentations may have an impact on self-efficacy to meet others' expectations because when students present, they always try their best to perform in order to obtain the best achievement (high grade) not only for themselves and their groups but also for their teacher. By delivering presentations, students have a chance to show their understanding, skills and individuality (Doree & Linton, 2007; Haber, 1997) to get the positive feedback from all peers and the instructor. Students are always nervous when speaking in front of many people due to the fact that they are afraid of being to look foolish in front of the group and they do not want to be looked down by other group members and their teacher (Farnsworth, 2007; King, 2002; Templeton, 2009).

Oral presentations may influence social self-efficacy due to the fact that students' capability to initiate and maintain social relationships and to manage interpersonal conflicts can be affected by oral presentations. Working in group presentation gives learners an excellent opportunity to get to know one another, so they easily to make new friends and keep up social relationships (Girard, Pinar, & Trapp, 2011; Lee & Park, 2008; Lomas, 2002). Through working in group presentation, learners can also practice and develop the skills of negotiation, conflict resolution, and teamwork (Becker & Emden, 2004; Ivey, 2010; Mandel, 2000)

There is an assumption that self-assertive efficacy is affected by oral presentations since students' capabilities to voice their opinions and to stand up to mistreatment are improved when they prepare and deliver oral presentations. Learners frequently have a group discussion when preparing for the content of the presentation or they may lead a discussion after an oral presentation (King, 2002; Thurneck, 2011). It is the chance for students to learn how to express opinions when the other classmates disagree with them or how to stand up for themselves when being treated unfairly (Jing, 2009; Lomas, 2002). They also learn how to stand firm to someone who asks them do something unreasonable or inconvenient (Joseph, 2012).

In reviewing the findings of previous research then, it was impossible to make an assumption that oral presentations will be positively related to self-efficacy. As a result, from the researcher's own teaching experience as a Vietnamese EFL teacher, it seems there is not sufficient appreciation of the relationship between self-efficacy and oral presentations. From this reason, it is hoped that the current study has helped contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between oral presentations and self-efficacy. Specifically, the objectives of the current study are:

1. To evaluate the level of students' self-efficacy in language classrooms

2. To explore the relationship between students' self-efficacy and their oral presentations.
3. To find out whether there is any difference between males and females in self-efficacy.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a quantitative descriptive methodology is employed. The respondents consisted of 88 third-year English-majored students including 43(48.9%) males and 45(51.1%) females were invited to participate in the study. All of them were chosen randomly from six classes at six higher education institutions in the Mekong Delta including Vinh Long, Can Tho, Tien Giang, and Dong Thap. The student participants' ages ranged from 20 to 23 and all of them had delivered oral presentations at least once from the first semester of their courses. The reason for the choice of third-year students as participants was that these students had more opportunities to give oral presentations than first-year or second-year ones.

The instruments used to measure self efficacy were the Self Efficacy Scale by Bandura (1995). However, some of the items of the questionnaire had been simplified for easy comprehension; at the same time, some items were also removed to be relevant to the current research. The dimensions within the Bandura's Self Efficacy Scales included academic achievement, self regulated learning, extra curricula activities, meeting others' expectations, self assertiveness and motivation self regulation. All items were measured on an 11-point scale ranging from 0 to 10. The 30-item questionnaire was divided into 6 clusters. *Self-efficacy for academic achievement* (Item 1-5) measures students' beliefs in their capabilities to master different subject matters. *Self-efficacy for self-regulated learning* (Item 6-15) measures students' efficacy to structure environments conducive to learning and to plan and organize academic activities. *Self-regulatory efficacy to resist peer pressure* (Item 16-18 and item 30) evaluates students' beliefs to *resist peer pressure* to engage in

high-risk activities and misbehave manners. *Self-efficacy to meet others' expectations* (Item 19-21) measures students' beliefs in their capability to fulfill what their teachers, peers and they expect of them. *Social self-efficacy* (Item 22-25) evaluates students' beliefs in their capability to initiate and maintain social relationships and to manage interpersonal conflicts. *Self-assertive efficacy* (Item 26-29) assesses students' perceived capability to voice their opinions, to stand up to mistreatment, and to refuse unreasonable request. Two of 30 items were designed as reversed items to check whether the participants were serious while providing the answers to the questionnaire or not in order to increase the reliability of the obtained information. The questionnaire was translated into Vietnamese language to enable the respondents to understand thoroughly.

The scales were pilot-tested in Vinh Long with the involvement of twenty students sharing similar characteristics with the principal population sample. The reliability of the piloted questionnaire was *Cronbach's alpha* (α) = 0.94.

To collect data on the participants' self-efficacy, the questionnaires in Vietnamese were delivered to 88 respondents. Before answering the questionnaire, the learners were explained the purpose, the relevance, and the significance of the study. Moreover, some specific directions were provided when necessary, which might help the respondents to understand what is required as well as which items in the questionnaire were not clear in order to minimize wrong information due to misunderstanding. The length of time for students to complete the questionnaire was from 10 to 15 minutes.

The responses of each individual participant were encoded and analyzed with SPSS. Firstly, Cronbach's alpha was utilized to estimate the reliability of the questionnaires. Next, to answer the first research question, the descriptive statistics test of the data collected from the questionnaire was conducted to describe and compare responses of the participants. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were reported in order to understand the

level of students' self-efficacy, and then *one-sample t test* was utilized. After that, to answer the second research question, a Bivariate Correlations was employed to evaluate whether there was a correlation between self-efficacy and oral presentations. Finally, in order to answer the third research question, an *independent-sample t test* was run to evaluate whether there was a difference in self-efficacy of males and females.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section will highlight the findings of the study. The first objective seeks to find out the level of self efficacy of students in language classrooms. The findings showed that 92 percent of the students have high self efficacy. This indicates that a large majority of students had judgments of their high capabilities to perform activities in their lives.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Test on 6 sub-clusters of self-efficacy domains

Self-efficacy domains	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-efficacy for academic achievement	88	3.20	9.20	6.55	1.57
Self-efficacy for self-regulated learning	88	2.70	9.90	7.47	1.43
Self-regulatory efficacy to resist peer pressure	88	3.25	9.75	6.91	1.64
Self-efficacy to meet others' expectations	88	4.00	10.00	7.11	1.33
Social self-efficacy	88	3.50	10.00	7.76	1.53
Self-assertive efficacy	88	2.75	10.00	7.63	1.39
Total	88	3.27	9.20	7.27	1.23

As we can see from Table 1, the total mean score for *social self-efficacy* ($M= 7.76$) is the highest and the one for *self-efficacy for academic achievement* ($M= 6.55$) is the lowest of the six domains. It means that participants believed the most in their capability to initiate, maintain social relationships and to manage interpersonal conflicts. Nonetheless, in the six self-efficacy domains, students believed the least in their ability to master different subject matters in spite of the fact that their level of self-efficacy in this domain is rather high ($M= 6.55$). Consequently, the researcher can conclude that the self-efficacy levels of most of the students are rather high. This finding is consistent with the result of the studies carried out by Alldred (2013) although its participants, eight grade students, are different from college students in the current study. Simultaneously, another finding can be drawn is that of all the six domains, college students believe the most in social efficacy but the least in academic achievement.

The second objective of this study is to explore the relationship between students' self-efficacy and their oral presentations.

Table 2: Bivariate Correlation on students' self-efficacy and their frequency of oral presentations

		The number of oral presentations	Self-efficacy
The number of oral presentations	Pearson Correlation	1	.784**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	88	88
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.784**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	88	88

		The number of oral presentations	Self-efficacy
The number of oral presentations	Pearson Correlation	1	.784**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	88	88
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.784**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	88	88

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As presented in Table 2, the results of the test indicated that there was an interaction between the two variables, self-efficacy and oral presentations ($r=.78$, $p=.00$). Self-efficacy had a fairly close relationship with the number of oral presentations. From this result, it might be assumed that the more numbers of presentations students delivered, the higher self-efficacy level they got. This finding suggests that giving oral presentations might have positive effects on student enhancement's self-efficacy in all six domains despite the fact that there has been no empirical evidence reported so far.

The result also illustrated that the mean score for *social self-efficacy* ($M= 8.93$) was the highest and the one for *self-efficacy for academic achievement* ($M= 8.14$) was the lowest of the six domains. It denotes that students having many numbers of presentations were confident the most in their capability to initiate, maintain social relationships and to manage interpersonal conflicts. Nonetheless, of all the six self-efficacy domains, they were confident the least in their ability to master different subject matters.

The third goal of this study is to find out whether there are any gender differences in self-efficacy.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of the questionnaire on the participants' self-efficacy

Variable	N	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Males' self-efficacy	43	51.1	6.79	1.32
Females' self-efficacy	45	48.9	7.72	0.96
Total	88	100%	7.27	1.23

As presented in Table 4.8, the mean scores of males' and females' self-efficacy was 6.79 ($SD=1.32$) and 7.72 ($SD=0.96$) respectively.

Then, the *Independent-Samples T-Test* was conducted in 2 groups of males and females students. The result indicated that there is a significant mean difference between boys ($M=6.70$) and girls ($M=7.99$) at the .05 significance level ($t = -3.74$, $df = 76.50$, $p = .00$). Female students had significantly greater self-efficacy than their male. This finding is inconsistent with some previous studies (Pajares & Miller, 1994; Schunk & Pajares, 2002) which had shown that boys were often found to have higher efficacy beliefs than girls.

Table 4: Differences between males and females in six self-efficacy domains

Self-efficacy domains	Mean		SD		t value	p sig.
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Self-efficacy for academic achievement	6.46	6.63	1.78	1.36	-0.50	0.61
Self-efficacy for self-regulated learning	6.88	8.04	1.49	1.12	-4.12	0.00
Self-regulatory efficacy to resist peer pressure	6.52	7.28	1.30	1.85	-2.22	0.02

Self-efficacy domains	Mean		SD		t value	p sig.
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Self-efficacy to meet others' expectations	6.96	7.26	1.29	1.36	-1.07	0.28
Social self-efficacy	7.00	8.50	1.56	1.09	-5.16	0.00
Self-assertive efficacy	6.95	8.29	1.49	0.90	-5.07	0.00

The results show that female students had higher self efficacy level than male ones. Although, the two groups had similar self efficacy level in academic achievement and meeting others' expectations domains; a new points could be concluded that in such domains as self-regulated learning, resisting peer pressure, social self-efficacy, and self-assertive, females were shown to be more assured than males. This result is inconsistent with the study of Bandura et al. (1999) which reported that female children showed a higher sense of academic efficacy but lower level of social efficacy than that of male children.

CONCLUSION

Research has indicated that most of college students had strong beliefs in their capabilities to complete tasks and reach goals. Of all the six domains, students were confident most in social efficacy but least in self-efficacy for academic achievement. Moreover self efficacy correlates with learners' oral presentations. The more presentations students delivered, the higher level of self-efficacy they had. Simultaneously, the result presented the gender dissimilarity in self-efficacy level. Female students had significantly greater self-efficacy than their male peers.

From the positive correlations between oral presentations and self efficacy, it is suggested that oral presentations can be considered as

an effective tool for enhancing students' self-efficacy. The self-efficacy mean score for social self-efficacy domain is especially high. Thus, the implication here is that teacher can enhance students' capability to maintain social relationships or to manage interpersonal conflicts by requiring students to give oral presentations frequently. Male students in this study were found to have lower self-efficacy than their female peers, therefore, it appears that they need to be handled differently in the school setting in order to maintain or enhance their self-efficacy.

This study has a number of limitations. First, it is restricted to a small sample of 88 students at six higher education institutions of four provinces in the Mekong Delta; hence, the judgments from findings are verified validated in these locations only. No general conclusions could be made on this issue in other education settings. Second, due to the selected focus of the current study, factors such as age, ethnicity and years of learning English of the participants were not considered as independent variables. Thus, all other aspects of self-efficacy were not examined. Third, the current study is a descriptive one and it examined students' efficacy at the current time. Therefore, it does not describe the change in students' self-efficacy throughout time. Finally, the translated version of the questionnaires was done by the researcher herself, which might be somewhat subjective than the English version.

The current study has contributed to the growing body of knowledge related to self-efficacy and oral presentations at higher education institutions in the Mekong Delta. To gain deeper insights, it is necessary to carry out further research on one of these following directions. First of all, it is suggested that future research should be conducted on a larger number of the participants across contexts so that general conclusions on the correlation between students' self-efficacy and oral presentations can be made. Consequently, more comprehensive judgment on this issue in Vietnamese education context can be achieved. Furthermore, it would be desirable in future research that such factors as age; ethnicity and years of English

learning should be investigated in order that other aspects of self-efficacy can be compared. In addition, further studies should be conducted as experimental ones in order to describe the how students' self-efficacy changes thanks to the frequency of their oral presentations.

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STUDENTS' SILENCE IN EFL CLASSROOMS AT MILITARY SCIENCE ACADEMY

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Abstract

Although teachers have paid a lot of concerns and efforts to engage students into English as foreign language (EFL) classroom activities and to enhance their teaching efficiency, many students tend to keep silent in class and reluctant to express their thoughts in class interactions. In fact, students' in-class silence becomes a common phenomenon and it often causes communication failure between teachers and students as well as among students themselves.

This paper explores the silent behavior of students within English as foreign language classrooms. It investigates reasons behind students' in-class silence, or lack of verbal participation, and then puts forwards several suggested solutions for more effective classroom communication. The population for this study consists of 85 students majoring in English at Military Science Academy and the data are collected via questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The findings indicate various causes of students' classroom silence: personal and impersonal, linguistic and psychological factors such as students' personality and language proficiency, teachers' methodology, lesson contents, and class cooperation. Together with the theoretical discussion, the empirical evidence revealed by this study can perhaps go some way in helping applied linguistics practitioners/ teachers gain an increased awareness and deeper understanding of students' silent behavior. The current study purposefully aims at improving both the English teaching and learning efficiency at Military Science Academy.

Keywords: *in-class silence; classroom activities; communication; participation; English teaching and learning, EFL*

Bionote

Dr. Nguyen Thu Hanh is currently working as Head of Advanced English Section at the English Department, Military Science Academy. Her research interests include English literatures, linguistics, ESP, and language teaching. Her research experience has been reflected in the publication of a series of textbooks on English and American Literatures, and various articles on linguistics and language teaching and learning.

INTRODUCTION

This paper explores the silent behavior of learners studying English within foreign language classrooms at Military Science Academy (MSA). The verbal unresponsiveness of undergraduates in English as foreign language (EFL) classrooms has been mentioned in a number of past works (Liu, 2005; Schultz, 2012) and particularly as indicated in Nguyen Thi Bien's research (2016), there is evidence of MSA students' tendency towards silence. However, it seems strange that no major empirical research has been conducted positioning in-class silence at the heart its investigation.

Although silence itself in some educational contexts can be beneficial to students as it provides space for extended cognition and deep reflection (Granger, 2004; Liu, 2005), many researchers believe that in the context of a foreign language classroom silence represents a significant threat to effective language learning when it is characterized by a lack of oral communication and verbal responsiveness on the part of students (Tani, 2005; Tsui, 1996). In other words, students of language have to communicate in order to make progress with their foreign language development.

The current paper progresses from identifying general trends of silence within EFL classrooms at MSA, and then moves on to a critical analysis of which factors students find most influential in their oral participation and silence in EFL classrooms. It then concludes with suggestions on what actions teachers should take to boost more oral participation in class.

SILENCE IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS

As this research focuses on the silent behavior of learners of English as a foreign language, the next part concentrates on studies seeking to comprehend silences that occur specifically within educational contexts.

Bosacki (2005) considers silence as the absence of vocalization. In his view, the most typical concept of silence is a total lack of audible verbalization and that the definition of silence can be extended to include a student failing to talk about a specific topic or to say what is expected. As for classroom silence, Granger (2004) associates it with disobedience, conflict, misbehavior, and, in the case of students appearing to fulfill a listener role, deception. He claims that in-class silence can be used as a form of protection because it allows students to hold onto practices and beliefs that might make them vulnerable to their peers and teachers. What is more, silence in classrooms may be employed by students as an emotional defense against the teacher's authority and as a way of passively expressing negative emotions. Silence may have pedagogical merit in some situations because it facilitates learning, but when considered in relation to a student's academic performance, teachers seem to overwhelmingly rate it as a negative phenomenon. In his research, Teng (2009) holds that college students' in-class silence refers to a kind of psychological state and behavior a student presents in the level of thought, emotion and action. He stresses that silence is the absence of talk, but not the absence of thought because it only denotes to limited participation or lack of participation during classroom interaction.

In conclusion, classroom silence happens when the teachers have posed their questions and there is no response from students or when the teacher calls for discussion or debate, most of the students are reluctant to express their ideas. What is certainly clear from the preceding discussion is that student's silent behavior is generally considered as a student's negative response to the teacher and a hindrance to the language teaching and learning process.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO CLASSROOM SILENCE

To date, there have been various attempts to explain the silent reticence of language learners. Studies on students' classroom behavior have often aimed at identifying factors contributing to such silence with the aim to prevent student silence. Earlier studies on classroom participation considered students' culture and personality as one major factor contributing to student silence (Lui, 2005). Other factors causing learner reticence, according to Tsui (1996), are learners' failure to understand teacher's talk, not enough time to digest information, and students' fear of embarrassing themselves by making mistakes. Moreover, elements like students' target language competence, previous speaking experience in class, confidence level, and lesson contents are all potential reasons contributing to students' tendency to be silent in language classrooms (Liu & Jackson, 2009). Studies conducted on Asian students studying in EFL classes also identified their inherent shyness (Liu, 2005), the wash-back effect of university entrance exams on speaking skills (Cheng, 2000), resistance to a repressive education system (Tani, 2005) as significant factors leading to student silence.

The above findings indicate personal and impersonal, linguistic and psychological causes of students' in-class silence, namely students' personality and language proficiency, teachers' methodology, lesson contents, and class cooperation. With this in mind, in the following sections I turn my attention to silences that can be found specifically within MSA context, and attempt to outline some of the complex roots of silence within EFL classrooms at MSA.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The population for this study consists of 85 second year students majoring in English at Military Science Academy. Participation in the research was voluntary and the participants were at an intermediate level of English. Assurance was given that the

participants would remain anonymous and that participation or non-participation would not affect the student's grade in the class. They were also informed that the study would consist of a student questionnaire which would be conducted in class, and that they would be invited for a semi-structured interview on their belief and attitudes towards in class silence.

Instruments for data collection

Two instruments employed to obtain data were questionnaire and semi-structured interview. To obtain reliable quantitative data on the extent of students' silence in EFL classes, the study employed a systematic questionnaire which was intended to discover the students' intentions and interpretations of the functions of silence. The students' difficulties in expressing themselves and their intentions in using silence were explored. The questionnaire items were arranged on a 5-point Likert scale, asking students to indicate their level of agreement with the items from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), or their frequency of silence behavior from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). Likert scale was selected for this study because it is appropriate for measuring opinions, beliefs, and attitudes (DeVellis, 2003).

Complementing the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to disclose participant's fundamental beliefs about and personal experiences of silence in EFL classrooms. Furthermore, this qualitative element was able to broaden the investigation's scope and led to enhanced opportunities to interpret the EFL classroom silence at MSA.

PROCEDURES

Prior to administering the questionnaire and interview, an informal meeting was arranged in order to clearly explain data-collection procedures and to reassure participants of the confidential nature of the research. The questionnaires were administered to all the

participants (85 in total), then they were compiled and answers to each question were tallied. Open-ended questions were compared and similar answers were grouped together in the results. For the semi-structured interviews, the researcher conducted them in a sensitive, non-judgmental manner and repeatedly reassured interviewees that there were no right or wrong answers prior to asking them to recount their experiences and beliefs about language classroom silence. 10 participants were randomly invited for the interview and each interview would last about 15 minutes. All interviews were audio recorded with the participants' consent for later coding and analysis.

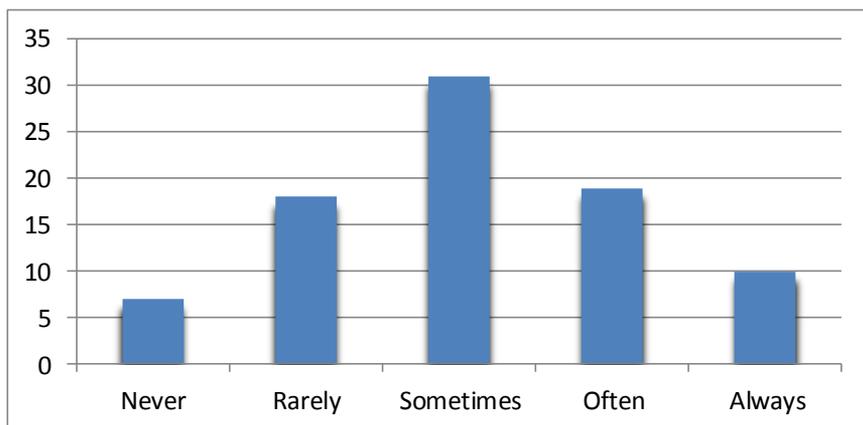
DATA ANALYSIS

The first part of the survey asked students about their foreign language class and their language ability. Generally, responses were positive with 68% of the participating students describing the class as fun, interesting, relaxed, and for some, it was a good learning experience. One group of students (25%) pointed out that speaking was their favorite part of the class while listening was the most difficult (69%). A large number of students (75%) confessed they did not feel confident with their language skills, particularly speaking skill even though they loved communicating in English.

Students were then asked about the frequency of their oral participation in class and the result was illustrated in Chart 1 below. Only 10 of the 85 students said that they spoke most of the time. These students gave various reasons for their speaking enjoyment such as: fun, supporting learning progression, recognition of achievement, showing off skills, and having a new experience. One group (30 students) took very low frequency, saying that they only spoke when the teacher or seatmate asked them to do. Seven students confessed that they did not make any oral participation at all during the whole lesson because they were self-conscious, embarrassed or afraid to fail in front of their peers. They also mentioned a lack of skills or lack of self-efficacy. Three students blamed their reticence

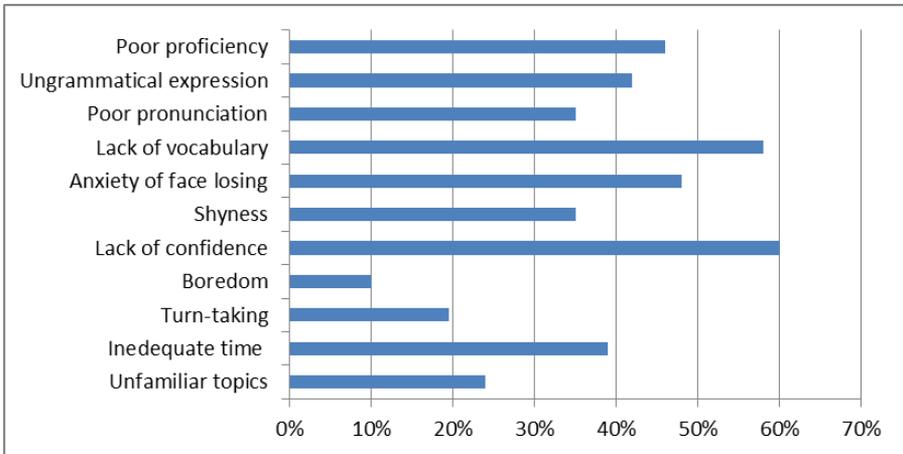
on fewer opportunities for speaking due to the increased amount of other activities and instruction going on in class.

Chart 1. Frequency of oral participation



Students were next asked what difficulties they faced when they communicated in English with their teacher and classmates during the EFL lessons (see Chart 2). Most of the students declared that they have linguistic problems which can be lack of vocabulary (58%) or ungrammatical expression (42%) (students could tick on more than one option). Some students also experienced difficulties in making themselves understood. They provided two main reasons for this: 35% of them said that they had a problem with pronunciation and nearly half of them (46%) felt that they had a problem with expressing their ideas in English. Students being interviewed then confessed “*only when the teacher is around, I speak English*” (S3) or “*It seems I lost my tongue, ..uh my mind becomes blank*” (S5). Here, the problem is a matter of how to construct their ideas in English, including the issue of translating their ideas from Vietnamese into English, spontaneous response, and the difficulty in expressing themselves fully in English.

Chart 2. Contributing factors to students' in-class silence



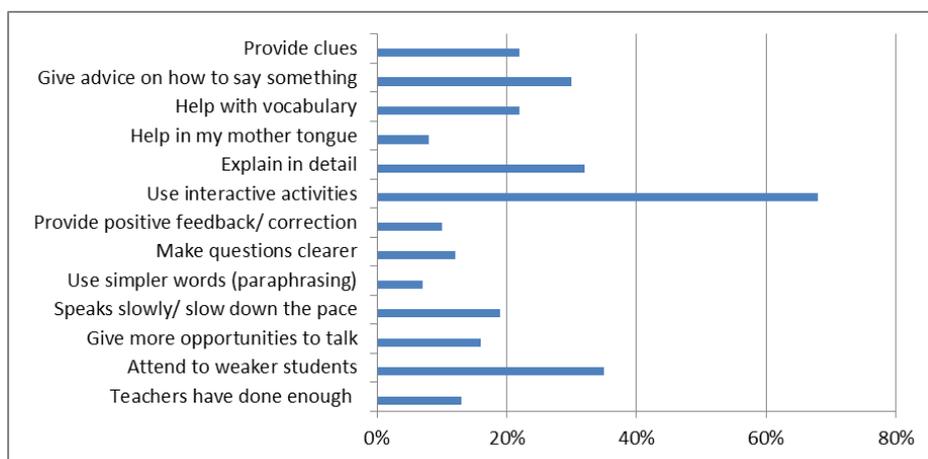
The other significant issue with in-class silence is a matter of psychological problems such as lack of confidence and anxiety of face-losing. A large number of students (60%) more specifically stated that they lacked confidence in presenting themselves and maintaining communication for a certain amount of time. About 48% of the participants stated that they did not want to look foolish or unintelligent in front of their peers. Therefore, they tended to be silent when they were not sure whether their answers were right or if their ideas differed from those of others. In line with this, a strong theme from the interview data was the extent to which students were afraid of the embarrassment of having to speak English publicly in front of their peers as they said *“I worry about what friends around me think of me. If I made a mistake um everybody knows the answer, then they would think I am stupid”* (S1) or *“I don't have confidence in my answer, then I really don't like what my classmates judge (..) because they are watching you, you have to speak English well”* (S4).

Apart from linguistic and psychological factors, students also pointed out turn-taking, unfamiliar topics, boredom of the lessons... were contributing factors that hindered them from participating orally more. With regards to turn-taking in class, in total 19.5% of them experienced difficulty in claiming a turn. That is, they thought the

turn was not allocated to them or there were occasions when they missed the speaking chance mainly because the topic already moved to the other. 10% of the participants admitted that their silence behavior was employed when they did not engage in the lesson due to its tediousness and repetition. The interview data indicates that even students who have a level of English knowledge good enough to deal with the lessons still chose to remain silent due to the boring and easy class activities: *“my teacher only asks us to do simple tasks... sometimes too easy. I think my teacher mainly counts our attendance”* (S6).

When being asked about what the teacher could do to encourage them to speak more in class, the participants provided various responses. Most of the participants (68%) suggested using more interactive activities during the lesson such as language games, debates, role-play. Some students added that the teacher should attend more to the weaker students and offer them more chances to express themselves instead of calling on those students who volunteered (35%). One group (19%) stated that the teacher should give them more time to analyze the information as well as provide them with further explanation and support on the topic. To make it easier for them to express their opinions or ideas, students also wanted their teachers to give them more clues such as giving examples, helping with vocabulary, or explaining the task in detail. This means they seem to need some structured instruction in order to make them comfortable with sharing their thoughts. 13% of the participants believed the teacher has already done enough to engage them in the lesson.

Chart 3. Teachers' methods to minimize students' silence behavior



DISCUSSION

Having explored silence behavior by MSA learners of English in EFL classrooms both theoretically and practically, it can be understood that the existence of silence in classroom interaction has rooted from various reasons in educational contexts. Not only does the frequency of the occurrences differ, but there are occasions when their causes are interpreted differently.

One main finding is that the students' in-class silence originated not only from learner factors but also from teacher factors. In this section, several significant findings in the data obtained through the questionnaires and the interviews will be highlighted.

First, it is the silence of students' low self-confidence. The idea of being afraid of losing face is so common that some students are not confident about themselves. They always worry about making mistakes or losing face so they refuse to express their ideas. Students also worry that they will be laughed at by their classmates if they give the incorrect answers, especially when the questions are quite simple. In general, students' lack of confidence is the prominent phenomenon due to the students' psychological fear and poor linguistic knowledge.

Second, it is the silence of students' inadequate language competency. Students state that they remain silent simply because they do not know the answer or do not understand the question. Therefore, staying silent becomes their only escape in such a case or when they cannot express their ideas. Each time, when unable or unwilling to answer the teacher's question further, students remain unfalteringly silent until eventually the call passed on the other students. During the lesson it was observed that most learners within the group required time in order to decode information and then to formulate an appropriate response. Lack of English language ability, unfamiliarity with topics/ tasks, misinterpretation of the teacher's talk may all lead to the failure of learners to orally respond.

Third, it is the silence of students' learning demotivation. Students' silence can be rooted from their shyness or boredom because of the lack of spontaneous reaction and learning enthusiasm. Some students just sit in the classroom quietly, take in what the teacher says and depend on the teacher's explanation. Some students responded that they did not join in class because they felt inferior to the others, or they lacked the essential knowledge and skills to do well. Moreover, teachers need to help students realize the importance of autonomous learning and set up positive learning attitudes towards English leaning.

Finally, it is the silence of unsuitable teaching methods, here to say teacher-centered one. This type of silence is clearly connected with the silence of disengagement. The pedagogical technique the teachers employ with a class, in addition to their choice of lesson materials and task activities, can have a profound effect on whether classroom discourse systems are pulled towards a pattern of non-participation. Teachers' attitudes and beliefs about language learning play an important role here when a grammar-translation approach remains. Teachers' recognition to students' work proves to be a strong factor influencing their willingness to participate orally in foreign language class. Some students said they wanted positive feedback and complements from the teacher, while others said they wanted to show off their skills to their teacher and peers.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study proposes a number of practical implications to pedagogical techniques to language education planning in MSA. The current project found convincing evidence that there is a strong and common tendency towards silence within the EFL classrooms of English-majored students at MSA. Based on the concepts discussed throughout the paper, I would like to draw attention to a number of practical educational suggestions as follows:

First, lack of confidence can hinder students from learning English so it is very important for teachers to build up students' self-confidence. To do so, teachers should help students have a better understanding and an appropriate evaluation of themselves, and make them believe that they can study English well by working hard. Teachers need to reassure students not to fear for mistakes, but to learn from their mistakes or failures. Also, it is necessary for teachers to show patience and care for students to help them relieve their fear and anxiety. Only when students feel confident to communicate in English classroom, will they willingly participate in the activities and tasks teachers design for them.

Second, it is necessary to improve students' language competency because it has been shown to have a facilitative impact on classroom interactions. As students gain some successes in the language, their confidence will grow and so will their amount of oral participation. Therefore, teachers should stimulate learners' interests and provide as many opportunities as possible for students to produce the target language by implementing various classroom interaction tasks. Students should be often given motivation and encouragement to linguistically present themselves in front of class. Linguistic knowledge such as grammatical structures, vocabulary, and phonetics should be emphasized by teachers in the classroom so that students should know how to speak correctly. Students should develop the habits of listening to English speaking programs for the improvement of their language skills.

Third, the harmonious and comfortable classroom atmosphere is fundamental requirement of the classroom interaction. It plays a very important role in achieving effective teaching. To create a non-pressing and harmonious environment in class, what is needed for teachers is to give students more time and freedom for their class participation. The roles of the teacher shift from the dominator and controller into the organizer, instructor, monitor, helper and evaluator who create a supporting environment for students to be engaged in. In such a harmonious classroom, the students feel less nervous and anxious about participating in class activities. Only by promoting teacher-student empathy and peer empathy, can students' involvement in classroom activities be enhanced and classroom silence be avoided.

Last but not least, teaching methods have a great influence on students' performance in the classroom so teachers should encourage students to ask questions, organize them to cooperate to get answers, and always prepare to provide help to them, which is beneficial for nurturing student' communication abilities. Teachers should try to motivate the students to take risks to answer questions in class without giving them negative comments. Positive feedback can be much more effective than negative feedback in changing students' behaviors. Also, to increase students' language output, more activities should be carried out such as discussions, group learning, role-play, and debates. By taking various useful teaching methods, teachers can stimulate the students to take part in class activities enthusiastically so that the classroom silence can be avoided.

CONCLUSION

In EFL classrooms, silence is a common phenomenon and a barrier in the teaching and learning process, which troubles teachers. Classroom silence can be rooted from many factors such as linguistic and psychological factors and some other impersonal factors as well. For linguistic factors, lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, ungrammatical expressions, and low-level proficiency can be the

main reasons for the students to keep silence in class. For psychological factors, contributing elements which hinder the students from orally participating in class interaction may include their lack of confidence, shyness, and particularly their feeling of losing face or sounding foolish in front of their teacher and peers. Meanwhile, several other factors, namely inadequate time for information processing, turn-taking, and unfamiliar topics are also believed to be responsible for the student's silence behavior.

In order to avoid the classroom silence in EFL classroom at MSA, the following suggestions are made: boosting students' confidence in expressing themselves, increasing students' language skills, improving teaching methods and creating harmonious classroom atmosphere. Together with these proposals, teachers need to change their teaching concepts and renew their teaching methodologies to stimulate students' learning interests, and therefore, to reduce in-class silence and promote more engagement so that they can eventually involve more students in classroom activities and improve students' English competence.

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TEACHERS' USE OF ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN SPEAKING LESSON IN AN ENGLISH PRIVATE CENTRE, HANOI, VIETNAM: THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NESTS AND NON-NESTS

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Abstract

Corrective feedback (CF) has long been a controversial topic attracting many scholars in English language teaching (ELT) world. Many theoretical and empirical research studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of corrective feedback (CF) on students' second language development. This research is carried out in an English private centre in Hanoi to explore the use of oral corrective feedback among native English speaker teachers (NESTs) and non-native English speaker teachers (non-NESTs) in their speaking lessons, and to find the differences between two groups of teachers in correcting their students' errors. Even there have been many studies exploiting this issue; however, those studies rarely mention the relationship between corrective feedback (CF) and speakerism; thus, there is a gap for this study to help fill in. The types of CF used in class, the factors influencing teachers' choice, and the most effective feedback types as perceived by the teachers are the specific objectives of this study.

Three research instruments: questionnaire, observation and interview are employed to gain sufficient, reliable and valid data for the study. Among 15 teachers agree to do the questionnaire, 6 teachers are invited to take part in the observation and interview

sections. 6 lessons of teachers are videoed and 6 stimulated recalls are recorded.

The study has found out that teachers agree CF is very important and use 6 types of CF in their lessons. Besides, Recast and Explicit correction are the most common types and bring the highest effectiveness to students' language development. Even though sharing many similar choices and preferences, NESTs and non-NESTs still have several differences as regards their methodology, beliefs or culture. While the non-NESTs do not pay attention to students' feelings, the NESTs mind more about students' emotion. Moreover, NESTs provide less CF than their counterparts and they prefer the prompts which make students think more.

Keywords: *corrective feedback, NESTs, non-NESTs*

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

The study is conducted in a private English centre in Hanoi. English has become a global language (Smith, 2005; Crystal, 2004) as an open-door policy was implemented and the diplomatic relations between Vietnam and the US was normalised in 1995. Thus, Vietnamese education was influenced significantly and studying English became increasingly important (Nguyen, 2012). As the demand of learning English was rising, a number of English private centres in Vietnam, especially in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city, were booming (Do, 2006). Many people study English in private centres. Private English centres are different from official schools as they offer the learners more chances to practice communicative skills.

The English centre is offering classes of 5 to 10 students; thus, in 90 minute classes, the interaction between teachers and students in class is more frequent and the teachers can provide feedback more often. Among three lessons a week; the NESTs and non-NESTs go to teach in turn.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What types of oral corrective feedback used by the NESTs and non-NESTs in speaking lessons in an English private centre in Hanoi, Vietnam?
2. Which factors guide the NESTs and non-NESTs' choice for different types of oral corrective feedback?
3. Which types of oral corrective feedback do the NESTs and non-NESTs think most useful that lead to most uptake and repair?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Key concepts

1. Errors

Errors are defined in different ways, originally as “idiosyncracies in the interlanguage of the learner which are the direct manifestation of a system within which a learner is operating at a time” (Brown, 1987, p.170). Twenty years later, error’s definition is shortened and condensed as the “slip” of the tongue when learners fail to use the correct forms (Brown, 2007).

2. Types of errors in ESL/ EFL classroom

Since there is a rapidly growing literature on error and error treatment, the ways the researchers categorize errors into types vary.

According to Ahangari & Amirzadeh (2011), errors can be classified with pronunciation, grammar, or word choice. Besides, Nishita (2004) gives a more detailed categorization: Morphosyntactic error, Phonological error, Lexical error, Semantic error (more detailed in Appendix 1)

The suggestions of Ahangari & Amirzadeh (2011) and Nishita (2004) are detailed and clear to apply; nevertheless, this way still does not summarize all aspects of errors. To address the problem,

Zhang & Rahimi (2014) and Kassa (2011) develop ways of categorising errors regarding all aspects which can be applied in all classroom settings:

- ✓ spoken errors that originate serious problems for listeners' understanding
- ✓ spoken errors that do not have any serious impacts on listeners' understanding
- ✓ commonly spoken errors
- ✓ uncommon spoken errors
- ✓ learner's own errors

Lastly, Kassa (2011, p.12) adds errors can be labelled as “errors of competence” and “errors of performance”. He realises that the former type of errors is repeated and organised which leads to serious problems in learners' communicative competence. Meanwhile, the latter type is not serious; thus, the learners can correct themselves (Kassa, 2011). However, teachers normally rest on the assumption that error's nature is systematic, harmful and errors need correcting and avoiding.

Above all, Kassa (2011) supposes not every error is bad and needs correcting and that can be adaptable in this research.

3. Corrective feedback

There are many interactions in English language classrooms, between students and students, or students and teachers. Above all, oral CF is the only interaction form in which teachers give to students explicitly or implicitly.

Various definitions of CF have been proposed. Askew (2000) defines CF as a judgement on others' performance in order to complete the gaps in terms of knowledge and forms. In addition, Campillo (2004, p.209) refers to CF as “a reactive pedagogical strategy that emerges when the teacher identifies an error” while two years later, Rusell &

Spada (2006) give a simpler and more straightforward explanation that CF refers to “any feedback provided to a learner, from any source, that contains evidence of learner error of language form” (p.134). Alongside, Ellis, Loewen & Erlam (2006) may give the most comprehensive interpretation of CF that “Corrective feedback takes the form of responses to learners’ utterances that contain an error” (p.340).

4. Types of corrective feedback

Actually, there are many types of CF: explicit correction and implicit correction (Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Campillo, 2003), feedback on accuracy work and feedback on fluency work (Ellis, 2009); immediate feedback, delayed feedback or no feedback (Nunan, 2003); self-correction, peer-correction, and teacher-correction (Méndez, Arguelles & Castro, 2010).

Research by Lyster and Ranta (1997) is considered the main theoretical framework about CF as it has first shed a light on the issue in a comprehensive way with six categories: explicit correction, recast, meta-linguistic feedback, elicitation, repetition, and clarification request. (Appendix 2).

5. Factors influencing the teachers’ choices of corrective feedback

Several factors have been identified to be the sources of teachers’ choices for the use of CF.

Firstly, it is the approach of the lessons, for example, “focus on form” and “focus on formS” approaches (Sheen, 2002) or from Lyster & Mori (2006): form-oriented and meaning-oriented classes (Lyster & Mori, 2006), meaning-focused and form-focused approaches (Zhang & Rahimi, 2014). Additionally, the two may become the most common among the language teaching methods which can affect the decision to provide CF among teachers. With the meaning-focused approach, language is acquired through communication skill; hence, the accuracy is not paid attention to,

then, the correction of forms may occur less. However, in form-focused classrooms, learners are provided more opportunities to practice the linguistic forms; thus, more correction on their accuracy may be given to students.

Additionally, it is the types of errors like local and global errors (Kassa, 2011). As global errors cause communication difficulties whilst local errors do not, local errors are often neglected as teachers do not want to interrupt students' flows.

Lastly, students' emotion affects teachers' choice of oral CF. Although, many students find it helpful to receive CF in class and want to be corrected frequently (Martínez, 2013; Schulz, 2001; Havranek, 2002; Zacharias 2007; Lyster, Saito & Sato, 2013), other students still face embarrassing moments when being corrected in class. Indeed, correction can be constructive; however, over-correction may seriously damage students' feeling and motivation.

There remain others such as timing (Li, 2013), and students' ages (Oliver, 2000; Dabaghi, 2006, Martínez, 2013; Zhang & Rahimi, 2014; Havranek, 2002). The factors influence teachers' options for CF in class may vary; therefore, the use of CF among different teachers differentiates.

6. Students' uptake and types of uptake

The detailed definition of students' uptake and types of uptake is included in Appendix 3.

7. How should the errors be corrected?

7.1. Theoretical issues

Firstly, CF is supposed to be contingent that it is provided merely when there is a necessity to correct (Lantolf, 2000); hence, the first problem that teachers may face when correcting students is timing (Li, 2013). The acceptable amount of time should be allocated to CF has to be in harmony with other parts in the content (Li, 2013).

As regards what errors to target and what types of CF to use, Hedge (2000) states that teachers should only respond to the global errors which may affect badly on students' communication and audiences' understanding. In addition, when dealing with serious global errors from students, Lyster & Ranta (1997) recommend that teachers use flexibly different types of CF. On the one hand, Ellis et al. (2006) provide theoretical evidence to prove that recasts are much more practical compared to the explicit forms since they are potentially efficient which grasp learners' attention to form the correct linguistic features themselves rather than receive them passively. On the other hand, there is theoretical support for explicit correction (Sheen, 2004) that recast does not completely show the students the locations of errors as the explicit correction. Moreover, explicit correction tends to encourage students to compare their own errors and the target forms, which may advance the cognitive development in learning progress. There has been an inconclusive debate about CF; therefore, theoretical evidence should be examined together with empirical results to look at the issue in more aspects.

7.2. Empirical evidence

Motivated by the theoretical evidence above, many studies have been conducted to test the results and spot the gaps between the proposed theories and evident practices.

Firstly, a study by Lyster and Ranta (1997) in child French immersion content-based classes. Even though six types of CF are used by the teachers during 18.3 classroom hours, recast is shown to be prominent among those types for the first time (55%). Years later, Panova and Lyster (2002) replicated that study on adult ESL learners. Despite the different contexts, there is a striking similarity between the results of the two studies: recast is again the most common type and accounts for 77% this time. Last but not least, the findings remain unchanged with two more investigations with the same adult ESL context in New Zealand by Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001) and with native-American teachers in EFL

intermediate classrooms in Korea by Sheen (2004). The findings from those studies indicate that teachers regard recast as the efficient tool in class that they frequently use. In Vietnam, there have been a few studies concerning this issue; Bui (2009) and Nguyen (2014), have been by far the most updated and profound about the relationship between teachers' CF and learners' uptake and repair, with 235 students and teachers in a high school. Recast, again, is recorded as one of the most effective CF types. However, some other researchers show that recasts can benefit only short-term language learning, which should not overwhelm other types of CF (Ayoun, 2001; Braidi, 2002; Han, 2002; Havranek, 2002; Iwashita, 2003; Leeman, 2003; Oliver & Mackey, 2003). Generally, the experimental data are rather controversial, and there is no general agreement about those findings as researchers just have conducted their studies over small samples; thus, results need to be given more investigations.

8. NESTs and non-NESTs

NESTs and non-NESTs refer to two groups of English language teachers. NESTs are English language teachers whose first language is English while English is not the mother tongue of non-NESTs. The term goes with "non-" has long been regarded as deficient or inferior to the ones without "non-". Nowadays, the teachers who do not have English language as their mother tongue are still called non-native speaker teachers, and the issue "native and non-native English speaker teachers" is still under debates, which attracts many debaters.

I. Debated issues

1. NESTs and non-NESTs

English has long become the global language and a lingua franca (Crystal, 2004; Smith, 2005). And people now concern whether the NESTs should have a preferential position over the non-NESTs.

First of all, the NEST is frequently considered "model speaker and the ideal teacher" (Clark & Paran, 2007, p.407). Actually, "the use of 'non-' usually signifies a disadvantage or deficit" (Holliday, 2005, p.

4). The indisputable biggest strength of NESTs may be pronunciation instruction (Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009). However, those teachers may lack the necessary knowledge of designing lessons and teaching methodologies (Ma, 2012).

For decades, the native speaker has a privileged position in English language teaching as nowadays many institutions restrict their requirement with English native speakers only when recruiting (Clark & Paran, 2007, McKay, 2002). For instance, in Vietnam, the English native speakers are often employed by the private institutes even though they do not have enough knowledge of language teaching.

Recently, educators and researchers are calling for the equality between two groups of teachers (Amin, 2001, Jenkins, 2000, Graddol, 2000, Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009, Selvi, 2011), Árvá & Medgyes (2000) also conclude that NESTs and non-NESTs are two separate groups with many differences regarding their language proficiency, teaching behavior and characteristics. Besides, Jenkins (2000); Holliday (2005); Graddol (2004); Todd & Pojanapunya (2009) are critical of the claim of Árvá and Medgyes (2000), arguing that the majority use of English is now outside the English-speaking West; thus, native speakers are merely a part of the much greater group of English language speakers. Jenkins (2000), therefore, summarizes that NESTs and non-NESTs are currently equal, and English should be taught as an international language, rather than as a language fixed to a specific culture of the Western English-speaking countries. Therefore, Ma (2012) concludes in a comprehensive way that the supposed strengths and weaknesses are complementary and both groups of teachers can do their jobs well in their own ways (Ma, 2012).

2. Should errors be corrected?

As there is an increasing interest about CF, the fact that whether errors should be corrected divides the concerns into two sides.

One side mentions errors should not be given treatment in classrooms for three main reasons: its ineffectiveness, harmful impacts on learners, and the innate that counters to SLA (Katayama, 2006; Krashen, 1982; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Truscott, 2007; Spratt, Pulverness & Williams, 2010).

However, there are also many advocates for CF in class due to four undeniable merits: the benefits on learners' emotions, the effectiveness on SLA, the preference from teachers and learners, and the positive empirical evidence (Martínez, 2008; Waring & Wong, 2009; Li, 2010; Lyster & Saito, 2010; Bitchevner & Ferris, 2012; Ellis, Loewen & Erlam, 2006; Lyster, 2004; Lyster et al., 2013; Calsiyao, 2015; Schulz, 2001; Havranek, 2002; Zachariaz, 2007).

To conclude, CF still has some disadvantages for language learning; however, both theoretical and empirical evidence has shown that CF plays an essential role in EFL/ ESL classrooms.

METHODOLOGY

I. Sampling method

Among 16 invited English teachers, 15 teachers agreed to take part in the research project. Among 15 teachers, only 6 teachers who were teaching in communicative English classes (elementary level) were chosen to be observed and interviewed. Non-probability sampling method (purposive and convenience sampling strategies) was employed. In this case, in order to see how the teachers provide CF to the same levelled students, the researcher invited all the teachers who were teaching at elementary communicative English classes in the centre to be participants of the observation and interview sections. Among 6 chosen teachers, 3 of them were NESTs and the others were non-NESTs. The teachers were also invited to attend individual stimulated recall interviews. Furthermore, 6 lessons of the 6 teachers were filmed by the researcher. All the students in 6 classes also participated in the study as the researcher observed 6 lessons of 6 classes. The students were all at the elementary level and above the

age of 18.

Three NESTs are teacher A, teacher B and teacher C. They were in charge of class A, B and C, respectively.

Three non-NESTs are teacher A1, teacher B1, and teacher C1. They were in charge of class A1, B1, and C1, respectively.

II. Data collection methods

To collect valid and reliable data for the investigation, the researcher combined qualitative and quantitative methods to conduct “mixed methods research”.

Question 1: Questionnaire, Observation, Interview

Question 2: Questionnaire, Interview

Question 3: Questionnaire, Observation, Interview

The survey questionnaire is included in Appendix 4.

The observation scheme and detailed sample of observation description for 6 lessons are included in Appendix 5 and 6.

The detailed questions in stimulated recall interview were included in Appendix 7, the sample of an interview transcription was included in appendix 8.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

I. Answer to question 1

Each group of teacher considered “important” differently, which led to different teaching. The NESTs seemed to be more tolerant to students’ errors than non-NESTs as they corrected students less than their counterparts. It could be seen as contrasting attitudes of two groups of teachers towards “errors” in learning. For example, NESTs paid attention to the message conveyed while non-NESTs cared about the accuracy. Moreover, it might be because correcting

students might indicate the attention from the teachers and the sign of good teaching that non-NESTs were implementing. Last but not least, the different experiences of education system could be partly responsible for the difference among NESTs and non-NESTs as Vietnamese students were regulated by rules in class while students from English-speaking countries seemed to feel relaxed in their lessons. Overall, further explanations for the differences between the teaching of two groups of teachers could be shown more clearly from the answers to research question 2.

II. Answer to question 2

Even teachers supposed correcting students was significant; however, they had to consider many factors before deciding, especially students' feelings. NESTs and non-NESTs, in this case, had different views towards students' feelings as the NESTs cared more about how students felt more than non-NESTs. The reasons for the difference could be the differences in teachers' cultures and teaching methodologies that the Westerners often care about humans' feelings and needs more than the Easterners. Furthermore, it might be because the Western educational system care more about the students' summative achievement whilst Eastern educational system pay attention to the progress.

III. Answer to question 3

Even though NESTs and non-NESTs both supposed that correcting students was useful and they all agreed that Recast and Explicit Correction led to the most uptake, NESTs tended to preferred the prompts which elicit more from students while Vietnamese teachers appeared to use straightaway tools to remind students of their mistakes. The difference might be the result of different learning and thinking ways of NESTs and non-NESTs. The English native students appeared to learn from teachers' guides and explore the knowledge themselves while Vietnamese students preferred the direct answers from their teachers.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, teachers used different types of CF in their speaking lessons flexibly; however, teachers tended to provide Recast and Explicit Correction the most as those two types proved to benefit students more than other types. Among many factors affected teachers' choices of CF, students' emotion seemed to be a big concern of NESTs rather than non-NESTs. Besides, non-NESTs appeared to give students much more CF than NESTs did and they had different preferences in choosing feedback types (E.g. NESTs liked implicit correction which evoked more thinking from students). Those distinctions seemed to be the most particular in describing the differences in using oral CF in speaking lessons of two groups of teachers.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Even though the researcher has made a concerted effort to accomplish the project, certain limitations are unavoidable. One teacher was interviewed one week after the lesson; thus, he might have forgotten some details even though he had the chance to watch some segments of the lesson again. Moreover, each teacher was observed only once due to the workload of the teachers; therefore, the long-term effect of oral CF could not be examined.

Despite the above disadvantages, the research project still went very smoothly thanks to the researcher's flexibility and efforts.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

CF had been an attractive topic in the ELT world; and there are some suggestions for researchers with their further studies.

It is advisable for future researchers to observe more lessons to gain more data and get more ideas of the real situation better. Different contexts should also be employed to offer the researchers chances to look at the issue with a different population and obtain more

information. Furthermore, it is suggested that different aspects relating to CF (students' preferences and teachers' difficulties) should be investigated more thoroughly to draw a larger picture about CF. Last but not least, action research can be a good idea for the teachers as well as researchers to test the effectiveness that CF can bring to students.

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APPENDIX 1

Detailed categorization of errors by Nishita (2004)

- ✓ Morphosyntactic error: when learners use the word order, tense, conjugation and particles in the wrong way
- ✓ Phonological error: When learners pronounce words wrongly
- ✓ Lexical error: when learners have incorrect word choices
- ✓ Semantic error: when there is misunderstanding in learners' utterances

APPENDIX 2

Types of corrective feedback	Definitions	Examples
Explicit correction	Explicit correction refers to the explicit provision of the correct form. As the teacher provides the correct form, he or she clearly indicates that what the student had said was incorrect	S: He have a ball. T: not have, has
Recast	The teacher does not indicate directly that the student made an error, but implicitly reformulates the student's error or provides the correction	S: He have a ball. T: He has a ball. S: Yes, he has a ball.
Clarification request	The teacher indicates to the student that the utterance is not correct in some way and that the student needs to repeat or reformulate the utterance. A clarification request includes some phrases such as "Excuse me?", "Pardon me?" or "I don't understand". It may also include a repetition of the error such as "What do you mean by X?"	S: He have a ball. T: Pardon me? S: He has a ball.
Elicitation	Elicitation refers to some techniques that teachers employ to directly elicit the correct form from the student. Firstly, teachers can elicit completion of their own utterance by strategically pausing to allow students to "fill in the blank". Secondly, they can use questions such as "How do we say X in English?" to elicit correct forms.	S: He has ball. T: He has... S: He has a ball.

	Thirdly, they can directly ask students to reformulate their utterance	
Metalinguistic feedback	The teacher asks questions, provides comments or gives information related to the formation of the student's utterance without providing the correct form	S: He has ball. T: Use the article. S: He has a ball.
Repetition	Teachers repeat the student's incorrect utterance in isolation. In most cases, they change their intonation to highlight the error	S: He have a cat. T: He have a cat? (question mark in the teacher voice) S: He has a cat.

APPENDIX 3

Students' uptake and types of uptake

Definition

The uptake is defined to be the learners' response following the correction from the teachers (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Uptake is considered the effectiveness evidence of CF because uptake possibly shows whether the students notice and incorporate with the feedback that teachers provide or not (Egi, 2010; Lyster and Ranta, 1997). In other words, the uptake from students is considered the negotiations of forms which provide the students more chances to advance their language learning (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Types

Among the studies about the types of learners' uptake, the results proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) has been by far the most important and comprehensive (Panova and Lyster, 2002; Suzuki, 2005). Lyster and Ranta (1997) categorise two types of student uptake: repair and needs- repair.

Repair

Repair has been seemingly defined as “the correct reformulation of an error as uttered in a single student turn and not to the sequence of turns resulting in the correct reformulation; nor does it refer to self-initiated repair” (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 49).

Needs-repair

According to Lyster & Ranta (1997, pp.50-51) there are 6 types of utterances need repairing.

6 types of utterances need repairing (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, pp.50-51):

- ✓ Acknowledgment generally refers to a simple “yes” on the part of the student in response to the teacher’s feedback, as if to say, “Yes, that is indeed what I meant to say (but you’ve just said it much better!”). Acknowledgment may also include a “yes” or “no” on the part of the student in response to the teacher’s metalinguistic feedback.
- ✓ Same error refers to uptake that includes a repetition of the student’s initial error.
- ✓ Different error refers to a student’s uptake that is in response to the teacher’s feedback but that neither corrects nor repeats the initial error; instead, a different error is made.
- ✓ Off target refers to uptake that is clearly in response to the teacher’s feedback.
- ✓ Hesitation refers to a student’s hesitation in response to the teacher’s feedback.
- ✓ Partial repair refers to uptake that includes a correction of only part of the initial error.

Four categories of “other-initiated repair” (Lyster and Ranta’s, 1997, p. 50):

- ✓ Repetition refers to a student’s repetition of the teacher’s

feedback when the latter includes the correct form.

- ✓ Incorporation refers to a student's repetition of the correct form provided by the teacher, which is then incorporated into a longer utterance produced by the student."
- ✓ Self-repair refers to a self-correction, produced by the student who made the initial error, in response to the teacher's feedback when the latter does not already provide the correct form.
- ✓ Peer-repair refers to peer-correction provided by a student, other than the one who made the initial error, in response to the teacher's feedback.

6 types of utterances need repairing (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, pp.50-51):

- ✓ Acknowledgment generally refers to a simple "yes" on the part of the student in response to the teacher's feedback, as if to say, "Yes, that is indeed what I meant to say (but you've just said it much better!"). Acknowledgment may also include a "yes" or "no" on the part of the student in response to the teacher's metalinguistic feedback.
- ✓ Same error refers to uptake that includes a repetition of the student's initial error.
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- ✓ Off target refers to uptake that is clearly in response to the teacher's feedback.
- ✓ Hesitation refers to a student's hesitation in response to the teacher's feedback.
- ✓ Partial repair refers to uptake that includes a correction of only part of the initial error.

APPENDIX 4

Survey questions for the teachers

My name is Hoa Bao Lai. I am doing an MA course on TESOL at the University of Huddersfield. This survey questionnaire is designed for my dissertation titled “ **Teachers’ use of oral corrective feedback in English speaking lessons in an English private centre in Hanoi, Vietnam: The differences between teachers who are native English speakers and teachers who are non-native English speakers**”. Please give your answers truthfully for a guaranteed success of the investigation. Your personal information and your opinions will be kept strictly confidential.

Thank you very much for your help!

Before completing the questionnaire, please read through the definition given below to make sure that you have understood its meaning thoroughly.

Question 1: In English speaking lessons, do you give students oral corrective feedback? Circle your choice. YES NO

Question 2: If “YES”, which types of corrective feedback do you use? Please choose answer by circling the letter next to your choice. You can choose more than one options.

- A. Explicit correction (You indicate that what a student has said was incorrect and provide the correct form) E.g: “go is wrong. You should say went”
- B. Recasts (Without directly indicating that student’s utterance was incorrect, you implicitly reformulate student’s error, or provide the correction) E.g: “You **go** to school yesterday?”
- C. Clarification request (By using phrases like “Excuse me?”, “Pardon” or “I don’t understand”, you indicate that the message has not been understood of that student’s utterance contained some kind of mistake and that a repetition or a reformulation is

required.)

- D. Metalinguistic feedback (Without providing the correct form, you ask Yes/No questions or provide comments or information related to the formation of the student’s utterance) E.g: “Do we say **go** in past tense?”
- E. Elicitation (You directly elicit the correct form from student by asking questions which require more than a Yes/No response, by pausing to allow the student to complete your utterance (“It’s a...”) or by asking the student to reformulate the utterance (“Say that again”) E.g: “You...to school yesterday?”.
- F. Repetition (You repeat the student’s error and adjust intonation to draw student’s attention to it.). E.g: “I **go** to school yesterday?”
- G. Other types (Please specify.....)

Question 3: Please put a tick (v) into suitable blanks which express your frequency of using types of corrective feedback. You only need to do with types chosen in question 2.

Types of corrective feedback	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Very rarely	Never
A. Explicit correction						
B. Recasts						
C. Clarification request						
D. Metalinguistic feedback						
E. Elicitation						
F. Repetition						
G. Other types						

Question 4: When do you use oral corrective feedback in your lessons?

- A. Immediately after students make mistakes (even interrupt students' speaking)
- B. After students finish speaking
- C. After the activity
- D. At the conclusion of the lessons (Summarise the whole performance, indicate some common errors)

Question 5: Which factors guide your choice for those types of corrective feedback in speaking lessons?

- A. Students' emotions at that time
- B. Students' personalities
- C. Students' learning styles
- D. Students' levels
- E. Students' errors types (knowing that a certain item was more successfully learned with that feedback, E.g: systematical errors that need correcting/ slips of the tongue OR grammatical/ lexical/ phonological errors)
- F. Timing of the lessons
- G. Approach of the lesson (E.g. Meaning focus/ Form focus approach)
- H. Others (Please specify

Question 6: How effective do types of corrective feedback lead to uptake and repair for students in speaking lessons?

You only need to evaluate the effectiveness of types of corrective feedback chosen in question 2.

APPENDIX 5

Observation scheme is adapted from observation schemes of Nguyen (2014) and Panova & Lyster (2002)

Teacher:										
Class:										
Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of CF	Repair	Needs- repair		

APPENDIX 6

Observation transcription of teacher A1, class A1

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
1. S: My name is /ɪ/ Thao. T: My name is /ɪz/, not my name	Free talk: Introduce yourself			X		Explicit correction + Metalinguistic feedback		X		

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
is /ɪ/. You should have the ending sounds; therefore, people will know what you are saying. S: (nod their heads)										
2. S: I'm 17 years old. /jɪər əʊld/ T: /jɪərz/əʊld/ S: Yeah				X		Recast		x		
3. S: I live near here. /hɪə/				X	x				x	
4. S: My hobby is /ɪ/ reading novels and play some game.				X	x				x	
5. S: My hobby is reading novels and <u>play</u> some game.		x			x				x	
6. S: My hobby is reading novels and play some game. T: play games /geɪmz/, not game				X		Explicit correction	x			

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
/geim/. Many students said "play game" / pleigeim/ S: games /geimz/										
7. S: I'm live in Hanoi.		x			x				x	
8. S: My hobby is play games.		x			x				x	
9. S: <u>In my hobbies</u> , I like listening music and play games. T: About my hobbies, I like st the most,,,,, not "In my hobbies..."			x			Explicit correction		x		
10. S: In my hobbies, <u>I like</u> listening music and <u>play games</u> .		x			x				x	
11. S: In my hobbies, I like <u>listening music</u> and play games. T: Listening to		x				Recast		x		
12.	Game: Bingo Get			X		Explicit correction	x			

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
S: Are you a senior? /seni.ər/ T: /'si:.ni.ər/, not /seni.ər/ S: /'si:.ni.ər/	to know more about your friends.									
13. S: Do you have any sibling?		x			x				x	
14. S: Do you have black hair? /he/			X		x				x	
15. S: In some countries... /ʃʌm/ T: Okay in some /sʌm/countries, /sʌm/ not /ʃʌm/ S: /sʌm/	Speaking practice: Describe your hometown			X		Explicit correction	x			
16. S: One example is /i/			X		x				x	
17. S: The word /wɜ:/ "extension" means T: The word /wɜ:d/ S: The word /wɜ:d/				X		Recast	x			
18. S: The capital city				X					x	

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
is /ɪ/ in the centre of the country.										
19. S: Geographical /ˌdʒi.əʊˈgræf.i.kəl/ T: /ˌdʒi.əˈgræf.i.kəl/ , not /ˌdʒi. əʊ/ S: /ˌdʒi.əˈgræf.i.kəl/			X		Explicit correction + recast	x				
20. S: political /pəʊˈlɪt.i.kəl/ T: /pə/, not /pəʊ/ S: /pəˈlɪt.i.kəl/			X		Explicit correction	x				
21. S: created /kr'eɪtɪd/ T: /kri'eɪtɪd/			X		Recast			x		
22. S: size /saɪ/ T: /saɪz/ S: /saɪz/			X		Recast	x				
23. S: medium /'mi:zi.əm/ T: /'mi:di.əm/, not /'mi:zi.əm/, okay? S: /'mi:di.əm/			X		Explicit correction	x				

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
24. S: Industrious /ɪn'dʌ.tri.əs/			X		x				x	
25. S: hospitable /'hɒs.pi.təbl/ T: /hɒs'pɪt.ə.bl/			X			Recast	x			
26. S: The population of Vietnam is /ɪ/ about... T: You sometimes miss the ending sounds /ɪz/ S: /ɪz/			X			Metalinguistic feedback	x			
27. S: It's famous /feɪ.'mɑs/ for "banh chung" T: You have to put the stress on the syllable when you are speaking.			X			Metalinguistic feedback	x			
28. S: Public transport is very pollution. T: Public transport can be very polluted?		x				Recast			x	
29. S: Public transport is very pollution.			x			Elicitation		x		

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
T: Public transport can be very polluted? You mean the air quality? S: Yeah T: You can say public transport can cause/ create pollution.										
30. S: My city is /ɪ/ Hanoi.				X	x				x	
31. S: It is /ɪ/ a big city.				X	x				x	
32. S: It's famous for food /fu:dz/, specialties is bun cha, bun oc,... T: /fu:d/ S: /fu:d/				X		Recast	x			
33. S: It's famous for food, specialties /,speʃl.i.ti/ is bun cha, bun oc,... T: /,speʃ.i'æɪ.l.i.ti/ S: /,speʃ.i'æɪ.l.i.ti/				X		Recast	x			
34. S: It's famous for		x			x				x	

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
	food, specialties is bun cha, bun oc,...									
35.	S: The population is ten /tens/ thousands			X	x				x	
36.	S: It has lots of <u>historic</u> buildings.		x		x				x	
37.	S: The public /'pʌb.lɪks/ transport is terrible.			X	x				x	
38.	S: People /'pju:.pəʊl/ are very friendly, kind, and hospitable.			X	x				x	
39.	S: People are very friendly /'frend.lɪs/, kind, and hospitable.			X	x				x	
40.	S: People are very friendly, kind, and hospitable /hɒs'pɪt. əɪ.bəl/. T: /hɒs'pɪt. əɪ.bəl/ S: /hɒs'pɪt. əɪ.bəl/			X		Recast	x			

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
41. S: And I love /læv/Hanoi.			X		x				x	
42. S: It is a medium-sized /zaiz/ town. T: /saiz/, not /zarz/ S: Yeah			X			Explicit correction		x		
43. S: The population (without stress) of it is about 10 thousand people. T: Population (With stress) S: Population (With stress)			X			Recast	x			
44. S: It's famous for delicious /de'lız.əs/fruits, beautiful flowers T: /dr'lıf.əs/ S: /dr'lıf.əs/			X			Recast	x			
45. S: About public transport is quite dangerous. T: This sentence is problematic . About public transport, it is		x				Metalinguistic feedback + Explicit correction		x		

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
dangerous. When you talk like that, this sentence doesn't have a subject.										
46. S: Education / ,ed.ʊ'keɪ.fən/ T: / ,ed.ʊ'keɪ.fən/? Sorry? S: / ,ed.jʊ'keɪ.fən/				X		Repetition + x Clarification request				
47. S: My hometown is very crowd. T: The city is very crowd? T: Crowded S: Crowded		x				Repetition + x Recast				
48. S: My house is in Nhon street. T: In Nhon street? S: On Nhon street.		x				Repetition x				
49. S: People here is very friendly. T: Can we say "People here is..."? No "People here are..." Okay? S: (nod their heads)		x				Explicit correction	x			

Student turn	Activities	Students' error types			Teacher's corrective feedback (CF)		Students' uptake		No-uptake	Notes
		Grammatical	Lexical	Phonological	Ignore	Types of feedback	Repair	Needs-repair		
50. S: One statue is in Brazil and one statue is in Vietnam				X	x				x	
51. S: It is one of our pride.		x			x				x	
52. S: There is a historic building.		x			x				x	
53. S: It's on the coast. T: It's located on the coast. S: (nod their heads)			x			Recast		x		
54. S: convenient /kən'vi:.ni.ənt/ T: /kən'vi:.ni.ənt/, not /kən'vi:.ni.ənt/ S: /kən'vi:.ni.ənt/				X		Explicit correction	x			
55. S: /'wer.ər/ T: /'weð.ər/ S: /'weð.ər/				X		Recast	x			

APPENDIX 7

Stimulated recall questions adapted from survey questionnaire of Nguyen (2014)

Teacher:

Class:

Background information

Question 1: How old are you?

Question 2: For how long have you been teaching?

Question 3: For how long have you been working at this English centre?

Question 4: How do you provide your students with oral feedback?

- Which types of oral corrective feedback you often use in your speaking lessons?
- Which types of oral corrective feedback you use most frequently? (least frequently)
- When do you use oral feedback in your speaking lessons?
- What is your main focus when you give oral feedback? (which types of errors, E.g. lexical/ grammatical/ phonological errors)

Question 5: What do you take in consideration when providing oral feedback? (Students' characteristics, ages, needs, levels, learning styles, students' error types, timing of the lessons, approaches of the lessons,...)

Question 6: How effective are the oral corrective feedback you provided?

- How do students react on your oral feedback? Do you get any response?
- Do you experience that the students develop their English when

they receive oral feedback?

- What do students learn when being provided with oral feedback?
- Do you suppose all students learn from feedback? How?
- Do you believe students listen and respond to your given feedback?
- Do the students understand your oral feedback?

Question 7: How important is it to give oral feedback do you think?

Thank you for your cooperation!

APPENDIX 8: Stimulated recall transcription Teacher A1

Background information

Question 1: How old are you? *I am 22*

Question 2: For how long have you been teaching? *Just for one recent year*

Question 3: For how long have you been working at this English centre? *Just two months*

Question 4: How do you provide your students with oral feedback?

- Which types of oral corrective feedback you often use in your speaking lessons?

About Explicit correction (I usually use it). With Recast (Use when I taught them this already or I know at their level, they must know it already). And I don't have any idea about Clarification request. Is it okay? Elicitation (I use when I taught them this already). Metalinguistic feedback (Use it usually in terms of grammar. I might teach them already but they forget). Repetition (Use when I taught them this already or I know at their level, they must know it already - > It is obvious and possible for them to realize their mistakes on their own)

- Which types of oral corrective feedback you use most frequently?
(least frequently)

Most frequent:

Among 6 types of CF, I always go for recast and explicit correction.

Least frequent:

Maybe metalinguistic feedback

- When do you use oral feedback in your speaking lessons?

It depends. It could be during their speaking, I interrupt them. However, after they have finished their own speaking, I point out some general and common mistakes. And after the speaking of all members, when the mistakes are common among students, I remind the class of those mistakes.

- What is your main focus when you give oral feedback? (which types of errors, E.g. lexical/ grammatical/ phonological errors)

I will put them in order of priority

1. Phonological errors (since it affects the comprehension)

2. Lexical (improve for them to use better words/collocations)

3. Grammatical

Question 5: What do you take in consideration when providing oral feedback? (Students' characteristics, ages, needs, levels, learning styles, students' error types, timing of the lessons, approaches of the lessons,...)

There are many things I have to consider:

- *Levels*
- *Ages*
- *Needs*

- *Timing of the lesson*
- *Approaches of the lesson*
- *Student's characteristics*

Question 6: How effective are the oral corrective feedback you provided?

- How do students react on your oral feedback? Do you get any response?

Some said my feedback were useful. One used to say that they preferred to be corrected after they had finished their speaking instead of being interrupted during their speaking.

- Do you experience that the students develop their English when they receive oral feedback?

Yes. For example, they corrected their intonation or pronunciation quickly later on.

- What do students learn when being provided with oral feedback?

In my case? Students change their pronunciation. Honestly, many Vietnamese students pronounce the words incorrectly due to their habit since they were at low-level school and teachers gave them the wrong pronunciation. Normally, I ask them to repeat the words many times to forget the wrong previous ones. After receiving the feedback, they correct their intonation or pronunciation quickly later on. They also change the intonation and mind more about grammar/new words.

- Do you suppose all students learn from feedback? How?

I'm not sure all. But maybe almost all since I can see their changes.

- Do you believe students listen and respond to your given feedback?

Yes they listen very carefully, correct their mistakes immediately, or

nod their heads and say “yes”.

- Do the students understand your oral feedback?

Yes. Sometime they may not. I can see from their facial expressions, hence, I explain one more time and slowly

Question 7: How important is it to give oral feedback do you think?

Vitally important, especially when I am teaching them communication. It is a must for them to know how to use the word in a right and appropriate way.

Thank you for your cooperation!

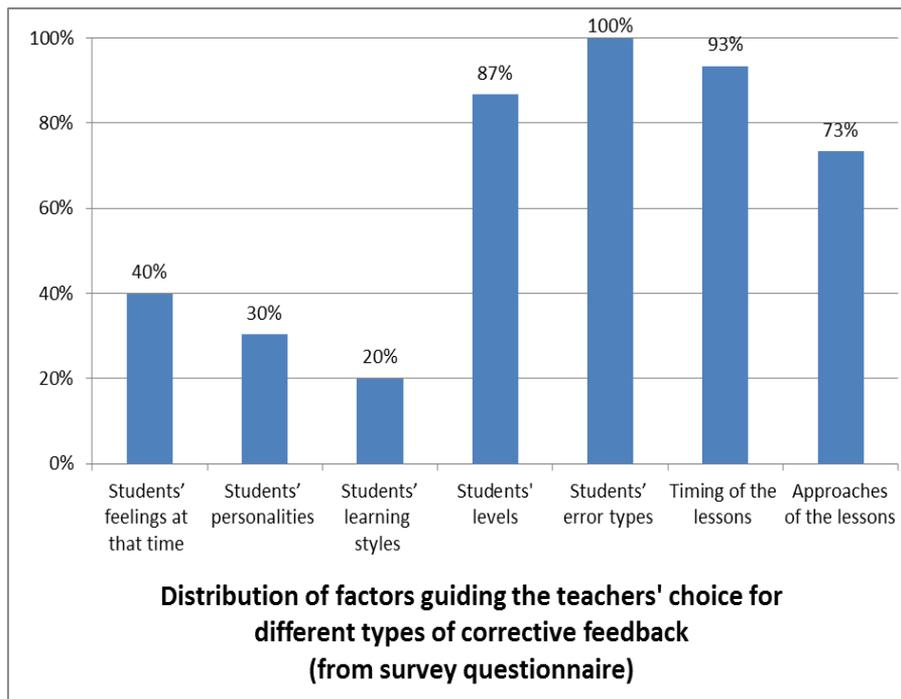
APPENDIX 10

The distribution of types of oral CF used in 6 speaking lessons

		Explicit correction	Recast	Metalinguistic feedback	Clarification request	Elicitation	Repetition	Sum
Non-NESTs	A1	12	16	4	1	3	3	108
	A2	5	16	4	2	1	2	
	A3	10	17	4	1	4	3	
	sum	27	49	12	4	8	8	
NESTs	A	5	6	2	1	1	1	41
	B	2	4	3	1	2	1	
	C	4	4	1	1	1	1	
	sum	11	14	6	3	4	3	
	SUM	38	63	18	7	12	11	149
		25.50%	42.28%	12.08%	4.70%	8.05%	7.38%	

APPENDIX 11

Distribution of factors guiding the teachers' choice for different types of corrective feedback (from survey questionnaire)



APPENDIX 12

Distribution of uptake and repair in relation to corrective feedback types

Corrective feedback types (N= 149)	Uptake moves (N=119)		Repair (N=99)		Needs- repair (N=20)		No uptake (N=30)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	Explicit correction (n= 38)	32	84.21%	28	76.19%	4	10.52%	6
Recast (n=63)	58	92.06%	48	76.19%	10	15.87%	5	7.94%
Clarification request (n=18)	12	66.67%	8	44.44%	4	22%	6	33%
Metalinguistic feedback (n=7)	5	71.43%	3	42.86%	2	40%	2	29%
Elicitation (n=12)	8	66.67%	8	100.00%	0	0%	4	33%
Repetition (n=11)	4	36.36%	4	100.00%	0	0%	7	63.64%

Distribution of uptake and repair in relation to corrective feedback types

ENGLISH AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AT UNIVERSITIES IN HANOI- VIETNAM- THE CASE OF VIETNAM UNIVERSITY OF COMMERCE

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Abstract

The development of English as a medium of instruction is of great interest to language and language policy researchers in an era of globalization and internationalization. The education in the world is experiencing a dramatic growth in the teaching of academic subjects through the medium of English in countries where the first language is not English. However, changing from the mother tongue to another language in education can have influence on the quality of education. Not only students but lecturers also have to cope with a foreign language as the medium of instruction.

The study is an attempt to identify any difficulties due to a shift from Vietnamese to English as a foreign instructional language and to offer measures to implement, develop or conduct English-medium courses without any loss of learning outcomes. Based on these findings, suggestions are made for enhancing the success of similar programs.

Keywords: *English as a Medium of Instruction, globalization, challenges, lecturers, Vietnam*

INTRODUCTION

In Vietnam, the project which proposes to begin English as medium of instruction was introduced by the Prime Ministerial Decision number 1400/QĐ-TTg in 2008. Its implementation needs a lot of

time to stand back and reflect. Few studies include experience of both lecturers and students who have actually switch from their mother tongue to a foreign language in an instructional setting in Universities in Vietnam. This means that it has inadequate knowledge effects that a change of instructional language may have on the quality of education.

Since Vietnamese teaching staff and students are likely to have limited command of English, a switch from the mother tongue to English is expected to have a number of negative effects. This study will be an attempt to find out the effects basing on the reflect from lecturers and students at Hanoi University of Commerce where using English as medium just started to apply in two first faculties in 2015. This will contribute to the understanding of overall application state and accordingly, the extent to which a switch from Vietnamese to English affects lecturers and students can be reduced

English as medium of instrument in Asia

In Asia, the selection of English as medium of instrument in university is regarded as the “policy fashion” (Byun, Chu, Kim, Park, Kim, & Jung, 2011, p. 432) to draw students. Accordingly, some universities in Asia have adapted their education policies to internationalization and have started to recommend English-medium programs. However, reports on the execution of English as medium of instrument reveal both optimistic and pessimistic consequence. While this trend has dramatically improved, the students involved have received less support and instruction from professors (Byun et al., 2011) and have had difficulties in understanding the subject content and fluently expressing their opinions (Chang, 2010; Wu, 2006). In addition, when referring to the advantages and disadvantages of this trend, De Wit (2011) argued that the quality of education showed downward trend (p. 6) because both students and teachers, more or less, have some difficulties in studying and teaching in a language which is not their native language. Other risks of English as medium of instrument involve seriously differentiating

between Western-trained and native scholars (Kirkpatrick, 2011), possible erosion of primitive cultures, and displacement and loss of mother tongue (The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, 2007). Social inequality is another aspect of concern with English as medium of instruction; for example; in India, English as medium of instruction is expected to be positive for students from wealthy families which have used English for a generation or more, but negative for other students who do not afford to approach to knowledge resources in English (Annamalai, 2004). In general, there are a lot of concern in using English as a medium of instruction. And in each nation, these varies on developing this trend depending on the educational system operation (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997). Baldauf and Kaplan (2005) claimed that it “largely depends on policy decisions related to the teachers, the courses of study, and the materials and resources to be made available” (p. 1014). In China, since 1998, the Ministry of Education of China has implemented the 985 project to build about 12 world-class universities. In Phase 2 (2004-2007) this project focuses on the creation of favorable conditions for the formation and consolidation of a world-class training. The training programs include courses according to the program's innovative curriculum by native and foreign professors; 2-first-year training program is educated in China, the rest is implemented in the United States; graduates can get both degrees. China recommends that this direction should be concentrated so that these fields can become an important base for reaching the pinnacle of science and technology in the world, solving the problems of theory and practice, having positive influence on the development of related training, thereby making higher education establishments play an important role for the national innovation and enhancing the competitiveness of the country.

Thailand is an other Asian country which implement this trend in education. Since the 1960s of the twentieth century, due to changes in the mechanisms, policies, many investors want to invest in Thailand, which led to a great demand for qualified human resources expertise

and language. Thailand has invited many foreign professors to Thailand to teach and attract foreign students to study in Thailand. Many universities of Thailand have trained with international standard to meet the needs of society; developed curriculum and taught in English, combining English, information and knowledge economy.

English as medium of instrument was also proposed in Malaysia in 2005. However, this language policy has been launched suddenly (Gill, 2006) and policy makers only “utilize the beliefs, values and interests of the individuals responsible for the policy,” (Zaaba, Ramadan, Anning, Gunggut, and Umemoto, 2011, p. 163). As the result, the success of the application of English as medium of instrument in Malaysia was doubted because of the lack of clarity in connection with its direction (Gill, 2006).

English as medium of instrument in Vietnam

On 30 September 2008, a national initiative on foreign language teaching and learning in the educational system from 2008 to 2020 was introduced by the Prime Ministerial Decision number 1400/QĐ-TTg and the government went to the conclusion to make an investment of VND 9,378 billion in a 12-year period to develop this policy which is known as the National Foreign Language Project. Accordingly, in the years leading up to 2015, the project proposes to begin English as medium of instrument for approximately 20% of national, provincial, and other university students in certain subjects and sectors. The proportion of students and the number of schools and provinces will increase every year. By 2020, all higher education institutes will have intensive language training programs. Therefore, although the idea of using English as medium of instrument is considered a timely decision by the Vietnamese government in response to globalization, its implementation will not happen quickly but on the minor scale in some large universities first.

This trend, in fact, is really new in Vietnam, which needs a lot of time to stand back and reflect, especially at Hanoi University of Commerce where using English as medium just started to apply in

two first departments in 2015. Therefore, few studies include experience of both lecturers and students who have actually switch from their mother tongue to a foreign language in an instructional setting. This means that it has inadequate knowledge effects that a change of instructional language may have on the quality of education. The present dissertation addresses the question whether and in what ways internationalization as the use of an international language- English affects the quality of university education. Since Vietnamese teaching staff and students are likely to have limited command of English, a switch from the mother tongue to English is expected to have a number of negative effects. But what kind of effects are expected? This study will be an attempt to find the answer basing on the reflect from lecturers and students who have directly taken part in recent implementation of English as a medium of instruments in Hanoi University of Commerce. The finding will contribute to the understanding of overall application state and accordingly, the extent to which a switch from Vietnamese to English affects lecturers and students can be reduced.

Research questions:

1. What challenges do lecturers face in teaching an English medium instrument course?
2. What problems do students experience in studying in an English medium instrument course?

Objectives

The study is an attempt to identify any difficulties due to a shift from Vietnamese to English as a foreign instructional language and to detect the difficulties might have on the quality of instruction. In addition, it aims to offer measures for Vietnam University of Commerce who wishes to implement, develop or conduct English-medium courses without any loss of learning outcomes.

Method

Data on student and teacher perceptions of English as a developmental tool is collected using a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The scope of this research is limited to the extent of business university education in which learning and teaching in business education is the focus of the attention.

In the case of lecturers, questionnaires including 2 parts is designed and there are 10 lecturers taking part in the survey. The first part deals with background information on the lecturers such as teaching experience, oral English proficiency, and opportunities to use and practice English. In all subsequent questions, respondents are asked to compare the performance of teaching duties in an English-medium and a Vietnamese-medium setting. Some questions go into preparing for English-medium preparation, then some focus on teaching skills in an English-medium setting.

In connection with students, the study places during the university year. The questionnaire is initially administered in mid-October and then during the year student motivation is monitored through results from assignments and performance in tests. The same questionnaire will be given again at the end of the school year to see if there had been any changes in students' benefit from English as a developmental tool. The mean was used to analyze the questionnaires and percentages used to assess the other aspects of student motivation.

The questions in the semi-structured interview were derived from the questionnaire findings, from which the authors identified two major themes: lecturer teaching (including teachers and their attitude towards English medium instruction), student learning (methodology and concepts of teaching and learning). The questions were also translated into Vietnamese to provide participants with a choice of language.

Student and Teacher Issues

The study affirmed that language is a serious issue for most students in Vietnam University of Commerce. In spite of the hype around new pedagogical approaches such as student-centered teaching and learning, the students in English medium classrooms whose mother tongue is not English remain passive, as their low English language competency does not make them free self-expression. The result from the entrance exam into university from Vietnam University of Commerce shows that 70% of the newly enrolled students have insufficient English proficiency to pursue studies in English. With such limited command of the language, students would face a lot of challenges to grasp lectures or materials in English. While vast resources are directed toward language teaching and bilingualism, most students face a lot of difficulties to obtain the language skills necessary in order to enter and succeed in school. Moreover, questionnaire data illustrated that there is a wide range of levels in students' English learning experiences. However, the written placement test used to classify the students on their English level cannot prevent them to be all enrolled with little differentiation into a one-year language preparation program, causing great difficulty for lecturers: "I had a huge handicap with students' diversity in language ability. I assume that is the greatest issue. When English skills of students are of different levels, it is a challenge for lecturers to select a threshold to teach. You know, for better level students, you just need to lecture briefly and they can understand easily. Nevertheless, for lower level ones, I have to spend much more time and sometimes they cannot get the point if they do not try their best at home to study more."

In consideration of lecturers, not many have the proficiency to verbally convey lessons in English. The professors who got their academic qualifications abroad seem to be better at English, although there are some concerns about their proficiency, their ability to lecture at a level suitable for their students, and their interactions with students. If these concerns are not addressed, it may be difficult

for students to learn from lecturers educated abroad. These concerns arise from the fact that non-native speaking instructors teach in English to non-native speaking students. As the result of the interview, 75% students revealed that they often asked lecturers to translate at least some parts in lessons into Vietnamese in English-medium classes so that they can get the point. This fact showed that a significant figure of students face trouble grasping courses instructed totally in foreign language. Some of the lecturers also acknowledged that they were driven to conduct less content in an English-medium course and that language use had a great deal of influence on student learning. In addition, academic approach influenced both competent and apprentice lecturers, whose English medium instruction experience ranked only from four months to three years. As the curriculum was brand-new, they were continually in pursuit for applicable teaching approaches, and code switching was one example. When lecturers perceived difficulties in instructional interaction they reverted to Vietnamese. “During the lecture, there was time to explain some new terms or answer students’ questions, things I feel I couldn’t explain thoroughly or express opinions easily, hence difficult for the students to understand. Then I think it was necessary to switch into Vietnamese.”

To deal with the issue of code switching from students, Vietnam University of Commerce has introduced language proficiency courses in the curriculum in an attempt to address the language problem. Previously, universities used to work on the assumption that anybody who enrolled at university would be able to communicate in English, given that English is the language of instruction at primary and secondary levels. However, with the advent of mass education, there is a growing concern that English Medium Instruction may actually hinder the students’ acquisition of the subject matter being taught, even though it can possibly contribute to improving the students’ command over the English language. Given the importance of language in knowledge

construction and acquisition, teaching and learning initiatives cannot be adequate without addressing the language question. How can students learn actively in a language they do not know? The basic problem for most learners is that they simply cannot understand what the teacher is saying. Initiatives towards active learning are therefore ineffective when both teachers and students do not fully understand the language of instruction.

Socioeconomic and Political Impacts

The introduction of English medium instruction course has raised the question about the potential loss of the culture and academic fear about diminished curriculum control. In the interview, the focus on concerns about English-language proficiency in higher education and how national language is affected by English-medium instruction. The growing application of English language teaching leads to the debates of whether it will inevitably cause the displacement and erosion of national language and cultural identities. Although English has considered as an global medium that helps the country better cooperate in the global higher education market, Vietnamese is arguably narrowed if fewer and fewer academic discourses are taking place within it. A comprehensive shift to English-medium lectures at the higher education level may deprive the country of ways to further develop national vocabularies and communication styles, and of terminologies that academics and scientists need in their careers to make science more accessible to the wider public. On the other hand, cultural change in the universities seems inevitable in those universities where the majority of teaching staff has earned their degree abroad, although at this stage it is unclear whether or to what extent the cultural identities will be displaced.

In addition, English-medium instruction in Vietnam are likely to lead to socioeconomic discrimination, since English-medium instruction benefits only the affordable minority of students who often live in big city and afford to access to English. Most students from rural areas are marginalized because of their lower level of proficiency in

English. The technological and professional knowledge taught in English will be inaccessible to these linguistically disadvantaged students, who will subsequently be unable to compete for jobs on an equal basis with students who are fluent in English. In addition, they may not have the same opportunities for professional development and career advancement. Socioeconomic inequality may promote socioeconomic and political instability.

Implications and conclusion

Based on the previously discussed challenges that the English medium instruction lecturers were facing (language proficiency, student diversity, pedagogy), a number of implications can be suggested to improve the introduction of English medium instruction.

First, prior to being assigned teaching duties, Vietnamese lecturers should be screened to determine whether their English speaking proficiency is adequate for teaching duties, more in particular their redundancy, clarity and accuracy of expression, explicit structuring of information, and their improvising skills. Redundancy refers to explaining the same information in different ways. This assumes an extensive vocabulary as well as the ability to paraphrase technical concepts in ordinary language, use synonyms, clarify by restating, clarify by giving examples, and summarize. Clarity and accuracy pertain to expressing discipline-specific information clearly and accurately. This requires an adequate knowledge of discipline-specific terminology. The most obvious screening instrument would be simulated or actual classroom situations where prospective English medium instruction lecturers are observed as they teach a lesson. Also, language support could be provided for those wishing to enhance their proficiency for an academic context. Such support could include taking English courses specifically oriented to academic teaching in a formal setting or engaging in more informal opportunities, such as study tours in English-speaking countries, scholar exchanges, and travel grants for international conferences

The second implication involves pedagogical support assisting lecturers with effective teaching techniques to encourage student participation and minimize teacher talk. More importantly, this initiative would provide opportunities for lecturers to share experiences of teaching and practices that work in their own contexts. A discussion forum could be set up or they could be supported to conduct collaborative action research to explore pressing teaching issues in the English medium instruction classroom. Moreover, it is necessary to have institutional investment in English materials and technology to ensure that adequate facilities are accessible. Such initiatives would reduce the workload for lecturers in searching for up-to-date English materials and enable students to access learning resources independently.

The final implication involves student-related measures. On the one hand, the findings of the study reveal that the students' learning from a lecture is affected negatively by a switch from Vietnamese to English. This, in turn may either reduce their academic performance or increase their workload. On the other hand the outcomes of research into the relationship between foreign language proficiency reduces the negative effects a change of instructional language may have on students' performance at English medium university. Based on the preceding findings I propose to review students' recruitment procedures. If Vietnamese institutions of higher education are going to include English-medium course in their curricula, they should screen their prospective students to determine whether their English proficiency is adequate for studying purposes or students can be required to obtain an international English certificate such as IELTS or TOEFL with a definite score.

Finally, if English continues to be the dominant language of teaching for the future, it is essential that studies of English medium instruction not only investigate macro issues of policy-making, but also generate evidence for good practice that can assist the development of effective English medium instruction programs.

Appendix 1: For lecturers

1. What faculty do you teach at (in Vietnamese)?

.....

2. For how many years have you been a university lecturer/
instructor?

1= less than 2 years

2= 2 to 5 years

3= more than 5 years

3. How often do you teach in an English-medium instructional
setting?

1=occasionally

2= 1 course a year

3= 2 or more courses a year.

4. Have you ever taken any additional English course(s) after
you finished secondary school?

1= no, I haven't

2= yes, I have

5. Have you ever stayed in an English-speaking country for 2
months or longer?

1= no, I haven't

2= yes, I have

6. How often do you speak English in the exercise of your
profession?

1=never

2= occasionally

3= regularly

7. Do you ever read a paper or give a lecture at English-medium conferences?

1= no, I don't

2= yes, once or twice a year

3= yes, three times or more a year

8. How would you characterize your pronunciation of English?

1= as "moderate"

4= as "native-like"

9. How would you characterize the grammatical correctness of your oral English performance?

1= as "moderate"

4= as "native-like"

10. How often do you try to find adequate words when speaking English, compared to speaking Vietnamese?

1=much more frequently

4= as frequently

11. How would you characterize your overall oral English proficiency?

1= as "moderate"

4= as "native-like"

12. How confident are you when speaking English, compared to speaking Vietnamese?

1= much less confident

4= as confident

13. Considering teaching in an English-medium instructional setting, would you like to improve your oral English

proficiency by taking an English language course?

1= No, I wouldn't

2= Yes, I would

14. When I prepare for English-medium instruction, I include:
(You can choose more than one)

- a) demarcating and going through relevant subject matter
- b) elaborating broad outlines and relevant issues in writing
- c) elaborating links or connections between various subject matter units in writing
- d) clarifying theories, formulas, operations and the like in writing
- e) thinking up or thinking about appropriate and or/clarifying examples
- f) elaborating potential difficulties about which students might ask questions
- g) working out problems or sums and writing down the appropriate ways of solving them
- h) preparing materials: overhead sheets, handouts, outlines for use of blackboard and the like
- i) writing down "opening sentences" for the various subject matter components
- j) rehearsing parts of the subject matter that I find difficult or tricky.

15. How often do you need to look up technical terminology when preparing English-medium instruction?

1= nearly always

4= never

16. How often do you need to look up terminology not related to subject matter content when preparing for English-medium instruction (e.g. words to paraphrase or explain the concepts)

1= nearly always

4= never

17. What is the ratio of preparation to teaching time (e.g. the ratio is 2 to 1 if it takes 2 hours to prepare for 1 hour of teaching) when you prepare for an English-medium course compared to in Vietnamese?

1= much higher

4= the same

18. Compared to a Vietnamese- medium instruction, in an English- medium instruction, I am able:

- a) To express myself clearly and accurately
- b) To explain something in different ways
- c) To differentiate and qualify statements
- d) To provide students with background information on theories or concepts that I discuss
- e) To discuss recent developments in my field of study
- f) To air views different from my own
- g) To present subject matter clearly and coherently
- h) To summarize subject matter which has been covered so far
- i) To encourage or get a discussion going
- j) To give appropriate and/ or clarifying examples unprepared

- k) To alternate or illustrate theory with personal experience
 - l) To give a clear and complete answer to student questions unprepared
 - m) To respond to current affairs (e.g. newspaper, television)
 - n) To make a humorous remark
 - o) To adjust my teaching strategy to the situation in a somewhat flexible way.
19. To what extent do you rely on your notes when teaching in English?
- 1= to a much greater extent
 - 4= to the same extent
20. How many overhead sheets do you use when teaching in English?
- 1= a much larger amount
 - 4= a similar amount
21. To what extent do you go into subject matter in depth when teaching in English?
- 1= to a much lesser degree
 - 4= to the same extent
22. How hard is it for you in English-medium instructional setting to find words that express your ideas adequately?
- 1= much harder
 - 4= not harder at all
23. What amount of subject matter do you cover when teaching in English?
- 1= a much smaller amount
 - 4= a similar amount

24. Of what importance are your teaching skills when teaching in English?

1= of much more importance

4= of similar importance

25. How hard is it for you to hold students' interest when teaching in English?

1= much harder

4= not harder at all

26. To what extent can you get your enthusiasm across when teaching in English?

1= to a much lesser degree

4= to the same extent

27. What do you think of the quality of your English-medium instruction?

1= it is much lower

4= it is as high

28. Compared to Vietnamese, writing lecture notes in English takes up

1= much more time

4= a similar amount of time

29. Compared to Vietnamese, my English lecture notes are of

1= much lower quality

4= the same quality

30. Compared to Vietnamese, constructing a written exam in English takes up

1= much more time

4= a similar amount of time

31. Compared to Vietnamese, I experience grading a written exam in English as being

1= much more complicated

4= complicated to the same extent

Appendix 2: For students

Please circle the correct alternative or write your answer in the space reserved for it.

1. Gender:

2. Date of birth:

3. Faculty:

Please circle the most appropriate alternative. One response per question.

4. I speak English

1) Daily

2) Weekly

3) Sometimes

4) Hardly ever

5. I acquired English

1) At school (general studies in native language)

2) In an English-speaking country

3) In a school where teaching was in English (with native language surroundings)

4) Elsewhere, specify.....

6. Do you have any international English certificate (IELTS/TOEFL/TOEIC)? If yes, what score do you achieve?

.....

.....

7. The level of my English skills in my opinion is

- 1) Excellent
- 2) Good
- 3) Fair
- 4) Poor

The following questions pertain to the lecture you just attended. Please circle the alternative corresponding to your opinion.

	Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree
7. I understood the contents of the lecture well.	1	2	3	4
8. I did not understand the main contents of the lecture.	1	2	3	4
9. Most of the lecture remained unclear to me.	1	2	3	4
10. The atmosphere during the lecture was relaxed.	1	2	3	4
11. The atmosphere during the lecture encouraged to question and to discuss the topic.	1	2	3	4
12. I would have understood the lecture better in my native language.	1	2	3	4
13. The topic of the lecture was so challenging that the language used would have not influenced my understanding of the lecture.	1	2	3	4
14. The contents of the lecture were presented logically.	1	2	3	4

	Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree
15. It was easy to follow the lecture.	1	2	3	4
16. The contents of the lecture remained secondary since I concentrated on the language so much.	1	2	3	4
17. It was difficult to follow the lecture, but it had little or nothing to do with the language used.	1	2	3	4
18. I felt uneasy for the lecturer while he/she lectured in English.	1	2	3	4
19. I would prefer a native-speaker of English as a lecturer.	1	2	3	4

The following questions pertain to the lecturer's English skills. Please circle the alternative(s) corresponding to your opinion.

20. The lecturer's language skills in my opinion are

- 1) Excellent
- 2) Good
- 3) Fair
- 4) Poor

21. The lecturer's language skills lack in

- 1) Vocabulary
- 2) Fluency
- 3) Intonation (=melody of speech)
- 4) Pronouncing single sounds
- 5) Other, specify

.....

22. Further comments:

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Thank you for your responses and for your help!

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THE IMPORTANCE OF HIGHER - ORDER THINKING WITH YOUNG LEARNERS

David Kaye

(McMilan)

Abstract

In most classes at Primary level, teachers focus on memorization of information such as vocabulary. However, research shows the power of moving towards higher-order thinking even with younger learners. But teachers often express misconceptions such as ‘higher-order thinking requires complex language’, or ‘children cannot perform higher-order cognitive tasks’. This workshop will show how teachers can move easily and effectively from memorization to higher-order thinking activities, while exploring the reasons why it is worthwhile using examples from Macmillan’s Primary course, Story Central.

NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED COLLABORATIVE LEARNING²

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Abstract

This research investigates how computer-mediated communication assists English foreign language students in learning collaboratively. The research emphasises the students' attitudes towards the application. It is conducted with English foreign language students from three faculties of a university in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; collaborative learning with computer-mediated communication is examined on these students within a semester. A post-course questionnaire and a group interview are designed to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Findings from the research have confirmed learners' positive attitudes towards this application, and their willingness to practise it more in their future classes. However, computer-mediated collaborative learning has been found to affect the learning of different students in different ways, as learners from the social sciences and humanities group and business-finance-economics group have more positive attitudes towards computer-mediated communication practices than those from the technological science group. Furthermore, it cannot accommodate all language skills and thus cannot fulfil all English foreign language learners' needs.

Keywords: *Collaborative learning, Computer-mediated communication, Computer-mediated collaborative learning, English foreign language (EFL)*

² This is a part of the author's thesis supervised by A.Prof. Shen Chen and Mr. Greg Preson of the University of Newcastle, Australia.

INTRODUCTION

The growth of English as an international language has been accompanied by an increased focus on English language teaching. Specifically in this technological age, when computers offer humans numerous opportunities for a more convenient life, their contribution to education in general, and language teaching in particular, is potentially profound. It is clear to see that successful communication in diverse cultural contexts, rather than a native-like pronunciation or prescribed grammar achievement, is necessary as English is spoken by mostly non-native speakers. As Savignon (2002) argued, diversity is recognised as part of language development in second/foreign language learning; therefore, no specific teaching practices are appropriate to all EFL learners. Under the concept of sociocultural perspective, language is no longer learnt individually, it is learnt contextually and collaboratively. Accordingly, collaborative learning (CL) has developed and increasingly attracted more interest from language teachers and educators, as it meets the demand for a comprehensive method for the current purpose of using English as an international language.

Along with the development of language teaching methods, ICT accompanied language teaching and learning as a supportive application from the early days of its emergence into humans' daily life. In many language teaching and learning practices in this age of technology, ICT becomes a necessary tool that helps support teaching and learning activities, and improves motivation and learning autonomy. Significantly, with its particular characteristics, ICT plays an important role in promoting learners' fluency and accuracy in the target language. The integration of ICT into language teaching has promoted language learning both inside and outside classrooms. As most EFL teachers are non-native speakers, the question of whether the advantages of ICT can better assist second/foreign language teaching and learning than the normal methods, is worth an answer.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Collaborative Learning

Based on the Sociocultural Theory (SCT) that learning is a socially collaborative process, CL in education has become an increasingly significant part of education worldwide (Bruffee, 1999). It has been recognised as “*the move away from traditional education*” (Brady, 2006, p.4) that equips learners with the necessary skills for a changing world (Adam & Hamm, 2013). To a layperson, CL is understood as the learning process where learners are working together on a task to learn and to solve problems. In the research literature, it has been analysed in more complexity with many different perspectives and at many different levels (Baker, Joiner & Traum, 1999; Littleton & Hakkinen, 1999). While traditional learning is seen as the transmission of information from teacher to learners and subsumed by the label of teacher-centred learning, CL is equated with learner-centred learning in which learners whose learning abilities, needs, and preferences for how they learn, are particularly different (Brady, 2006). As Nunan (1992) defines it, CL is a learning process in which learners learn collectively through structured activities, and the teacher participates in this process as a facilitator, not a knowledge transmitter. It is compatible with the notion of scaffolding in SCT about the teacher’s roles in facilitating learners’ learning. As learning is not a transmission of knowledge from teacher to learners, the teacher should not be a knowledge transmitter, and learners should not be the absorbers of knowledge directly from teachers. In contrast with competitive learning, where individuals compete with each other to achieve their conflicting goals, CL involves learners working together to accomplish common goals (Dillenbourg, 1999). Therefore, not only group responsibility but also individual accountability becomes the key factors of this method, as learners are aware of the fact that the team’s success or failure is theirs also.

Computer-Mediated communication

With the development of the widespread use of the high-speed Internet, CMC, a growing area of CALL, plays a significant role in many aspects of education (Beatty & Nunan, 2004). It offers learners opportunities for authentic input and access to interlocutors that do not often happen in the face-to-face classroom-based learning environment (Goertler, 2009). Language teachers can make their teaching more efficient, to motivate their learners by providing a learner-centered creative learning environment, and to help learners become computer literate. Significantly, with its unique characteristics, CMC offers numerous active ways for learning and teaching.

CMC was first defined by Hiltz and Turoff (1978) as a form of electronic written communication, and this *intensely social phenomenon*, that was designed to facilitate interaction, has contributed significantly to education as an efficient tool for instructional support (Barnes, 2003; Santoro, 1995). In the linguistic study of CMC, it is referred to as a written natural language message that is sent and/or received across a distance via a computer connection or through a mobile phone connection. Specifically, its impacts on people's habits of communication are noted as it helps people to communicate more than in the traditional FTF mode. Constantly, CMC has changed and developed more speedily than was anticipated in the literature (Greiffenstern, 2010). Therefore, it is hard to give a complete and detailed definition for CMC. Today CMC is used to refer to a wider range of technologies. From e-mail and web chat at its early stage of emergence, CMC currently includes synchronous tools (chat, instant messenger, Internet telephony and audio- or video conferencing) and asynchronous tools (e-mail, voice-mail, discussion boards, voice discussion boards, shared network group folders, annotatable webpages and databases). Depending on the different purposes of use, users may have different definitions in their own perspectives. Adopting from many, CMC, within the perspective of this research study, is defined as the process of

creating, exchanging, and perceiving information between individuals or groups via the instrumentality of computers (Herring, 2001; Luppicini, 2007; Murray, 2000; Warschauer, 1999).

Computer-Mediated Collaborative Learning

Writing on CMC, Collins and Berge (1995), and Fotos and Browne (2004) clarify it as a powerful tool facilitating collaborative learning. As first observed by Warschauer (1997, p.476), Computer-Mediated Collaborative Learning (CMCL), with its special features including text-based- and computer-mediated interaction, multi-party communication, time- and place independence, long- distance exchanges, and hypermedia links, was claimed to be making online learning “*a potential useful tool for collaborative language learning*”. Additionally, the contributing factors of CMC to CL such as equalising involvement of all participants, great opportunities for interaction, and synthesis of information were also generally examined in further studies (Bikowski & Kessler, 2002; Fitze, 2006; Miller, 2004; Smith, 2003; Warschauer, 1997). Warschauer (1997) noted that communicating through CMC would reduce non-verbal cues that might discourage shy learners in FTF interaction. However, Miller (2004) warned that CMC does not eliminate social inequality, so it does not guarantee equal participation. Students with different social, cultural and educational background may contribute differently to this collaborative practice. Therefore, learners’ perceptions should be taken into account when conducting this practice. Furthermore, as discussing the effectiveness of synchronous CMC in CL, Kitade (2000) claimed that some of its distinctive features such as no ‘turn-taking’ competition, text-based interaction, a lack of non-verbal cues enable participants to self-correct, and negotiate meaning. In another study about asynchronous CMC, Abrams (2005) found that peer review in collaborative learning through CMC enhanced learners’ critical thinking, which then advanced their language competence. Furthermore, peer review through CMC, documented in Lantolf and Thorne (2007), helps encourage collaborative learning in the view of idea synthesis among

group members.

To sum up, CL has been examined as a resource for language acquisition and academic achievement for language learners (Olsen & Kagan, 1992), and CMC, in both synchronous and asynchronous forms, basically embraces some distinctive features which facilitate CL by way of encouraging learners' participation, interaction, critical thinking, and idea sharing. Consequently, all these lead to language competence.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To learn whether students of different faculties have distinctive perceptions of the same application, CMCL was examined in three English classes of three particular professional divisions, including social sciences and humanities, business-finance-economics, and technological science. Following the curriculum of the university, the English course 'General English 1' was designed to be taught in 20 meetings of 10 weeks. Students had two hours per meeting to work face-to-face in class and were asked to do the online tasks at home after each meeting. Normally, students had to join in a group of three or four people to discuss a topic on E-learning, post their writing about the given topic and review their classmates' writings. After finishing the course, the application was evaluated based on students' thoughts and attitudes towards the efficiency of this application. Accordingly, a post-course questionnaire were delivered to all students of these three groups to learn their attitudes towards the teaching approaches applied in their classes. Then two volunteers from each class were invited to a focus-group interview after the course, for further discussion on their opinion about the strengths and shortcomings of the CMCL applications in their classes.

Participants

Participants in this study were 132 first-year non-English-major

students of three ‘general English’ classes, from different faculties of a university in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. They were classified into three different clusters: social sciences and humanities, business-economic-finance and technological science. Typically, full-time students of this university are mostly younger than 20 years of age and come from provincial schools where educational conditions are not as good as in cities. In particular, there are usually more female than male students who choose social sciences and humanities as their major, while fewer female students are interested in technological science. Therefore, the ratio of male/female in classes of different faculties is dramatically unequal. For example, in some classes of technological science there is not a single female, while the reverse is true in some social science classes.

Instrument

Questionnaire

A post-course questionnaire was designed and delivered immediately to all students after the course as an effective measure of their preferred applications (McMillan, 2012). This questionnaire was designed based on Likert 4-point scales (1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: agree, 4: strongly agree). The ‘neutral’ choice was not provided in this questionnaire to encourage the respondents to think and decide to choose one side of the scale or the other (McMillan, 2012). Depending on the question this research attempted to ask and the supported literature in the previous studies about the field, the questionnaire was designed with 27 items grouped in three sections. The first 13 items focused on the academic effects of the applications; the next 6 items (from 14 to 19) considered the social effects, and the last 8 items (from 20 to 27) asked students to evaluate the psychological effects of the applications on their learning outcomes. Additionally, 3 open questions (from 28 to 30), with given spaces for answers, were organised at the end of the questionnaire to encourage students to give more opinions on the applications.

Interview

As the post-course questionnaire collected data on students' evaluation of, and attitude towards CMCL applications, the semi-structured interview immediately after the course helped to find out more about students' reflections on, and perceptions of the application. Additionally, it was also employed to triangulate quantitative data collected from the post-course questionnaire and to learn more about the study's issues (Berg & Lune, 2011). The interview questions were designed to focus on these areas. However, to encourage interviewees to provide more opinion on the topic, some more situational questions were added during the interviews. Furthermore, to encourage students who might feel uncomfortable with the one-on-one conversation, especially with a teacher like the researcher, a focus-group interview was designed to help participants to talk freely about the topic (Berg & Lune, 2011). Due to the scope of the study and the researcher's ability to manage the interview, two volunteer students from each experimental class were invited to be interviewees at the last stage of the study. Referring to ethical issues, just two forms of data collection including audio recording and note taking were applied.

Data Analysis

Due to the various sources of quantitative data, two types of statistical analysis were included: descriptive statistics to describe the data and inferential statistics to test the hypothesis (Brace, Kemp & Snelgar, 2006). The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) IBM® SPSS ® Statistics, version 20.0, licensors 1989-2011, was utilised to support analysing all quantitative data collected from the post-course questionnaire. Different types of inferential statistical tests and analysis were applied depending on different analytical purposes.

To analyse qualitative data collected from the focus-group interview, the inductive analytical approach was applied with the hope that any new ideas or hypotheses would be discovered though this research's

intention is to investigate the transferability of an existing theory to a different context. Particularly, this research was conducted in a very different social, cultural, and educational context from the Western institutions where the relevant theory and hypothesis have been tested. Therefore, the choice of inductive data analysis, in which the data is gathered and synthesised to generate models or frameworks, enables the researcher to open new ways of understanding (McMillan, 2012). Accordingly, the process of inductive data analysis suggested by McMillan (2012) and Creswell (2014), was applied as the framework for qualitative analysis of this study. Particularly, for interviews were utilised to verify findings from the post-course questionnaire about students' reflections on the CMCL application, the data were coded based on the 'predetermined codes' using in quantitative data analysis from the questionnaire. Not only did it help verify findings from the questionnaire but also explain any specific issues that could not done with quantitative analysis.

FINDINGS

Findings from quantitative data

There were 110 out of 132 students from three experimental classes responded to the questionnaire. From the statistic, it can be seen clearly that a large number of respondents showed positive attitudes towards CMCL application. There is at least 66.13% response with 'agree' or 'strongly agree' for each item of the questionnaire. Among those 27 items asking learners about their perceptions of CMC application in their classes, the mean score of item 27 is reported the highest ($M=3.2$) in that 82.7% of learners 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that pair/group work with E-learning should be encouraged more in the future for a number of academic, social, and psychological factors.

Academic factors

Regarding the academic factors, most students 'agree' or 'strongly agree' respectively that working in groups with E-learning helps

improve their computer skills (90%) as well as their team work skills (80.9%). The course provides them more opportunities for exchanging knowledge/information/experience than in the traditional class (89.1%), helps them to get more involved in learning (88.2%), and to receive useful feedback from their fellow pair/group members (87.2%). They also find CMCL inspired their active learning (85.4%), and they learn more of what was taught (81.8%). Specifically, when working with E-learning, they have more time to edit their comments to make them better (88.2%), and all group members contribute equally to the collaborative task as well (81.8%). Although fewer students believe that their English skills have improved as a result of CMCL (74.5%) and they write more with E-learning than in a traditional class (70%), the number of ‘supposers’ are noteworthy (82 and 77 out of 110). Finally, the lowest percentage of students thinks CMCL stimulates their critical thinking (67.3%) and enhances their communicative skills (66.3%) (Appendix A).

From the correlation analysis, all factors are found correlated to the item “My English has improved as a result of CL with E-learning”. Significantly, the strongest correlation of this factor is with “CL with E-learning provided learners more opportunities for exchanging knowledge/information/experience than in a traditional class.” ($r=.536$, $p<.01$). Furthermore, as exchanging knowledge is important in learning, a number of other reasons attributed to learners’ positive attitudes towards English learning outcomes can also be counted from the analysis. For instance, CL with E-learning helps them learn more of what is taught ($r=.498$, $p<.01$), inspires their active learning ($r=.414$, $p<.01$), and helps them get more involved in learning ($r=.519$, $p<.01$). Specifically, when working with E-learning, all members contribute equally to the collaborative tasks ($r=.424$, $p<.01$), and learners have time to edit their comments to make them better ($r=.367$, $p<.01$), so they write more than in a traditional class ($r=.452$, $p<.01$). Similarly, for learners who believe their English skills improve as a result of CMCL, their communication skills ($r=.296$, $p<.01$) and teamwork skills ($r=.528$, $p<.01$) are also thought

to be enhanced (Appendix B).

Social factors

Along with the academic effects on learners' outcomes, CMCL is found to have contributed significantly to the improvement of the learners' social skills. A large number of learners (98 out of 110, 89.11%) believe that working in a group with E-learning entails more responsibilities, enables learners to help weaker group members (81.8%), as well as providing them more opportunities to express themselves (80.9%). Another 75.5% of learners find they could comprehend things more easily and the problem solving had become easier when working in a pair/group with E-learning than when working alone (79.1%). Therefore, 70% state that CMCL could help improve their social skills (Appendix A).

As interaction between individuals and among a group of individuals is the principal element in all learning activities of this practice, social effects are found to have contributed significantly to learning. Learners find it is easy to comprehend things when working together in pairs/groups with E-learning, so it makes problem solving easier ($r=.500$, $p<.01$). From a practical point of view, more interactions with pair/group peers in learning and solving problems help improve learners' social skills because they have more opportunities to express themselves ($r=.281$, $p<.01$), more responsibilities in learning ($r=.335$, $p<.01$) and in helping weaker members in the pair or group ($r=.409$, $p<.01$) (Appendix B).

Psychological factors

The psychological benefits of learning in a group with E-learning are also indicated in the analysis. Learners enjoy CL (86.4%), learning with a computer (84.5%), as well as learning English (77.3%), more after this course. They like learning with CMCL (75.5%); they feel more relaxed (69.1%), and more confident in sharing their opinions than in a traditional class (81.9%). For most learners, they meet no problem working with E-learning (84.5%) (Appendix A).

Among 27 items in the survey, the strongest correlation is between the 20th and 21st items. Accordingly, learners mostly like learning in pairs/groups with E-learning because they feel more relaxed ($r=.717$, $p<.01$). Additionally, they find E-learning is easy to use ($r=.226$, $p<.05$), and they feel more confident sharing their opinion with E-learning than in a traditional class ($r=.343$, $p<.01$). As a result, learners enjoy learning English ($r=.486$, $p<.01$), as well as learning with CL ($r=.443$, $p<.01$), and learning with the computer ($r=.508$, $p<.01$), more, after the course. Reasonably, they suggest encouraging more CMCL practice in the future ($r=.424$, $p<.01$) (Appendix B).

As academic, social, and psychological effects are reportedly attributed to the learners' perceptions of CMCL practices, their levels of influence on learners from different professional divisions are statistically different. Compared to the other two groups, learners of the business-finance-economics group have the most positive attitudes towards CMCL, with a very high average mean score for all items ($M=3.02$), while this score for the social sciences and humanities group is lower, at 2.84, and the technological science group is at 2.82 (Table 4.1). Within the professional groups, the effective factors have also been found to have different effects. For example, while academic factors had the highest effect on the business-finance-economics group learners' evaluation of the program ($M=3.06$), psychological factors had the most effect on both social sciences and humanities and technological science learners (Figure 4.1). However, the differences of the three factors on learners' perceptions within a group were not sufficient to be noticed.

Table 4.1 Average mean score of factors affecting learners' perception of CMCL

	Academic Effect	Social Effect	Psychological Effect	Average Mean Score
Social Sciences & Humanities	2.84	2.83	2.86	2.84
Business-Finance-Economics	3.06	3.01	2.99	3.02
Technological science	2.78	2.83	2.84	2.82

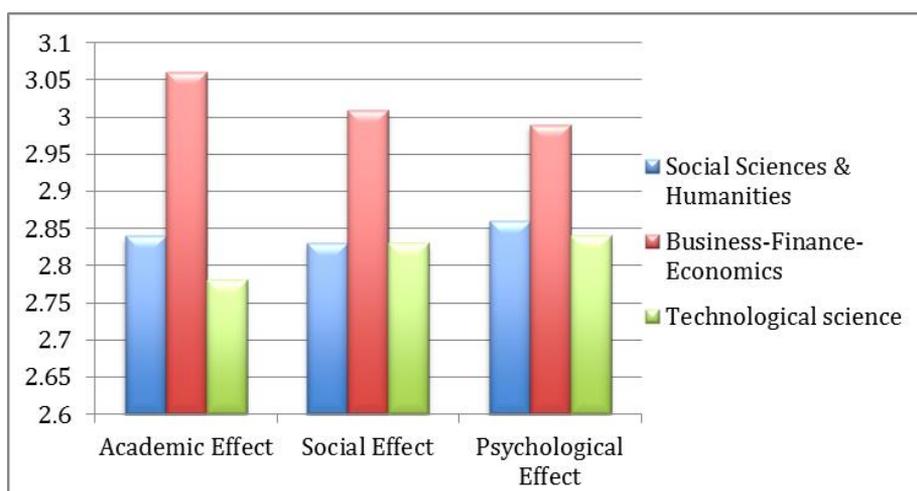


Figure 4.1. Effects on the perception of CMCL by learners in different groups

Findings from qualitative data

Benefits of the Applications

As with the quantitative findings, interviewees claimed that they learned a lot from group members and had opportunities to share their experiences, and to express their ideas or opinions. Therefore,

they believed the application was ‘very beneficial’ for their learning. They learnt more from their group members and shared more than in traditional classes. One explained that when he posted his writing on E-learning, he got many different useful comments from his classmates that helped him edit his writing to make it much better, and another believed that he had learnt much from ‘learning this way’. Comparing this experience to that in previous classes, students commented that there was an appreciable difference between these classes and teacher-centred practices in traditional classes, that brought about significant benefits for their learning. According to these students, with the typical practices in traditional classes, in which teachers did most of the speaking and students mostly listened and took notes, they did not have chances to express their ideas, to exchange knowledge and understandings with their classmates, and to help each other in learning. Therefore, they became very passive, and could not talk “bravely” in the open.

Obviously, students had more opportunities working together in the group, interacting and getting more involved in learning; they believed that their English skills improved. Moreover, they remarked, by working with different people they learnt how to solve problems together and know how to work efficiently in the team to complete their team commissions. The important benefits students got from these applications in their classes were that they enjoyed learning in these ways more than with the traditional practices, because they felt more relaxed, more confident working in groups and they were more responsible for their learning. In other words, not only their English skills but also their teamwork skills and social skills were enhanced.

Besides the common benefits, the different strengths the application brought to students, was evident. Students found their English skills had improved as a result of CL. Particularly, they believed that their writing skills, as well as grammar and vocabulary, had been enhanced much more than any other skills. The favourite thing was that they were given chances to edit and revise their writing after

getting feedback from their classmates on E-learning, to make their writing better before submitting it. They normally wrote at least twice for one writing task. As a result, they usually got a better mark for their writing than when they just wrote once and submitted the writing immediately to the teacher. Furthermore, interviewees also remarked on their opportunities for reading other classmates' writing and comments, as they all posted on E-learning. They claimed that this benefited them a lot in learning from others. Especially, working with computers, many students had the chance to learn more about using the computer, so their computer skills were also improved.

Regarding doing group tasks and discussion on E-learning, students felt more confident expressing their own opinions when working together, than on their own. All interviewees of the CMCL group agreed that it was easier for them to raise questions on E-learning, than in class. They sometimes got stuck on some tasks or confused about something but usually felt shy to ask their classmates or teacher in class. An interviewee stated "*I feel free to ask any questions on E-learning that I did not dare to ask (anyone) in class.*". Interviewees indicated that all group members contributed equally in all group tasks. They then explained the reasons for this advantage. In discussions on E-learning, they had time to make the best comments before 'sending' them online, so they felt more confident to 'talk' online than in class.

Challenges of Computer-Mediated Collaborative Learning Group

Students' obstacles were mostly technical problems. The first and greatest difficulty was that many students, mostly from rural places, did not own any computer at home so they had to use a shared computer in the library, with limited time, or rent a computer at the Internet shops that cost them a half of the price of their lunch, for an hour. Because the limited number of computers provided in the library did not meet all students' needs, the allocated time of computer use for each student was just one hour per day, and they had to line up for their turn.

In addition, students' lack of computer skills also contributed to this obstacle. Most interviewees reported that they were not familiar with an online discussion board like E-learning, and some had never even used a computer before. Therefore, many of them could not post their writing or join in online discussion in some of the early weeks. Interviewees suggested that they should be trained in using E-learning for some weeks before it was applied in their class. What guidance the teacher gave them in class, about E-learning usage, was not enough, so they could not deal with some unusual situations on E-learning and had to ask their classmates for help. The interviewees also complained that the interface of E-learning was neither as friendly nor as attractive as other social networks. There was a lack of many necessary functions that they believed helpful for learning, such as voice-discussion board, e-mail or text informing new notifications.

Another important reason that prevented students from joining smoothly in E-learning resulted from the technical issues and services. In fact, the E-learning site was not fully functioning all the time. Students sometimes had some problems accessing their account or posting their writings and comments. The worst thing was that it normally took at least one week for the technical service to fix the problem. As the teacher delivered a new task every week, the students missed the task when this problem happened to them. Those who used computers in the library complained a lot about the quality of those computers too. They said it took more time for them to post a file or a comment on E-learning, with these computers, than with those at the Internet shops or anywhere else. The system would also freeze on a page so that sometimes they could not do anything.

Students' Attitudes towards CMCL

Similar to the findings from the post-course questionnaire that a large percentage of students showed positive attitudes towards CMCL, most interviewees supported CMCL because they found it facilitated their learning and offered them a new way of learning; they could do

more things for learning than when they learnt with traditional methods. Specifically, students did not have the feeling of losing face or hurting when they were criticised on E-learning, the feeling that they usually met when working in face-to-face in the class.

Along with the mostly positive attitudes towards CMCL, students also showed some negative attitudes towards the application. Because of many obstacles resulting from poor technical services, quality of computers, lack of equipment, and limited skills as mentioned above, student interviewees argued that CMCL did not facilitate learning as they expected. As most of them were eager to learn with modern technology that would inspire their learning before they started the class, many of them felt disappointed with the program because of these technical issues. Furthermore, the form of learning also contributed to their reluctance to join in E-learning. Compared to face-to-face mode, where all group tasks were solved quickly in class and the questions were responded to immediately, on E-learning the tasks were solved much more slowly and the responses for any questions were received later than in face-to-face learning. Some tasks, which should have been better completed in a short time, were delayed for hours or days on E-learning. It affected, more or less, students' learning motivation as they argued that they were not always patient waiting for their classmates' responses. Remarkably, interviewees from the technical science group complained that they *"don't have feeling of learning English with E-learning"* because they *'don't talk to real people in person'*.

DISCUSSION

Students' Perceptions of the CMCL Application

With more than 92% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing to encourage CMCL in their future classes, it could be explained that they did get benefits from, and thus have positive attitudes towards, the application. This evidence can be found from quantitative data collected from the post-course questionnaires and verified by the

qualitative data from the focus-group interview at the end of the course. The results indicated that CMCL application has contributed significantly to the improvement of learners' academic, psychological, and social skills. Some of the main benefits learners believed CMCL brought to them were that it provided them opportunities to learn from their classmates, inspired their active learning and motivated them to get more involved in learning. Significantly, they enjoyed learning in a group because they felt more relaxed, could comprehend things easier, and problems were solved more easily in the group than by an individual. It reaffirmed Vygotsky's sociocultural theory that learners can learn better within their 'zone of proximal development' and learning was processed through social exchanges with peers (Vygotsky, 1978).

Regardless of students who found that CMCL helped improve their learning, there were 18% of CMCL students who disagreed to encourage these experimental applications in their future classes. From a practical point of view, various perceived barriers prevented these students from getting the best benefits from this application. While cultural hindrances, as found in a number of previous studies in Vietnam (Le, 2007; P.M. Nguyen, 2008, 2009; Pham, 2010, 2011) prevented students from taking the best advantage of CL practices in face-to-face mode in their classes, technological expertise, quality and services were reported as the main barriers for the success of the CMCL program. Therefore, the lack of modern facilities and inappropriate technological support added more difficulties for students getting involved in CMCL practices. It could be expected that learners' positive attitudes towards CMCL would improve if these problems were solved.

Further discussing the cultural hindrances in face-to-face CL practice, CMCL students stated that they felt more confident 'talking', asking questions, and discussing on E-learning, and found all members had the same opportunities to join in the discussion. Therefore, they believed all members had contributed equally to group tasks. These differences echoed some previous studies that

CMC could create fairer opportunities for all group members to contribute equally to the group performance as they collaborated when working online (Abrams, 2005; Bui, 2006; V.L Nguyen, 2010; Smith, Alvarez-Torres, & Zhao, Y. 2003). More importantly, this equal participation in interaction helps improve collaboration, thus enhance higher quality regulation of learners' cognition (Mei-jung, 2010; Volet & Mansfield, 2006).

One unanticipated finding was found in the research where students from different faculties presented their different perceptions of CMCL applications. Whereas social sciences and humanities students had the most positive attitudes towards the CMCL program, unfavourably, technological science students had the least positive attitudes towards this application. To illustrate this finding, as mentioned in the above section, 100% of technological science students refused to join in online discussion on E-learning and just more than a half of them participated in the peer review online. Unfortunately, evidence collected from this study was not sufficient to explain this phenomenon, except for one opinion expressed by a technological science student, that he had no feeling of learning English with a computer and therefore, he preferred the face-to-face CL practices to CMCL.

CONCLUSION

CMC is proved promising to apply and expand in EFL classrooms in Vietnam for a number of its potential benefits. This research has confirmed the positive impacts of CMC on CL processing that help students learn better. From the sociocultural perspectives, as learning is considered a social process and thus collaboration and communication are important for language development (Edelsky, 1989), CMC plays an important role in offering EFL learners more opportunities for communication among peers. Its advantages of access at any time and any place encourages learners to learn more, and become more independent in learning and more responsible for learning. More importantly, CMC offers learners opportunities to

learn outside the boundary of the classroom, to get into the authentic sources of knowledge and information on the Internet, which are not available in face-to-face modes. To sum up, CMC has inspired learning in ways not possible in traditional practices; therefore, avoiding CMC could be considered avoiding the opportunities to develop learning and teaching.

However, no matter what benefits CMC brings to EFL learners and teachers, it could not replace the traditional human face-to-face communication. This research has provided convincing evidence that CMC affects differently the learning of different students and cannot fulfil all learners' needs nor support all learning activities. Furthermore, to integrate CMC successfully into learning and teaching practices, to get the most of its advantages, requires not only learners' and teachers' but also institution's good preparation and satisfactory conditions. More importantly, computer literacy is necessary for any learner to ensure they acquire the knowledge and skills to integrate CMC and ICT broadly into learning or teaching practices, to help them access the unlimited authentic resources of knowledge online.

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Appendices

Appendix A: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FROM POST-COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE

(SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree)
N = 110

Items		SD		D		A		SA		Mean
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Part 1: Academic Effects	1	4	3.6	16	14	80	72.7	10	9.1	2.8727
	2	1	0	13	11	81	73.6	15	13.6	3
	3	4	3.6	8	7	79	71.8	19	17.3	3.0273
	4	1	0.9	15	13	70	63.3	24	21.8	3.0636
	5	1	0.9	12	10	90	81.8	7	6.4	2.9364
	6	3	2.7	33	30	63	57.3	11	10	2.7455
	7	4	3.6	17	15.5	66	60	23	20.9	2.9818
	8	5	4.5	32	29.1	60	54.4	13	11.8	2.7364
	9	4	3.6	24	21.8	77	70	5	4.5	2.7545
	10	4	3.6	16	14.5	73	66.4	17	15.5	2.9364
	11	2	1.8	11	10	78	70.9	19	17.3	3.0364
	12	5	2.5	28	25.5	63	57.3	14	12.7	2.7818
	13	2	1.8	9	8.2	70	63.3	29	26.4	3.1455
Part 2: Social Effects	14	4	3.6	19	17.3	74	67.3	13	11.8	2.8727
	15	2	1.8	19	17.3	71	64.5	18	16.4	2.9545
	16	4	3.6	23	20.9	75	68.2	8	7.3	2.7909
	17	2	1.8	18	16.4	67	60.9	23	20.9	3.0091
	18	1	0.9	11	10	74	67.3	24	21.8	3.1

Items	SD		D		A		SA		Mean	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
19	4	3.6	29	26.4	69	62.7	8	7.3	2.7364	
Part 3: Psychological Effects	20	5	4.5	22	20	74	67.3	9	8.2	2.7909
	21	5	4.5	29	26.4	66	60	10	9.1	2.7364
	22	3	2.7	17	15.5	73	66.4	17	15.5	2.9455
	23	3	2.7	14	12.7	80	72.7	13	11.8	2.9364
	24	2	1.8	23	20.9	75	68.2	10	9.1	2.8455
	25	4	3.6	11	10	85	77.3	10	9.1	2.9182
	26	3	2.7	14	12.7	79	71.8	14	12.7	2.9455
	27	2	1.8	6	5.5	70	63.6	32	21.9	3.2

Appendix B: CORRELATION OF LEARNERS' REFLECTIONS ON CMCL

Correlation of Social Effects

Items		14	15	16	17	18	19
14	Pearson Correlation	1	0.096	.500**	.255**	.440**	.291**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.319	0	0.007	0	0.002
15	Pearson Correlation		1	.229*	0.129	0.036	.281**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.016	0.179	0.706	0.003
16	Pearson Correlation			1	.379**	.283**	.341**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				0	0.003	0
17	Pearson Correlation				1	0.183	.409**

Items		14	15	16	17	18	19
	Sig. (2-tailed)					0.055	0
18	Pearson Correlation					1	.335**
	Sig. (2-tailed)						0
19	Pearson Correlation						1
	Sig. (2-tailed)						

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Correlation of Academic Effects

Items		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Pearson Correlation	1	.418**	.442**	.336**	.369**	0.123	.353**	.215*	.498**	.478**	.346**	.376**	.239*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0	0	0.202	0	0.024	0	0	0	0	0.012
2	Pearson Correlation		1	.324**	0.163	.298**	0.101	.378**	0.07	.457**	.507**	.345**	.375**	.481**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.001	0.09	0.002	0.293	0	0.467	0	0	0	0	0
3	Pearson Correlation			1	.464**	.328**	0.17	.532**	.217*	.536**	.267**	.320**	.317**	.359**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				0	0	0.077	0	0.022	0	0.005	0.001	0.001	0
4	Pearson Correlation				1	.240*	.258**	.412**	.402**	.414**	.230*	.193*	.235*	.348**
	Sig. (2-tailed)					0.011	0.006	0	0	0	0.016	0.043	0.014	0

5	Pearson Correlation					1	0.097	.306**	0.171	.519**	.289**	.248**	.293**	.255**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)						0.314	0.001	0.074	0	0.002	0.009	0.002	0.007	
6	Pearson Correlation						1	.239*	0.068	.188*	.333**	0.163	0.074	0.088	
	Sig. (2-tailed)							0.012	0.478	0.05	0	0.089	0.443	0.36	
7	Pearson Correlation								1	0.185	.529**	.496**	.349**	.383**	.390**
	Sig. (2-tailed)									0.053	0	0	0	0	0
8	Pearson Correlation									1	.296**	0.06	0.044	0.047	.244*
	Sig. (2-tailed)										0.002	0.535	0.647	0.627	0.01
9	Pearson Correlation										1	.424**	.367**	.452**	.462**
	Sig. (2-tailed)											0	0	0	0

10	Pearson Correlation											1	.426**	.352**	.283**
	Sig. (2-tailed)												0	0	0.003
11	Pearson Correlation												1	.558**	.379**
	Sig. (2-tailed)													0	0
12	Pearson Correlation													1	.391**
	Sig. (2-tailed)														0
13	Pearson Correlation														1
	Sig. (2-tailed)														

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Correlation of Psychological Effects

Items		20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
20	Pearson Correlation	1	.717**	.343**	.226*	.486**	.443**	.508**	.424**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0.018	0	0	0	0
21	Pearson Correlation		1	.360**	.296**	.395**	.316**	.430**	.428**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0	0.002	0	0.001	0	0
22	Pearson Correlation			1	.229*	.384**	.209*	.227*	.418**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				0.016	0	0.028	0.017	0
23	Pearson Correlation				1	.206*	0.092	0.144	.210*
	Sig. (2-tailed)					0.031	0.341	0.134	0.028
24	Pearson Correlation					1	.311**	.386**	.410**
	Sig. (2-tailed)						0.001	0	0
25	Pearson Correlation						1	.383**	.330**
	Sig. (2-tailed)							0	0
26	Pearson Correlation							1	.374**
	Sig. (2-tailed)								0
27	Pearson Correlation								1
	Sig. (2-tailed)								

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION AND WRITING PERFORMANCE WITH FREEWRITING TECHNIQUE IMPLEMENTATION

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Abstract

When freewriting has been applied somewhat commonly in foreign tertiary context, it is found to be a challenging technique for most Vietnamese high school teachers. Since freewriting has been claimed to bring to students numerous benefits regarding their writing performance and learning motivation, the issue is worth conducting in high school context. The current study was conducted with 62 tenth graders in a high school in Ca Mau to investigate the effects of freewriting on their writing performance and their perception toward using it in learning how to write. Data were collected from students' pre- and posttest of writing and a questionnaire. The study results reveal some useful implications for teaching writing to high school students in remote areas of Vietnam where students lack both learning conditions and English language exposure.

Keywords: *freewriting, writing performance, perception.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing plays an important role in most of fields and has been considered as a means for overcoming troubles, creating connections, and setting up relationships (Salas et al., 2016). Therefore, it is necessary for people to master writing so as to turn thoughts, ideas

into words on paper. In other words, the importance of writing is growing because the current trend for English language standardized tests such as TOEFL and IELTS comprises this skill as compulsory sections of tests (Yi, 2009). This requires both the teachers and learners to pay more attention to this skill in teaching and learning language.

In the current context where the study is conducted, teaching and learning writing English as a foreign language exist difficulties because of objective and subjective reasons. On the one hand, many researchers of English have stated, the writing skill acquisition seems to be more “laborious” and challenging than the other three skills acquisition (Zheng, 1999). In fact, “rhetorical conventions of English texts – the structure, style, and organization often differ from the conventions in other languages” (Saber, & Rahimi, 2013). On the other hand, the teachers center on grammatical aspects for the purpose of examinations rather than teaching language as a communicative tool. This makes students learn what help them achieve high scores in tests and examinations. In fact, both teachers and students are influenced by examination-oriented trend (Canh, 2011), which rejects students’ needs of using language in real life – particularly students’ learning outcomes such as writing. Therefore, finding a way to improve teaching and learning writing is essential in this case. In that context, freewriting has been used as a powerful tool to facilitate students understanding the nature and the process of academic writing in order to have more confidence in writing (Li, 2007) and helps students win mistake apprehension, convey their ideas freely, reduce the pressure and enhance writing skills (Tussupbekova et al., 2015). Few studies have been conducted in Vietnam to explore the benefits of freewriting in teaching and learning writing. The current study is such an attempt which focuses on learners’ perception toward freewriting and its impact on paragraph writing performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Types and Roles of Freewriting

Freewriting involves two main types, namely unguided (self-sponsored or self-expressive) freewriting and guided (teacher-sponsored or focused) freewriting (Elbow & Belanoff, 2000; Fontaine, 1991; Pennebaker, 1991). Unguided freewriting inspires deep personal insights as well as stimulates learners to state their views and relevant thoughts (Pennebaker, 1991). Moreover, Hilgers (1980) states that students are supposed to set up generalizability, particularly in the area of the experience of distance from prior knowledge to more general state by practicing unguided freewriting, which is essential for academic writing. Guided freewriting has limitation of freedom because of writing under a certain theme, but it is considered as a technique to increase critical thinking and skills of organization (Hammond, 1991; Haswell, 1991). In this study, freewriting is used as an activity in the writing process that the writer focuses on developing ideas about the topic as much as possible and using any structures without caring the order of ideas, grammar points in a certain period of time.

Using freewriting can vary depending on the users' purpose and context. For instance, it is used to assess graduate students' reading comprehension (Bintz, 2000); to explore non-English students' academic writing at the university (Li, 2007); to enhance EFL college-level students' writing fluency and confidence (Hwang, 2010); to enrich university students' writing style (Tussupbekova et al. 2015). In these studies, freewriting is used flexibly, which leads to different influential roles of freewriting on teaching and learning writing. The next part will investigate the effects of freewriting on EFL writing.

Contributions of Freewriting to Learners' Writing Performance

According to Hwang (2010), freewriting was one of the popular methods used during the late 1960s and early 1970s to improve

writing fluency. Studies were conducted in English as L1 (Adams, 1971; Davis, 1979; Ganong, 1975; Gauntlett, 1978; Walker 1974) and in ESL or EFL contexts (Brière, 1966; Cheshire, 1982; Potter 2008). Although there were the criticisms, the benefits of freewriting have been generated for decades. Various studies investigated the effectiveness of the use of freewriting in teaching writing (e.g. Harper, 2015; Hwang, 2010; Li, 2007; Tri, 2015) and reveal that it helped students find their writing tasks easier to complete (Li, 2007); increased students' writing fluency (Hwang, 2010); helped them get ideas and words flow more quickly (Harper, 2015) and improve their writing ability and generate ideas to make a recount text coherently (Tri, 2015).

In brief, the effects of freewriting on learners' writing performance were different in a variety of contexts. However, there is a consensus that freewriting brings learners positive effects in their learning process and outcome.

Students' Perception of Freewriting

Students participating in the research vary in terms of academic discipline, cultural and linguistic background; therefore, their perceptions of freewriting could be diverse. Lee (1999) reports that students like freewriting with limited time from fifteen to twenty minutes since this creates positive pressure for them to freewrite faster than the situation of no pressure. In another research, (Bean & Elbow, 2009), students feel more comfortably fluent and generative in writing because freewriting helps them resist the pressure in some ways such as opening up more thinking inside the individual, feeling much freer and safer to let words, developing a meta-awareness of the complex forces of authority and convention in classroom, bringing pleasure. In Hwang's study (2010), the results of a survey indicate that students like practicing guided freewriting and they think guided freewriting contributes to increase their confidence in English writing. Similarly, Harper (2015) states that freewriting has an increase of confidence in writing because they have a great

opportunity to express feelings and ideas freely. However, she also mentions a lack of grammar instruction as freewriting’s drawback. Additionally, Tussupbekova et al. (2015) report that most students enjoy freewriting tasks.

METHOD

Research Questions and Design

The study is an experimental design aiming to identify the effects of freewriting as the independent variable on high school students’ writing performance as the dependent variable. A combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches was used to collect and analyze data of the study as well as to answer the two research questions:

1. What are the effects of freewriting on high school students’ writing performance?
2. What are high school students’ perceptions towards freewriting in learning writing?

The study was conducted with two groups: experimental group (G1) and control group (G2) and adopted pretest - posttest randomized experimental design (Gay et al., 2011), as shown in Table1 below.

Table 1: Pretest - Posttest Randomized Experimental Design

Groups	Pretest	Intervention	Posttest
G1	X	X	X
G2	X	O	X

During the nine weeks of the study, students from the experimental and control groups were instructed with the same writing topics and product approach. However, students in experimental group had a chance to freewrite and self-edit under teacher’s helps before they were ready for writing texts. There was one writing task for students

each week and writing topics were picked out from English textbook grade 10. The progress of students' writing performance after intervention was examined by comparing the results of the pretest and posttest of writing; and the results of the posttests of the experimental and control group.

Participants

Sixty two students, including 30 females and 32 males from two Grade 10 classes at a high school in Ca Mau province were chosen to participate in the study. The result of the pretest of writing shows that their level of writing performance were not statistically different before the intervention ($p = .49$). All students have been learning English for 5 years but had low motivation in learning since they had few opportunities to access English outside the classroom. Their only place to be exposed to English is the classroom where they studied English as a subject in their school curriculum. It was supposed that students have the same culture, learning materials and instructional environment

Procedure

In the first week, the researcher built up the complete evaluation rubrics to assess students' writing productions. Then students were introduced the project. For the experimental group, the researcher describe to students how to implement freewriting in learning writing and then they were asked to freewrite as an example. Final activity they did was to take part in the pretest of writing.

From week 2 to week 7, the researcher applied freewriting to teach writing lessons for students of the experimental group. They have learned four writing lessons in textbook from unit 9 to unit 12 and three extra writing lessons based on the topics of the two themes.

In week 8, the students took part in the posttest of writing and one week later, they were going to answer questionnaire individually. Finally, the researcher collected the data for the research.

Instruments

Two writing tests and a questionnaire were used to collect the data for this study. Direct tests of writing were used to assess students' writing performance. The two tests share common task requirements and aim to measure students' ability of producing English paragraphs in 20 minutes. The two topics include (1) describing one's favorite animal and (2) describing one's favorite singer. The topics are familiar with learners and appear in their school talks.

The questionnaire was used for investigating students' perceptions towards the use of freewriting in learning writing. The participants made a decision to some extent they agreed with each item belonging to three main clusters of (1) roles of freewriting in learning writing, (2) effects of freewriting on students' writing performance, and (3) students' satisfaction with freewriting. They were additionally asked to give free-responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results gained from the two tests were subjected to SPSS 20 to investigate participants' writing performance. Descriptive Statistics Tests were conducted to observe minimum (Min), maximum (Max), mean scores (M), and standard deviations (SD) of the two tests. Additionally, Independent Samples t-Tests were performed to compare the mean scores obtained by participants from the two tests between the two groups. Finally, Paired Samples t-Tests were computed to compare the mean scores of the two tests as well as of the five deep features before and after the study within the experimental group.

Students' Writing Performance Between the Two Groups

The descriptive statistics of the results on participants' writing performance in the two tests is reported in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest of the

Writing test	Group	Min	Max	M	SD
Pretest	Control group (N=30)	1.5	8.5	2.90	1.86
	Experimental group (N = 32)	1.5	8.5	3.21	2.16
Posttest	Control group (N = 30)	1.5	8.5	3.39	1.76
	Experimental group (N = 32)	1.5	8.0	3.45	1.61

TWO GROUPS

An Independent Samples t-Test was run to compare the mean scores in the participants' writing performance between the two groups. The results indicate that the participants' writing performance of the two groups were not statistically different before the intervention program ($p = .49$). Similarly, the results from the posttest reveal that no difference between the participants' writing performance in experimental group and the participants' writing performance in control group was observed ($p = .90$). In other words, the participants' writing performance in the experimental group and the control group after intervention program was not statistically different from each other.

Students' Writing Performance Within the Experimental Group

The Paired Samples t-Test was run to compare the mean scores of the participants' writing performance before and after the study within the experimental group. The results indicate that the mean scores of the participants' writing performance before and after the

study was not significantly different ($p = .11$). It does not matter by which technique the participants were taught, the participants' ability in writing was not statistically different at the end of study.

The Participants' Writing Performance on the Specific Features Within the Experimental Group

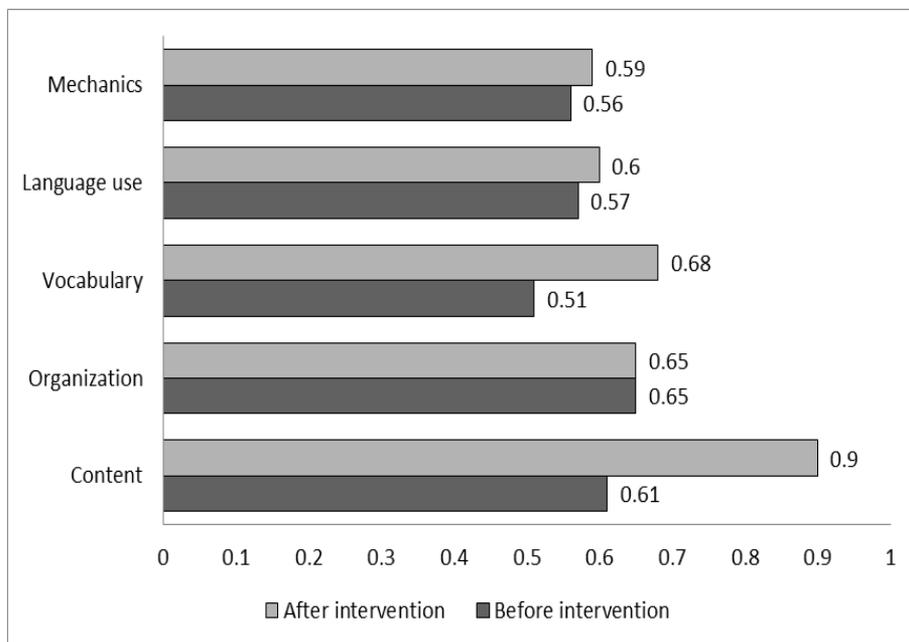


Figure 1: Mean Scores on Specific Features of the Pretest and Posttest of Experimental Group

The Paired Samples t-Test was run to compare the mean scores of the five specific features within the experimental group before and after the study. After the intervention program, writing ability of the experimental group in terms of content and vocabulary was better than that before the research ($p = .00$, $p = .001$ respectively) and writing ability in terms of organization, language use, and mechanics remained statistically unchanged ($p = .897$, $p = .679$, and $p = .766$ respectively). The mean scores of the five specific features of the pretest and posttest of the experimental group are illustrated in Figure 1. The results indicate that the participants improved their

ability of content and vocabulary in writing throughout freewriting if they were brought opportunities to learn how to do it. It was also seen that the difference of the participants' writing performance in terms of organization, language use, and mechanics before and after the research was not statistically significant.

Students' Perceptions Towards the Use of Freewriting in Learning Writing

The questionnaire aimed to finding out the participants' perceptions towards the use of freewriting in learning writing. The participants' responses focused on three main clusters of: roles of freewriting, effects of freewriting on writing performance, and students' satisfaction with freewriting. The percentage of agree refers to those by participants giving their responses of *agree* and *strongly agree*. Similarly, the participants choosing *disagree* and *strongly disagree* are grouped as disagree.

Table 3. Participants' Perceptions towards the Roles of Freewriting

Cluster 1: Roles of freewriting (N = 32)	Agree (%)	Neutr al (%)	Disagr ee (%)
It is necessary to freewrite in learning writing.	84	16	0
Freewriting plays a significant role in increasing critical thinking.	74	26	0
It is a necessary activity to facilitate a complete text.	74	23	3
Freewriting can be useful exercise for self-study at home.	71	26	3
I increase confidence when freewriting.	65	29	6
When I freewrite about a topic, there is not limitation in generating ideas.	58	26	16
I do freewriting as a meaningful activity in class.	19	42	39

Table 3 reports the results of participants' perceptions towards the roles of freewriting. The results indicated that the majority of the participants agreed that freewriting was not only necessary to learning writing and facilitating a complete text but was also considered as a factor to increase critical thinking and as useful exercise for self-study. More than 50% participants agreed that they felt confident and had no limitation in generating ideas when freewriting. However, about 39% participants supposed that freewriting was not a meaningful activity.

Table 4. Participants' Perceptions towards Effects of Freewriting on Writing Performance

Cluster 2: Effects of freewriting on students' writing performance (N = 32)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
Using freewriting can be a way to improve my vocabulary.	90	6	4
Freewriting helps me enrich the content of texts.	81	16	3
My freewriting positively influences my language use.	71	26	3
Mistakes related to mechanics can decrease thanks to practicing freewriting.	61	26	13
I can organize better my writings through freewriting.	48	26	26

Table 4 reports the participants' perceptions towards the effects of freewriting on their writing performance. The results reveal that more than 80% participants agreed that their vocabulary and the content of their written texts were improved thanks to freewriting. Additionally, the participants agreed that freewriting positively affects participants' writing performance in terms of language use and mechanics, namely 71% and 61% respectively. About the text organization, 26%

participants disagreed roles of freewriting and 26% other participants had neutral perception about this feature.

Table 5. Participants’ Perceptions towards Students’ Satisfaction with Freewriting

Cluster 3: Students’ satisfaction with freewriting	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
Freewriting is helpful in learning English.	71	19	10
Using freewriting is easy.	68	16	16
Freewriting makes me comfortable.	65	13	23
I like doing freewriting.	55	26	19
I feel confident when freewriting.	42	35	23
I do not have difficulty in freewriting.	23	32	45

Table 5 shows the results of the participants’ perception towards their satisfaction with freewriting. As a results, around 70% participants felt satisfied with the ease and helpfulness of using freewriting. Moreover, the participants agreed that freewriting brought them the comfort and interest with 65% and 55% of agreement respectively. Less than 50% participants felt confident when freewriting. Although the participants supposed using freewriting was easy, there were still some difficulties in freewriting. This was confirmed by 45 % participants.

Discussion

The results from the study indicated that freewriting did not help participants enhance their writing performance in general but contributed to improving the content and vocabulary use of students’ writing. These results were consistent with studies by Harper (2015), Tri (2015), and Tussupbekova et al. (2015) which found that learners could improve their writing ability and generate ideas to make a recount text coherently; students found freewriting helpful for

developing vocabulary. In this study, although the participants' writing performance did not differ statistically, their specific features of content and vocabulary were improved due to their practice of freewriting as a process to discover the content and vocabulary around a topic. The results from the posttest revealed the participants' awareness about incorporating the discovery process into their writing. The reason why they were aware of the discovery process was that freewriting allowed them to overcome the fear and worry when beginning writing. This is in line with Tussupbekova et al.'s study (2015) that freewriting helps learners get over mistake apprehension, convey their ideas freely, reduce the pressure when writing.

The results from questionnaire indicated the participants' positive perceptions towards the implementation of freewriting in learning writing. Their positive perception could be explained by the progress they gained in their writing performance in terms of content and vocabulary. Additionally, they expressed their satisfaction with freewriting throughout the way they took part in freewriting. This result is well supported by Bean & Elbow (2009), Harper (2015), Hwang (2010). The studies had indicated that freewriting contribute to set up the confidence, open up thinking and feel much freer in writing.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study point out that the participants' writing performance in terms of organization, language use and mechanics did not differ statistically while the content and vocabulary made much progress in their writing. The results of the present study confirmed the participants' positive perceptions of the use of freewriting in learning writing.

However, the current study has some limitations of small sample size. In addition, students were passive when being asked to discuss with their friends to find out the ideas and present the ideas orally in front

of class before freewriting.

From the limitations of study, some suggestions are proposed to teachers and learners. The teachers could create more opportunities for learners to express their ideas and exchange these ideas to each other more frequently before writing. The learners could practice freewriting by themselves in order to enrich the ideas and vocabulary as well as avoid grammatical mistakes more efficiently.

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APPLYING WEB-BASED TOOLS IN TEACHING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION AT A UNIVERSITY IN VIETNAM

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Abstract

Although the Internet is widely used in second language learning all over the world; the application of web-based technology in English classrooms in Vietnam remains modest. With 49,063,762 Internet users – 52% of the overall population (Internet live stats), the penetration of the Internet is not the reason but the comparative unawareness of the availability of accessible and cost-effective web-based tools for language educational purposes. The utilization of the Internet is especially limited in pronunciation – an aspect of EFL long ignored in Vietnam. This study responds to a call for more practice-oriented research on how such web-based tools can be taken advantage of to improve students' English intelligibility at tertiary level.

Pre- & post-test and survey results from 18 first-year English majored students along with interview data of five students were triangulated in order to explore if and how web-based tools facilitate phonological learning. A dependent t-test of pre- to post-test revealed that the participants experienced statistically significant improvement in the pronunciation of English sounds and word stress. The reasons were reported to be students' increasing exposure to authentic materials, improving learning motivation through online interactive group work, and acute awareness of the gap between their own pronunciation versions and the target language.

Keywords: *Pronunciation teaching, web-based technology, tertiary level*

INTRODUCTION

Along with the fast-paced development of technology, Technology-Mediated Language Teaching (TMLT) has experienced a phenomenal increase in many parts of the world (Lamy & Hampel, 2007; Leahy, 2008 as cited in Nguyen, 2010). The fundamental question for language teachers is still about which relevant technologies are chosen for each language area or skill (Levy, 2009). In that long quest for suitable technology for language learning, pronunciation has been neglected the most. It is regarded as ‘the Cinderella of language instruction’ (Ekso & Yesilcinar, 2016, p. 205), the skill that ‘long on the periphery of applied linguistics research and pedagogy’ (Levis, 2007, p.184) or ‘has for many years been relegated to a secondary role’ (Olson, 2014, p.53). Nevertheless, the importance of pronunciation grows unprecedentedly because of the need to communicate intelligibly in this globalized world. Leading researchers in the field concur that there is a critical lack of what technological tools can be incorporated to teach pronunciation and of practical methods for implementing them. (Levis, 2007; Levy, 2009; Olson, 2014).

In an effort to respond to the above call, this article proposes a new web-based mediated pronunciation teaching model applied in a first-year English majored class at a university in Hanoi, Vietnam. In this model, the teacher utilized different cost-free web-based tools at every stage of the pronunciation lesson as follows:

1. Basically, under the teacher’s instruction, the participants of this project actively studied phonetics and pronunciation rules by watching online pronunciation teaching videos, for example those from BBC Learning English website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/pronunciation>). The 18 participants worked in four different mixed-leveled groups; each group focused on one or two features of pronunciation at a time. They were assigned into new groups to exchange their understanding. After every lesson, they got to know four to twelve new sounds or pronunciation rules;

2. At home, each group of participants chose one short video on English Central to watch, did the integrated exercises, scrutinized the aspects or phenomenon of pronunciation in the videos (<https://vi.englishcentral.com/videos>) (for example weak-form, “tapping-t” in American accents);
3. Next, each student used Screencast-O-matic (<https://screencast-o-matic.com/>) to record the video he/she had studied. This software allows both screen and web-cam recording so that viewers could easily access the subtitle as well as watch how words and sounds were articulated. The group leaders had responsibility to revise their group members’ videos in advance;
4. When satisfied with their pronunciation performance in the videos, participants uploaded their videos onto an Edmodo closed-group (<https://www.edmodo.com/home>) where the teacher had already created for them to share their works. Each video was reviewed again by the teacher and other groups’ members. Compliments and comments about each students’ mistakes and how to overcome them were posted underneath each video to serve as feedback.

Through this process, students underwent two out of three stages in acquiring pronunciation: the cognitive stage - becoming aware of a feature, the associative stage - training themselves to be able to deal with the feature and hopefully set ground for the final stage - the autonomous stage - becoming able to do it automatically and fluently (Walker, 2010).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Changing Patterns of Pronunciation Teaching

Albeit being the neglected skill, researchers and academics still have to acknowledge that pronunciation is one of the most important aspects of a language (Çakır & Baytar, 2014) and “true measure of language learning success is the ability to be understood – and to

understand – when speaking a language” (“To Be Understood”, 2017). *Criticizing the ignorance of pronunciation in language teaching*, Morley (1991) emphasized that “ignoring students’ pronunciation needs is an abrogation of professional responsibility” and described the need for students to be intelligible, communicative and confident English users is “critical important” and “a growing premium” (p.489). The author suggested some emerging principles in teaching pronunciation including the focus on “meaningful practice and especially speech-activity experiences suited to the communication styles and needs of the learners’ real-life situation” (p.494). Thanks to the advances of technology and the Internet, nowadays, students can easily access authentic materials that facilitate them to study the language in a meaningful and practical manner. It is undeniable that technology can offer them more valuable communicative interaction in English than any traditional EFL lessons.

The Integration of Technology in Teaching Pronunciation

The irony is that even teachers and researchers place high hopes for the assistance of technology in teaching pronunciation “yet it remains in its infancy in many ways” (Levis, 2008, p.184). Apart from the fact that TMLT attach more to “other topics such as speaking, listening or computer-mediated communication” (p. 184) rather than pronunciation, other reasons include the less innovative and ineffective usages of technology and pedagogy (Levis, 2008). Reflecting on pedagogy, Walker (2010) asserted that technology provide very few of (1) meaningful feedback and progress checking, (2) explanation of students pronunciation errors or mistakes, (3) justification of the need for a particular focus, or (4) intensive practice. The above criteria are undoubtedly more associated with the responsibility of human-being teachers and instructors than artificial intelligence. Finally, because of a lack of training in both pronunciation and the use of technology, the number of teachers who can make effective use of applications remains modest (Levis, 2008) while many applications can be very complicated. It is rationale now

to deduce that there is a critical need for such user-friendly technology to be not only approachable but also widely-known among teacher community.

Examples of Technology-Mediated and Web-based Meditated Pronunciation Teaching (TMPT and WBMPT) in and out of Vietnam

Recently, literature has witnessed the growing number of studies about how pronunciation learning can be supported by technology. Some of the examples are using software to measure and assess speech rate, fluency and liveliness (Hincks, 2005), using mobile phone to improve students' pronunciation (Saran & Cagiltay, 2009), using online text-to-speech tools to improve teacher trainees' pronunciation, especially native-like accents (Eksi & Yesilcinar, 2016). The results of the above studies have proven the real benefits and the important roles of gadgets, applications, software on pronunciation training.

As a voice from Vietnam, Dang (2011) introduced several Web-based CALL tools that potentially solve Vietnamese's pronunciation problems. The common features in most of the tools she suggested were that they offered multimedia models with audio, video, technical descriptions and/or graphic visualization of sounds, facilitating students to listen, repeat then record and compare their pronunciation versions with the native standard. Van Nguyen (2011) believed that Web-based CALL tools can help surmount some of the common obstacles existing in the Vietnamese language learning context. The main aches, according to Van Nguyen, are the cultural influence of Confucianism, teacher-centered teaching method, examination-oriented education system, and difficult classroom management. Technological tools can serve as a solution in the Vietnamese context because they foster "greater amounts of participants, equalizing contribution, augmenting autonomous learning, enhancing class control via electronic management systems" (Kern, 1995; Lee, 2004; Smith, 2005; Warchauer, Knoble, & Stone, 2004 as cited in Van Nguyen, 2011, p. 222). Nonetheless, these studies just stopped at

introducing technological tools that can be applied and analyzed why they are potential in the Vietnamese context.

In reality, there has been very few action-oriented studies conducted in the Vietnamese context about the positive influence of technological tools on students' pronunciation. It is even impossible for the writers to find any research about the impacts of Web-based tools on Vietnamese students' pronunciation. As a result, this present research is trying to contribute a practical evaluation of some web-based tools on Vietnamese students' pronunciation learning. Again, within the limited scope of this study, I present the following research questions as spurs to my enquiry:

- 1. How do cost-free web-based tools integrated pronunciation lessons impact on first-year students' knowledge of pronunciation, especially sounds and word stress?*
- 2. What are students' attitudes towards utilizing cost-free web-based tools to improve their pronunciation of sounds and word stress?*

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Methodology and Data Collection Methods

The study incorporates mixed research methods in order to find answers to the above research questions. The students took a pronunciation pre-test on recognizing vowel and consonant sounds as well as word stress before the project started, then a post-test at the end of the project. A dependent t-test analyzes these results quantitatively to judge if the participants have significantly made progress in recognizing accurate English sounds and word stress. The students' insights about the project and their pronunciation cognition are explored through surveys and random interviews.

Participants and Procedure

The participants of the study were 18 first-year English majored students including 16 male and two female. Their English level ranged from elementary to intermediate. They were divided into four

groups. The criteria of division was that each group was composed of students of mixed proficiency and led by a strongest member.

The project was carried out over the course of a 16-week semester. Four weeks were designated for the participants to taking tests (midterm and end-of-term exams as well as pre-test and post-test sessions), that left 12 weeks of direct pronunciation training with the web-based tools. The web-based tools, again, are: online pronunciation instructional videos such as <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/pronunciation>, English Central website <https://vi.englishcentral.com/videos>, Screencast-O-matic application (<https://screencast-o-matic.com/>), and Edmodo forum (<https://www.edmodo.com/home>).

Pre- and Post-test Format

As aforementioned, the students in this project had to take pre- and post-tests before and after the project to evaluate the possible improvement in pronunciation recognition. The tests were adopted from the pronunciation test on www.posetest.com. They were designed to evaluate the ability to recognize different similar vowel and consonant sounds and the syllable or word received stress.

The following is some examples of the test format:

Illustration 1. Vowels Test

Vowels: Example

Directions: The sentences below are exactly the same EXCEPT for one word. Click  and listen to the recording. You will hear **EITHER** Sentence A **OR** Sentence B. Then click on the picture or sentence that you heard. If you cannot tell the difference between Sentence A and Sentence B, then click on "I don't know."

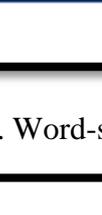
<p>Sentence A</p>  <p>What a feast!</p>	<p>Sentence B</p>  <p>What a fist!</p>	 <p>I don't know.</p>
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[BACK TO INSTRUCTIONS](#)  

Illustration 2. Consonants Test

Consonants: Example

Directions: The sentences below are exactly the same EXCEPT for one word. Click  and listen to the recording. You will hear **EITHER** Sentence A **OR** Sentence B. Then click on the picture or sentence that you heard. If you cannot tell the difference between Sentence A and Sentence B, then click on "I don't know."

<p>Sentence A</p>  <p>These peas all look alike.</p>	<p>Sentence B</p>  <p>These bees all look alike.</p>	 <p>I don't know.</p>
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[BACK TO INSTRUCTIONS](#)  

Illustration 3. Word-stress Test

Word Stress: Example

Directions: Click  and listen to the recording. You will hear a word with two (2), three (3), four (4), or five (5) syllables. Click on the choice that shows the syllable receiving the **main stress** in CAPITAL letters. If you cannot tell which syllable was stressed, then click on "I don't know."

Word: ordinary

OR-di-nar-y
or-DI-nar-y
or-di-NAR-y
or-di-nar-Y

I don't know.

[BACK TO INSTRUCTIONS](#)  

The participants did this kind of test only at the beginning and at the end of the course to diagnose and evaluate their ability to recognize different English sounds and word stress. They did not take any similar tests during the project so it is unlikely that their improvement, if any, accomplished because of rote learning or repeated testing.

Findings

In the following paragraphs, we will unpack the research findings following the order of pronunciation acquisition stages by Walker (2010): *cognitive*, *associative* and *autonomous* stage. Results from pre- and post- test were analyzed to investigate the impacts of WBMPT on the participants’ pronunciation *cognitive* ability. Then, their attitude towards this innovation and how they gradually train themselves to deal with English pronunciation features were revealed through the data collected from feedback survey and interview.

The Participant Improvement in Sounds Recognition

Data collected from the first research question which was “How do cost-free web-based tools integrated pronunciation lessons impact on first-year students’ knowledge of pronunciation, especially sounds and word stress?”

Three *t*-tests had been calculated in order to compare the students’ performances between the pre- and post-tests, from then evaluate the impacts of WBMPT on their ability to recognize English sounds and word stress. The results that derive from descriptive statistics are summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Summary of three t-test results

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T value</i>	<i>Sig.</i> <i>(2-tailed)</i>
Vowel Pre-test	70.6667	6.20247	3.044	.007
Vowel Post-test	76.7222	8.94299		

Consonant Pre-test	82.1667	6.37320	2.253	.038
Consonant Post-test	86.4444	6.81885		
Word stress Pre-test	85.5000	13.97582	3.621	.002
Word stress Post-test	92.7778	8.22876		

As for *t*-test on vowel sounds, there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test (M=70.6667, SD=6.20247) to (M=76.7222, SD=8.94299), $t(17) = 3.044$, $p < 0.005$ (two-tailed). Similarly, there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test on consonant sounds, (M=82.1667, SD=6.37320) and (M=86.4444, SD=6.81885) respectively, with $t(17) = 2.253$, $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed). The last *t*-test was carried out to assess the possible benefits of WBMPT on their ability to identify English word stress. There was also a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test (M=85.5000, SD=13.97582) to (M=92.7778, SD=8.22876), $t(17) = 3.621$, $p < 0.005$ (two-tailed). The findings revealed that significant difference existed between students' cognitive performance before and after the project. The participants after the project were more capable of identifying and distinguishing different English sounds and word stress patterns than they used to be. This is the fundamental factor since students can enhance their English pronunciation only when they are aware of the new language's pronunciation features and how they are different with the language of their own.

Students Attitude towards Web-based Pronunciation Learning

The following data relate to the questionnaire survey that was completed by the 18 participants of this project. It was designed to shed light on the second research question of the participants' attitude towards the employed method and to provide the researchers insights into how students became more intelligible thanks to it. There are four multiple choice questions in the survey:

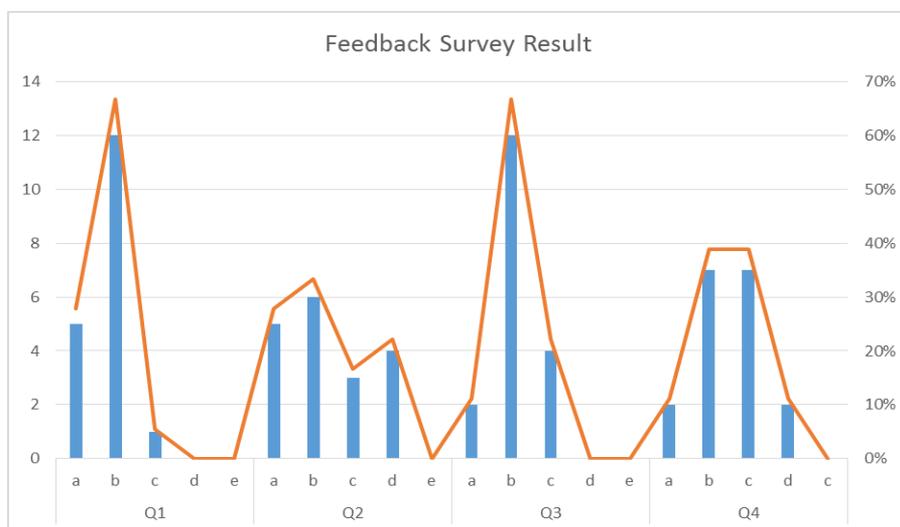
Q1. Is this web-based pronunciation practice project useful for you?

Q2. Is web-based pronunciation instruction more effective than lecture-only pronunciation instruction?

Q3. Does web-based pronunciation practice help you speak with clearer English vowel and consonant sounds?

Q4. Does web-based pronunciation practice help you speak with clearer English word stress?

Each students had to choose among five options “strongly agree”, “agree”, “undecided”, “disagree” and “strongly disagree” and give explanation or examples for their answer.



The great majority, 94 percent, of the students confirmed that the Web-based pronunciation training project was helpful for them. Only one out of 18 students stay “undecided”. More than 60 percent of the participants believed that web-based pronunciation instruction was more effective than lecture-only class. It is noticeable that 14 out of 18 students concurred that their pronunciation of vowels and consonants sounds improved thanks to this web-based project. Albeit their perspective on the efficacy of the project in word stress articulation was not as positive as in sounds (50 percent claimed that

they can speak with clear word stress and 39 percent stayed “undecided”), their statistical improvement in word stress was the most phenomenal with the greatest change in *M*, from 85.5000 (pre-test) to 92.7778 (post-test).

Students’ Explanation for Their Improvement in Pronunciation

The participants’ interview responses explain why 17 out of 18 students thought WBMPT was very useful for them. They acknowledged the advantages of web-based tools and claimed that this kind of study suited their own learning style:

“All of the web-based tools are user-friendly, visualized and continuously updated. Studying via web-based tools, I can easily track down my process, figure out my pronunciation mistakes and try to overcome them. I believe learning English is the long process and these web-based applicants are my self-studying tools.” (Student 18, Interview)

“The applied web-based tools provide efficient support for my pronunciation learning. As limited time frame of class setting is not enough for teachers to introduce all English pronunciation features to students or for students to absorb and practice them, these tools allow students to study at the comfort of their home and teachers can manage their work from a distance.” (Student 3, Interview)

The interviewed students all agreed that they had experienced great improvement in pronunciation and the reasons were increasing exposure to authentic materials, better learning motivation through online interactive group work, and acute awareness of the gap between their own pronunciation versions and native-like ones. Firstly, students got excited because they had more of flexible authentic learning environment and sincere constructive feedback from teachers and peers. The following are some of their sharings:

“During this project, students had the opportunity to study pronunciation with native speakers via authentic videos. I found it quite easy to imitate their speaking. Also, recording video clips with

peers' and teacher's assessment helped polish our pronunciation ability." (Student 6, Interview)

"Thanks to web-based tools, I felt that I had more room to practice. I didn't have to sit still in class to practice my pronunciation. During the process of imitating some authentic videos and recording myself, I had better look into my own strength and weaknesses in articulating English words, and expressing emotions through intonation." (Student 12, Interview)

"I think studying pronunciation with videos of native speakers is a very interesting way, even the most life-like way to study pronunciation and intonation. These videos are accessible and diversified; therefore, I can expose and get used to many kinds of accents and voices. From there, I can choose for me the most suitable pronunciation learning approach." (Students 18, Interview)

Secondly, during the development of this project, the participants became aware of how their own English was different with what it is supposed to be. Ending sounds, especially grammatical ending sounds such as *-s* endings and *-ed* endings are reported to be most focused and improved. They also became more cautious with similar words such as "greet vs great" (Student 18, Interview), "wine, wife and white" (Students 6, Interview), and "heart vs hurt" (Feedback Survey 9); stress shift in word formation like "'record (n) vs re'cord (v)" (Feedback Survey 4), and "en'vironment vs environ'mental"; word stress in multi-syllable word like "inde'terminate" (Feedback Survey 5), and the unstressed sound - *schwa* - in words such as "control" and "intimate". Some students also expressed that they developed other skills like having good control of pausing, more natural intonation, and the ability to pronounce complexed multi-syllable words.

There are several students who have departed to the final stage of being autonomous. When they gained a conceptual grasp of the target features, they trained themselves to master them. After vigorously practice, the students' new competence became an

autonomic process as in words of student 12 and student 13:

“I think the biggest progress I have made is to reduce the thinking time before I can speak out a word. For example, before this project, when I said the word ‘cats’ in the plural form I had to make the effort to articulate the consonant cluster /ts/. Thanks to the practising process in this project, I no longer have to think so much before I say, the word comes out of my mouth naturally.” (Student 12, Interview)

“I started having difficulty with a simple task of listening and repeating dialogue and conversation, but now I can easily speak along videos and films having subtitles at the same pace as the native characters.” (Student 13, Interview)

Student 12 and 13 are two of the strongest students in this class so it is understandable that they could reach to this stage. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that if the students continue following this WBMPT model, they can eventually speak English fluently and accurately.

DISCUSSION

According to Levis (2007), three key areas where computer technology and pronunciation intersect are: (1) appropriate pedagogical goals and the measurement of improvement, (2) the ability of technology to give useful feedback; and (3) the use of technology in diagnosing pronunciation errors. While such sophisticated technology is still expensive and unavailable in the Vietnamese teaching context, teachers should think about integrating cost-effective, even free, web-based tools into their pronunciation classroom. It is not challenging for teachers and students at tertiary level to get access to the Internet. According to one famous statistic website, www.internetlivestats.com, by June 2016 the number of Internet users in Vietnam was 49,063,762, ranked 13th out of 201 countries and territories calculated (Internet Users by Country, 2016). Therefore, it is maintained that the significant potential of

WBMPT has not yet been realized in practice primarily because of a lack of awareness about pedagogical design.

The present study findings indicate that WBMPT bestowed benefits on students' pronunciation learning. However, these benefits can only exist when web-based tools are employed along with meaningful pedagogy and instruction. The model was a completed package in the way that students were engaged in a task-based language learning project, they had an opportunity to experience a variety of technologies themselves but still received peer-feedback and effective pedagogies. Besides, there are still limitations that should be taken into consideration, as student 12 suggested: "...peer assessment should be encouraged to larger extent in this project and there should be a suitable benchmark to evaluate students' work".

CONCLUSION

The study explored students' pronunciation learning and improvement in a WBMPT environment and how students perceived this new learning model. *The project was able to effectively manage students' pronunciation assignments, provide them an opportunity to interact in and among groups and evaluate their own as well as each other's outcomes. In turns, students became well aware of the fundamental features of English pronunciation such as vowels, consonants, and word stress, and of the differences between their English pronunciation versions with the target one. Some of the strongest participants departed to the autonomous level where they could unconsciously speak English with correct sounds and word stress.*

The main purpose of this study is to shed some light on what and how web-based tools can be employed in teaching pronunciation, fulfilling the gap in extant literature which was describe in the words of Shein (2015) that "Computer-assisted language learning systems are useful in helping address the basic aspects of language such as speaking, reading, and writing, but often we get tripped up in the intricacies of

pronunciation.” However, it stopped at testing students’ cognitive ability rather than intelligibility. Further research is needed to introduce more effective models for students to study pronunciation and evaluate the understandability of their spoken English.

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Appendices

Appendices A.

Interview Questions

Question 1: Do you think the web-based technologies you have been using in the last semester (Screencast-O-matic, Edmodo, EnglishCenter, posttest.com) are helpful in practicing pronunciation? Why or why not?

Question 2: Do you think repeating authentic online videos is a good way to practice pronunciation?

Question 3: What, if any, are your problems using web-based technologies (Screencast-O-matic, Edmodo, EnglishCenter, posttest.com)?

Question 4: Has your pronunciation improved over the last semester?

- (If the answer is “yes”,) how do you think your pronunciation has improved?
- (If the answer is “no”,) why do you think that is?

Question 5: In your own judgment, what were the strengths of your pronunciation before this project?

Question 6: What were the weaknesses of your pronunciation before this project?

Question 7: What are the strengths of your pronunciation now?

Question 8: What are the weaknesses of your pronunciation now?

Question 9. How has taking part in this project influenced your awareness about pronouncing English? Please explain.

Appendices B.

Student Feedback Survey

1. Is this web-based pronunciation practice project useful for you?

- a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Undecided
- d. Disagree e. Strongly disagree

2. For studying speaking in general and pronunciation in particular, is web-based pronunciation practice more effective than the lecture-only class?

- a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Undecided
- d. Disagree e. Strongly disagree

3. Does practicing pronunciation with web-based tools help you to speak with clearer English sounds (both vowels and consonants)?

- a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Undecided
- d. Disagree e. Strongly disagree

4. Does practicing pronunciation with web-based tools help you to speak with clearer English stress (at both word and sentence levels)?

- a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Undecided
- d. Disagree e. Strongly disagree

5. If your answer for question 4 is (a) or (b), please answer the following question: Can you give some examples of the words that you now realize that you pronounced them incorrect

.....
.....
.....

6. If your answer for question 5 is (a) or (b), please answer the following question: Can you clarify some stress patterns you learn to handle after this project? What problems with stress you had before but now you can fix them?

.....
.....
.....

7. What suggestion would you like to make?/ What other web-based tools would you like to recommend?

.....
.....
.....

THE LOGIC OF FOUR TEXTBOOKS UNDER THE PROPOSITION ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Proposition density is an important factor in texts because it plays a crucial role in text comprehension and retention. The combination of text comprehension and retention suggests that proposition density might be useful in the selection of textbooks. The criteria of compiling textbooks must have the evaluation of proposition density based on the meanings of the sentences. Currently, it is difficult to find any published studies relating to proposition density used as evaluation criteria of textbooks in Vietnam, especially textbooks on foreign languages. Therefore, the author believes that the results of this study will contribute new information to the database for compiling textbooks and the subsequent works. The research analyses, identifies and compares the proposition density through the amount of meanings of sentences to show a logical evaluation in four textbooks and propose directions for the compilation of textbooks in the future.

Key words: *Proposition density, meaning, comprehension, retention, textbook*

INTRODUCTION

Today, in developed countries, linguists begin to refer to the developmental aspects of linguistics in order to set new criteria for compiling textbooks. According to the development of linguistics, discourse analysis has been increasingly perfected with new theories

and applied to teaching and learning. The meaning of the sentence is constructed and developed into propositions, which forms the scientific basis for defining sentences with few propositions (simple sentences) or sentences with high proposition density (Complex sentences). In this study, we use the proposition density as criteria for comparing sentence structures to arrange sentences on a gradual scale to help students logically learn lessons from one level to the next.

To help us comprehend the meaning of sentence structures in English textbooks 6, 7, 8 and 9 (published in 2004 by Nguyen Van Loi as the Chief Editor), we conducted an analysis of the sentence patterns according to the modern propositional criteria which have been in use by scholars. However, up to now no scholar has summed up these criteria, although many have presented the analysis in almost the same way. We have done research on this issue and incorporated propositional patterns into formulas for the purpose of analyzing the meaning of sentences, as the basis for scientifically evaluating the levels of language learning, namely in English textbooks 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Students at elementary level are not able to absorb sentences with dense propositions. This is beyond the capacity of the students and therefore they will understand vaguely and even understand nothing. For upper students, if the sentences are composed of very few propositions and the meanings are too simple, they are bored and do not feel interested in learning or reading. Selecting sentences with appropriate proposition density in accordance with the learner's ability is to help them maximize their learning and self-learning.

RATIONALE

In terms of the meaning of the text, proposition is an important concept for researchers. According to T. B. Jay (2003), proposition is a unit of meaning, a statement expressing a practical requirement. W. Kintsch (1974) and Kintsch & Keenan (1973) argue that proposition is a fundamental unit involved in the comprehension and archives of texts. "The propositions correspond to verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions (not nouns or pronouns)" (M.A.

Covington, 2008, p. 2).

Researchers have made use of propositions to compare documents. According to them, otherwise it is impossible to make comparisons (David Nunan 1989: 55). Texts with similar contents and grammatical structures are difficult for us to decide which are easier to read and to remember. The propositions of the sentences are the decisive factor of the complex characteristics of the texts. Kintsch and Keenan (1973) conducted the experiments and concluded that the students comprehend and remember the texts with fewer propositions better than the more ones.

According to Atkinson & Shiffrin (1968), for new language learners or students at a low basic level, the initial proposition density is the lowest and will increase gradually in a compatible manner. The proper adaptation of propositions will help learners acquire and remember the amount of information.

Charmaine DeFrancesco & Kyle Perkins said that we can divide the information into smaller parts to help students grasp the ideas. This is an effective way to help students understand and apply small amounts of information easily when their background knowledge is low.

So far, foreign authors have put forward rules for propositional phrasing in sentences, but these rules are fragmentary, incomplete and not universal for later research. Based on the types of simple, compound and complex sentences, we propose a set of rules for analyzing propositions in sentences, firstly in English ones.

FORMULAS-CRITERIA FOR PROPOSITIONAL ANALYSIS

On the basis of the studies by foreign scholars, we incorporated the sentence patterns into 37 formulas-criteria to facilitate the analysis of propositional density in sentence patterns. Many scholars use normal letters to analyze propositions. We endorse the use of capital letters by David Nunan when analyzing propositions in sentences.

1. S + V_i: (Intransitive)
V_i, S
2. S + V_t: (monotransitive)
V_t, S, O
3. S + V_t: (ditransitive)
V_t, S, O_d
(Prep) O_i
4. S + V_t + O + OC: (ditransitive)
V_t, S, O, WHO/WHAT
WHO/WHAT = ...
5. S + V_t + To V (Infinitive)
V_t, S
To V, (S), (O)
6. S + V_t + V-ING (Gerund)
V_t, S, V-ING
7. S, V_t, V-ING + (O) (Gerund phrase)
V_t + S + V-ING
V-ING + O
8. S + V_i + Prep V-ING (Gerund)
V_t, S
Prep V-ING
9. S + V_i + Prep Phrase (Intransitive)
V_i, S
Prep Phrase
10. S + V + NOT + (...) (Negative form)
V, S
NEG n't

11. S + V + Prep (...) N: (Noun Modification)
 - V, S
 - Prep (...) N
 - N, (...)
12. S + V + Prep + clause + (...) N: (embedded clause)
 - V, S
 - Prep (...) N
 - N, (...)
 - (...), Clause
13. S + V + (...): (Direct Quote)
 - V, S
 - (...), (S)
14. S + V + ADV: (Verb modification)
 - V, S
 - V, ADV
15. S + V + ADV + Prep phrase: (PP Modification)
 - V, S
 - Prep Phrase
 - Adv, Prep Phrase
16. ADV + S + V + (...)
 - ADV
 - V, S, (...)
17. S + V + (...) + O: (Possessives)
 - V, S, O
 - O, Possessive

18. S + V + Prep + (...) + O: (Approximator)
 V, S
 Prep + O
 O, Approximator
19. S + V + BOTH (...) + AND (...): (Conjunction)
 V, S
 (...)
 (...)
 BOTH (...) + (...)
20. S + V + BOTH + O: (Quantifiers)
 V, S, O
 O, BOTH
21. V + S ...?: (Yes-No questions)
 V + C/O, S
22. WH + (Aux) + S + V?: (WH questions)
 Aux V, S, WH
 WH = (...)
23. Intensifiers + S + V + O: (Sentence Intensifiers)
 V, S, O
 (V, S, O), Intensifiers
24. Intensifiers + S + V + O: (Word/phrase Intensifiers)
 V, S, O
 Word/phrase + Intensifiers

25. S + V + Modification + modification + N: (Repeated Modification)

V, S

(Prep) N

N, Modification

Modification, Modification

26. S + (...) + V + C: (Reflexive pronoun)

V, S, C

S, Reflexive pronoun

27. S + V + O_d + O_i: (Reflexive pronoun as object)

V, S, O_d

Prep + O_i

28. AFF + S + V: (Affirmative Answer)

AFF YES

V, S

29. NEG + S + Aux n't: (Negative Answer)

NEG NO

V, S

30. S + V + Conj + V + (...): (Coordinate Conjunction, except for temporal conjunction AND)

V, S

Conj + 1 + 3

(...)

31. S + V + (...) + CONJ + S + V + (...): (Subordinate Conjunction)

V, S, (...)

CONJ + 1 + 3

V, S, (...)

(...)

32. CONJ + S + V + (...): (Utterance with Initial Conjunctions of Addition)

V, S

(...)

33. CONJ + S + V + (...): (Utterances with other Initial Conjunctions)

Conj

V, S

(...)

34. S + THAT/WHO/WHICH + V + (...): (Adjective clause)

V, S, (...) [Main clause]

CONJ + 1 + 3

V, S, (...) [Adjective clause]

35. S + V (+ THAT) + S + V + (...): (Noun clause)

V, S, (THAT)

V, S, (...)

36. V + (...): (Parenthetical Elided Elements)

V, (S)

(...)

37. S + V + (...): (Proper Nouns and Titles)

V, S

(...)

ANALYZING THE TYPICAL SENTENCES IN THE UNITS OF ENGLISH 6, 7, 8 AND 9

English 6:

Beginning to learn English, students are introduced to a greeting with a proposition.

The first sentence of this book has a proposition:

I am Lan. (p.11)

1. AM, I, LAN

The next sentence is of two propositions:

My name is Ba.

1. IS, NAME, BA
2. NAME, MY

At the initial level of communication, each statement has a proposition and maximally two propositions, which makes the students easily understand and acquire.

From unit 3 onwards, the propositional density increases to three and four propositions.

In unit 4, the number of propositions rises abnormally: eight propositions.

My school has four floors and my classroom is on the second floor. (p.47)

1. HAS, SCHOOL, FLOORS
2. SCHOOL, MY
3. FLOORS, FOUR
4. AND, 1, 5
5. IS, CLASSROOM, WHERE

6. WHERE= ON THE FLOOR

7. CLASSROOM, MY

8. FLOOR, SECOND

In unit 6, the highest propositional sum is only four.

Minh lives in the city with his mother, father and sister. (P. 65)

In unit 7, despite the compound sentence, the number of propositions is still four.

Similarly, in unit 12, despite the compound sentence, the highest number of propositions is still 4.

She swims, she does aerobics and she plays badminton. (p. 126)

The longest sentence in unit 14 has six propositions:

Finally, they are going to stay with their grandmother and grandfather in Ho Chi Minh City for a week. (p.142)

English 7:

In unit 1, English 7, the majority of sentences is of one proposition, few are of two or three propositions. In particular, the most number of propositions in a sentence is six:

She is from Hue and her parents still live there. (p. 11)

Especially in unit 3, there are 10 propositions in a compound sentence constructed with many conjunctions:

It's smaller than the other two, but it's the newest of the three and it has a large, modern bathroom and a kitchen. (p. 36)

In unit 6 there is a multi-idea complex sentence, but it is composed of only seven propositions:

If they have any new stamps, they usually bring them to school. (p. 62)

A compound-complex sentence in unit 10 is of only six propositions:

I understand how you feel, but don't worry. (p. 103)

Unit 14 has a too long compound-complex sentence which is of thirteen propositions:

The older people might sleep a little and the children might play with their friends, but no one went home until the TV programs finished. (p. 142)

1. MIGHT SLEEP, THE PEOPLE
2. THE PEOPLE, OLDER
3. MIGHT SLEEP, A LITTLE
4. AND, 1, 5
5. MIGHT PLAY, THE CHILDREN
6. MIGHT PLAY, WITH FRIENDS
7. FRIENDS, THEIR
8. BUT, 4, 9
9. WENT, NO ONE, WHERE
10. WHERE = HOME
11. UNTIL 9, 12
12. FINISHED, THE PROGRAMS
13. THE PROGRAMS, TV

In unit 16, the longest compound-complex sentence is of eight propositions:

My uncle sends me postcards every time he goes away, so I have both postcards and stamps from all those cities.

English 8:

In unit 1 there is a compound-complex sentence composed of eleven

propositions:

He spends his free time doing volunteer work at a local orphanage, and he is a hard-working student who always gets good grades. (p. 13)

Unit 2 also has the longest sentence composed of eleven propositions in form of a compound sentence with a non-finite clause:

Traveling all over America, Bell demonstrated his invention to the public at countless exhibitions, and by 1877 the first telephone was in commercial use. (p. 22)

Unit 5 is of the longest compound sentence composed of seventeen propositions:

In order to remember words better, some learners even write each word and its use on a small piece of paper and stick it somewhere in their house so as to learn it at any time. (p. 49)

1. WRITE, LEARNERS WORD AND USE
2. WRITE, EVEN
3. WRITE, IN ORDER TO REMEMBER WORDS
4. REMEMBER, BETTER
5. WORD, EACH
6. USE, ITS
7. WRITE, ON PAPER
8. PAPER, A PIECE OF
9. A PIECE OF PAPER, SMALL
10. AND, 1, 11
11. STICK, (LEARNERS), IT
12. IN HOUSE
13. IN HOUSE, THEIR

14. IN THEIR HOUSE, SOMEWHERE

15. STICK, SO AS TO LEARN, IT

16. LEARN, AT TIME

17. AT TIME, ANY

The longest compound sentence in unit 6 is of ten propositions:

If possible, you can participate in other programs such as raising funds for the door, helping street children and planting trees and flowers along the sidewalks or in the parks. (p. 58)

In unit 7 the longest compound sentence is composed of fourteen propositions:

Some of the goods in the new stores will be the same as the ones in the small shops, but the stores in the mall will offer a wider selection of products, some at cheaper prices. (p. 67)

Unit 16, the last one, consists of only ten propositions:

Finally, the water is removed from the sheets which are pressed, dried and refined until the finished paper is produced. (p. 132)

English 9:

Unit 1 is composed of the longest complex sentence that is of twelve propositions:

Bahasa Malaysia is the primary language of instruction in all secondary schools, although some students may continue learning in Chinese or Tamil. (p. 10)

Unit 2 consists of twelve-proposition compound-complex sentence:

However, many Vietnamese women today often prefer to wear modern clothing at work, because it is more convenient. (p. 13)

In this unit there is another compound-complex sentence composed of twelve propositions.

They have added these patterns to the ao dai, so vietnamese women can continue to wear the unique dress, which is now both traditional and fashionable. (p. 14)

The longest complex sentence in unit 3 includes fifteen propositions:

People have the chance to travel between the green paddy fields and cross a small bamboo forest before they reach a big old banyan tree at the entrance to the village. (p. 23)

1. HAVE, PEOPLE, THE CHANCE
2. THE CHANCE, TO TRAVEL
3. TO TRAVEL, (BETWEEN) FIELDS
4. FIELDS, PADDY
5. PADDY, GREEN
6. TO TRAVEL, (CROSS) A FOREST
7. FOREST, BAMBOO
8. FOREST, SMALL
9. BEFORE, 1, 10
10. REACH, THEY, A TREE
11. TREE, BANYAN
12. TREE, OLD
13. TREE, BIG
14. TREE, (AT) THE ENTRANCE
15. THE ENTRANCE, (TO) THE VILLAGE

In unit 6 a long complex sentence is constructed of thirteen propositions:

When the trucks of your company have a short break on the streets around my house, the drivers have left lots of garbage on the ground

after their refreshment. (p. 52)

Unit 9 is of the longest sentence consisting of nine propositions:

The word “typhoon” comes from Chinese: tai means “big” and feng means “wind”, so the word “typhoon” means “big wind”. (p. 78)

In unit 10 the longest complex sentence consists of fifteen propositions:

In 1947, Kenneth Arnold, an experienced pilot in the USA, reported that he saw nine large round objects traveling at about 2,8800 meters an hour to the left and north of Mount Rainier. (p. 83)

DISCUSSIONS

Having analysed the sentences in the textbooks of English 6, 7, 8 and 9, we draw out the following summary table:

Book	Unit	The most propositions in a sentence
English 6	Unit 1	2
	Unit 3	4
	Unit 4	8
	Unit 6	4
	Unit 7	4
	Unit 12	4
	Unit 14	6
English 7	Unit 1	6
	Unit 3	10
	Unit 6	7
	Unit 10	6
	Unit 14	13
	Unit 16	8

Book	Unit	The most propositions in a sentence
English 8	Unit 1	11
	Unit 2	11
	Unit 5	17
	Unit 6	10
	Unit 7	14
	Unit 16	10
English 9	Unit 1	12
	Unit 2	12
	Unit 3	15
	Unit 6	13
	Unit 9	9
	Unit 10	15

Unit 1 in English 6 is the first lesson for students learning English for 7 grades. The number of propositions in a sentence is one and only a few sentences consist of two. With this number of propositions, English students will learn easily: easily understand and remember. Unit 2 is composed of the same number of propositions. Unit 3 has the highest propositions in a sentence which is of four. This number is reasonable in comparison to the level of elementary English for 6th grade students.

Rising abnormally, unit 4 consists of eight propositions. For the students in grade 6, in the first year's learning English, this number is too much for their ability to absorb. This number creates a negative impact on students' ability to understand and remember propositions (store information).

Our proposal is to divide the sentence of these eight propositions into two sentences: the first sentence has three propositions and the second sentence has four ones. This division is logical and helps students learn and absorb more easily. The sentence is as follows:

My school has four floors.

1. HAS, SCHOOL, FLOORS
2. SCHOOL, MY
3. FLOORS, FOUR

My classroom is on the second floor.

1. IS, CLASSROOM, WHERE
2. WHERE= ON THE FLOOR
3. CLASSROOM, MY
4. FLOOR, SECOND

In units 6, 7 and 12, the highest proposition in the sentence is four. This number is consistent with the capacity of the student. The last units have the right number of propositions. Lesson 14 has six propositions. This number is not excessive and is consistent with the capacity of students near the end of the first year's studying English.

Unit 1 in English 7 has the maximum number of propositions in a sentence, six ones. In the first unit, following English 6, which corresponds to the level and capacity of the 7th graders. But Unit 4 is composed of the highest number of propositions in a sentence, ten ones. This is too high for a student's ability to absorb. The number of propositions is reasonable in unit 6 with seven propositions and lesson 10 with six propositions, the highest in one sentence.

Unit 14 has the highest number of propositions in a spike, up to thirteen. The number of propositions is too high and unreasonable. This sentence can be cut into two sentences, one with seven propositions and one with six propositions, as follows:

The older people might sleep a little and the children might play with their friends.

1. MIGHT SLEEP, THE PEOPLE
2. THE PEOPLE, OLDER
3. MIGHT SLEEP, A LITTLE
4. AND, 1, 5
5. MIGHT PLAY, THE CHILDREN
6. MIGHT PLAY, WITH FRIENDS
7. FRIENDS, THEIR

Yet no one went home until the TV programs finished.

1. YET
2. WENT, NO ONE, WHERE
3. WHERE = HOME
4. UNTIL 9, 12
5. FINISHED, THE PROGRAMS
6. THE PROGRAMS, TV

In the remaining 2 units of English 7, the highest number of propositions in a sentence is 8 (Unit 16). This number corresponds to the ability to learn a foreign language at the end of a student's second year.

In unit 1 in English 8, the maximum number of propositions in a sentence is eleven and in the second unit the maximum number of propositions in a sentence is still eleven. This number of propositions is many, but acceptable, because students have learned English in the third year.

In unit 5, the number of propositions in a sentence spikes and reaches seventeen propositions. This excessive number will make difficulties for students to absorb. So, this sentence should split into two smaller sentences with the appropriate number of propositions for students to

easily learn and remember, as follows:

In order to remember words better, some learners even write each word and its use on a small piece of paper.

1. WRITE, LEARNERS WORD AND USE
2. WRITE, EVEN
3. WRITE, IN ORDER TO REMEMBER WORDS
4. REMEMBER, BETTER
5. WORD, EACH
6. USE, ITS
7. WRITE, ON PAPER
8. PAPER, A PIECE OF
9. A PIECE OF PAPER, SMALL

Then they stick it somewhere in their house so as to learn it at any time.

1. THEN
2. STICK, THEY, IT
3. IN HOUSE
4. IN HOUSE, THEIR
5. IN THEIR HOUSE, SOMEWHERE
6. STICK, SO AS TO LEARN, IT
7. LEARN, AT TIME
8. AT TIME, ANY

The numbers of propositions in two sentences which are, in turn, nine and eight are the most appropriate for students to acquire well.

The maximum number of propositions in unit 6 which is ten is acceptable. One sentence in Unit 7 has 14 propositions, the highest number. This number of propositions is too many and needs to be separated into two short sentences as follows:

Some of the goods in the new stores will be the same as the ones in the small shops.

1. WILL BE, THE GOODS, THE SAME
2. THE GOODS, SOME OF
3. THE GOODS, (IN) THE STORES
4. THE STORES, NEW
5. THE SAME, (AS) THE ONES
6. THE ONES, (IN) THE SHOPS
7. THE SHOPS, SMALL

However, the stores in the mall will offer a wider selection of products, some at cheaper prices.

1. HOWEVER
2. WILL OFFER, THE STORES, PRODUCTS
3. THE STORES, (IN) THE MALL
4. PRODUCTS, A SELECTION OF
5. SELECTION, WIDE
6. PRODUCTS, SOME (AT) PRICES
7. PRICES CHEAPER

The maximum number of propositions in the last unit of English 8 (unit 16) is ten which is suitable for students to learn and memorize.

As a textbook at the end of junior high school, English 9 is only composed of 10 lessons and the number of propositions is relatively

higher than those in the previous books. It is reasonable. Unit 1 has the highest number of propositions of twelve. The one in unit 2 is similar. The number of this proposition is high, but acceptable. In other units, like unit 9, the highest number of propositions is nine.

However, in units 3 and 10 there are sentences with the highest propositions of fifteen. The number of propositions is too high. Both sentences should be separated into sentences with the appropriate number of propositions for students to acquire better. For example, a sentence in lesson 3 should be broken down as follows:

People have the chance to travel between the green paddy fields and cross a small bamboo forest.

1. HAVE, PEOPLE, THE CHANCE
2. THE CHANCE, TO TRAVEL
3. TO TRAVEL, (BETWEEN) FIELDS
4. FIELDS, PADDY
5. PADDY, GREEN
6. TO TRAVEL, (CROSS) A FOREST
7. FOREST, BAMBOO
8. FOREST, SMALL

Then they reach a big old banyan tree at the entrance to the village.

1. REACH, THEY, A TREE
2. TREE, BANYAN
3. TREE, OLD
4. TREE, BIG
5. TREE, (AT) THE ENTRANCE
6. THE ENTRANCE, (TO) THE VILLAGE

English textbooks 6, 7, 8 and 9, in general, are good books, updating the practical knowledge between 2000 and 2010. The book is based on grammatical and vocabulary structures, graded from low to high level. The topics of the book are close to the situation of economic, social, political, etc. development of the country and the world.

In terms of propositional criteria, the sentences in this series are arranged in an increasing number of propositions. Most sentences contain a right number of propositions that are relevant to the student's cognitive and receptive level.

However, with the development of linguistics at the time, the proposition density criterion in the sentences was not applied to the compilation of this textbook series. Matching the number of propositions in the sentences is a coincidence, not a scientific one. Thus, sometimes the sentences have the proposition spikes, as follows:

Book	Unit	The most propositions in a sentence
English 6	Unit 4	8
English 7	Unit 3	10
	Unit 14	13
English 8	Unit 5	17
	Unit 7	14
English 9	Unit 3	15
	Unit 10	15

CONCLUSION

The proposition is one of the units that determine the number of sentences in a sentence in the most scientific and accurate way. Based on the number of propositions in a sentence, the amount of information in the sentence is determined to be less or more.

There are a number of factors that influence student's acquisition, in which the amount of information or the number of propositions plays

an important role, especially in learning a foreign language. Depending on the capacity, level and stage of learning foreign languages, the number of propositions is distributed appropriately so that learners can learn the most effectively. The inappropriate proposition placement in sentences, too little or too much, will affect learner's acquisition.

The propositional formulas in this article are a synthesis from the studies of foreign scholars. The formulas help to determine the number of propositions in the sentences for convenience in sentence analysis later. However, depending on a certain language, these formulas will vary and depending on each discipline, the formulas will be adjusted appropriately.

This study suggests that when compiling textbooks, firstly English textbooks, experts should consider proposition one of the criteria for compiling sentences suitable for units and subject matters depending on the student's ability, level and academic year. With the right knowledge in the propositions, students will learn the units most effectively.

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A COMPARISON OF VIETNAMESE AND AMERICAN GREETINGS IN ORDER FOR LANGUAGE LEARNERS TO COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY

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Abstract

With the aim to help learner communicate more successfully with native speakers, the study about comparison of Vietnamese and American greetings was conducted and a mode of socio-pragmatic contrastive analysis was used. The data used for the study consisted of American and Vietnamese greetings were collected by questionnaires. The analyses actually revealed the differences in greetings spoken by American and Vietnamese because of cultural and social features. Most of time, American people just say “Hi, How are you?” meanwhile Vietnamese people sometimes address their friends by saying “Hi, have you gotten fat?”. For some cases, the learners may use this way to greet the native speakers and it certainly brings culture shock for them. Hence, the results will be essential for ESL teachers to apply them on their own teaching.

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the problem

Communication plays a very important role in our lives. Human beings have to communicate in order to survive in society and to develop their personalities.

Communication is the act of conveying information for the purpose of creating a shared understanding or opinions. Clearly, it requires that all parties understand a common language that is exchanged. There are auditory means, such as speaking, singing and sometime tone of voice as well as nonverbal means, such as body languages and sign language. However, the fact that communication is very difference from each country because of social and culture features such as in greeting, thanking, requesting, and etc. As a result, communicators sometimes do not get what the speakers means. Hence, the appearance of sociolinguistic is concerned with investigating the relationships between language and society with the goal being a better understanding of the structure of language and of how language function in communication (Wardhaugh, 1992).

Sociolinguistic is the study of the way language varies and changes in communities of speakers and concentrates in particular on the interaction of social factors (such as a speaker's gender, ethnicity, age, degree of integration into their community, etc.) and linguistic structures (such as sounds, grammatical forms, intonation features, words, and etc.) Such views of sociolinguistic, teaching and learning process are not only paying attention to linguistic items such as vocabulary, grammatical points but also help learner communicate successfully and understand the implication meanings in daily conversations.

However, the fact that cultures of the countries are different from each other so the ways people react may bring different meaning. Sometimes it causes misunderstanding and breaks the conversation. Greeting may be the first thing that learners want to know when they start to learn new languages. They want to know how to address people then start the communication. Conversely, there are differences in different cultures that make learners confused and nervous to communicate with native speakers. Hence, in this study, I, particularly, would like to discover the most frequent verbal associated with American and Vietnamese greeting ways between the friends and then apply in teaching English so that both teachers can help student be more self confident in their own learning.

Purpose of the research

In an attempt to examine the influence of greeting ways in daily conversations, the purpose of the study is (1) to carry out comparison of Vietnamese greetings and the American ones with the aim of figure out the differences in greeting that can help the students understand better their English Foreign Language (EFL) performance, and (2) to give some suggestions and recommendations in teaching English especially teaching greeting effectively and then help Vietnamese and American avoid culture shocks and communicate successfully and effectively.

Objective

There are three objectives in this study:

1. To figure out what greeting American and Vietnamese friends often use to say in daily conversations.
2. To examine the effect of greeting sayings on communication.
3. To provide recommendations and suggestions to teaching how to greet to avoid misunderstanding and help learners study well.

This research was designed to compare Vietnamese and American greeting in order to achieve the objectives of the thesis, the research questions that present study seeks to answers are:

1. What are differences between Vietnamese and American greeting sayings?
2. **Why is it necessary to compare Vietnamese and American greetings?**

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociopragmatics

In sociolinguistic field, Mohammad (2006) stated that

sociopragmatics refers to the way conditions of language use derive from the social situation. In other words, it involves the study of both the forms and functions of language in the given social setting. The term "linguistic forms" refers to the abstract phonological and/or grammatical characterization of language. "Social functions," however, refers to the role language plays in the context of the society or the individual. For instance, language is used (or functions in such a way as) to communicate ideas, express attitudes, and so forth. It may also be used to identify specific sociolinguistic situations, such as informality, or varieties of language, such as science or law. The term "situation" is generally used to refer to the extra-linguistic setting in which an utterance takes place. It refers to such notions as number of participants, level of formality, nature of the ongoing activities, and so on.

The closest connected to the ideas of sociopragmatics is the notion of speech act. According to J.L. Austin (1962), he asserted, "Speech act is a term derived from the work of the philosopher of language". It refers to a theory, which analyzes the role of utterances in relation to the behavior of speakers and hearers in interpersonal communication. There are several categories of speech acts such as directives, commissives, expressive, declarations, and representatives (Stephanie, 2013). In each conversation can be implicated as a series of categories of speech as – greeting, inquires, congratulations, thanking and etc.

GREETING

According to Wikipedia, greeting is defined as a way for humans to intentionally communicate awareness of each other's presence, to show attention to, and to affirm or suggest a type of relationships or social status between individuals or groups of people coming in contact with each other.

The greet act fulfills three functions:

1. Speaker wishes hearer to know that speaker has taken cognizance of hearer's presence.

2. In recognizing hearer's presence via a greeting, speaker ratifies hearer's social standing with himself, and implies a readiness on his part for social interaction.
3. It is intended that the greet covers somewhat more ground than the every day term greeting. Further specification is, therefore, possible.

So, greeting indicates continuity of personal relation, and signals the recognition of the other participant as a potential agent in some activities (See Halliday and Hasan, 1985, p.63).

The most common verbal greetings involved topic initiation, verbal salute, and references to the interlocutor. Typical non-verbal greetings were found to be head gestures, mutual glances, and smiles. The only non-verbal difference between acquaintances and strangers was that more smiling occurred was participants were acquaintances. Differences between the two sets of subjects manifested themselves in the fact that verbal greetings were less common among strangers. While the authors regard greetings as ritualized behavior, Krivonos and Knapp (1975) point out that their results could have been specific to the situation in which they conducted their study.

Greeting forms could be classified in ways other than the verbal-nonverbal dichotomy proposed by Krivonos and Knapp (1975). Halliday (1979) classifies greetings as time-free and time-bound. For instance, English "Hello" and its Persian counterpart "salaam" /sæ'la:m/ are time-free but English "good morning" and its Persian counterpart "sobh bekheir" /sobh be'xêr/ are time-bound.

Sacks (MS) maintains that there are two important features about greetings. Firstly, they occur at the very beginning of a conversation, and cannot be done anywhere else in the conversation; secondly, they allow all the speakers a turn, right at the beginning of the conversation.

E.g.: Hello there, you two. / Hi./ Hi there,

There are two major occasions on which a conversation does not open with a greeting. Firstly, it is a conversation between people who do not consider themselves co-conversationalists (for example, strangers). They are not on greeting terms and, therefore, do not exchange a greeting (Coulthard, 1985). The speaker who opens must demonstrate in his first utterance why he is beginning the conversation.

E.g.: Excuse me. Could you tell me the way to..... or
Hey, You've dropped your book.

The other conversations which typically do not open with a greeting are telephone conversations. Schegloff (1968) argues that although the person who answers the telephone may say 'Hello' this is not a greeting; it is the answer to summons from the caller embodied in the ringing of the telephone. Following this indication that the channel is open there is often a greetings sequence to begin the conversation properly. Sometimes, if the answerer simply answers with "Hello," there is first a checking sequence to make sure that the caller is talking to the right person.

It is clear that there are important differences in the way greeting work within and between ethnic groups who speak different varieties of the same language, we must expect to find greater differences across speech communities where totally different language are spoken. This study, therefore, aims at such a comparison between American and Vietnamese greeting forms. In this paper will present different forms of greetings in each language, compare and press into serve in pedagogical contexts.

METHODS

Research design

As the investigation focuses on how American friends and Vietnamese friends greet each other, mainly measured by the frequent usage of greeting forms, is in accordance with two

alternative versions. The research process will deal with figures. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the quantitative approach in this study can serve to avoid cultural shocks and to have successful communication between American and Vietnamese.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Type of data

The data are collected with the use of quantitative approach. These quantitative data come from questionnaires.

Choosing samples

The samples were chosen in greeting sayings of friends. Twenty Vietnamese being friends and twenty American being friends participated in this study. Greeting is basic part of beginning the conversation or just saluting each other, people are familiar with these sayings. The questionnaire will comprise the most common greetings forms used by friends.

Conducting the questionnaires

The questionnaires were given to 40 people that are Vietnamese friends and American friends. After collecting the questionnaires and carrying out comparing the usage of greeting forms, the results will be discussed and the pedagogical implication in teaching and learning English will be mentioned, too.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION OF FINDINGS

Discussion and findings

Every society has its own particular customs and ways of acting. Over 290 million people living in the United State who are come from different backgrounds with regional and temperamental differences. In this study I will point out a few characteristics of greeting form when Americans greet their friends.

With 20 questionnaires for American, about 45% of American

people often greet their friends “Hi, how are you?” Meanwhile, there are 53% of Vietnamese people always saying that greeting because Vietnamese people normally ask about addressors’ health. For American, only occasionally really wants to stop and learn about your health. He simply asks the question to show friendly concerns about you and to keep “Hello” or “Good morning”, which is said sometimes by 25% of American and 20% of Vietnamese one, form seeming too short. If a person dose has time to explain how he is, he is not supposed to do so. An individual may be going through great mental and physical pain and still reply to the question by saying “Just fine. How are things with you?” This habit can result in a rather ridiculous situation. When a patient comes to see a doctor, the receptionist may ask, “How are you?” The patient may answer “Just fine” when it is quite obvious that this is true, he would not be at the doctor’s office.

Along with gestures such as shaking hands or nodding the head, both American and Vietnamese people often greet “What’s up?” as asking how everything is. “Where are you living now?” is sometimes said reaching 44% of Vietnamese people greeting form and there is only 6% of American saying this greeting. Meanwhile, “Long time no see” and “What’s going on?” are also sometimes used by 33% of American friends. But 33% of Vietnamese friends usually greet each other by “Long time no see” and “What’s going on?” is often greeted by 30% of Vietnamese one. 60% of Vietnamese friends never greet each other by saying “How old are you?” anymore because they already got to know each other and it will be so impolite to ask their friends’ ages again. Furthermore, there are 60% of Vietnamese friends sometimes greet each other and 40% of American friends never salute by asking “Do you have girl/ boy friend?” and 60% of Vietnamese people greet each other by asking “Have you gotten fat?” meanwhile there are 100% of American people greet that way because American thinks that people do not want to be fat. Some skinny people might want to gain weight but no one wants to be “Fat”. It is rude to say someone else is “Fat”. Asking about

relationships like “Are you married?” or “Do you have girl/ boy friend?” should not be a greeting in most normal American situations. Even in a social situation where people are looking for a new girl/ boy friend, they will try to have a conversation about the other things first. Another greeting form is often used by 53.3% of Vietnamese people is that “Have you eaten yet?” They are showing their friendliness and care to their friends or people around them. However, American people will usually use “Have you eaten yet?” when they plan to invite their friends to join you for a meal if they say “No”.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATION

It is important that students of learning English realize the important role of greeting forms used by American and Vietnamese friends. Each country has its own culture, custom, social system and language. Vietnamese people greet each other in English with their cultural and social principles. It is necessary for teachers to help students learn American greetings in order to help them communicate successfully and effectively. During teaching process, teachers should pay attention on what greeting forms are used sometimes or never in American sayings and compare with Vietnamese sayings in order to help student avoid misunderstood when communicating with American. For example, when greeting someone in a very formal situation an American might say “Hello, how are you?” or “Nice to see you again” but if he were meeting a friend in an informal situation it would be much more appropriate to say “Hi”, or “Hey, whatcha been doing?” In addition, “Good morning”, “Good afternoon”, “Good evening” are more formal verbal greetings used at the appropriate time of day. Note that the similar “Good night” or “Good day” are more commonly used as phrases of parting rather than greeting. For Vietnamese people, they greet by asking private questions such as “How old are you?” “Are you married?” “How much do you earn each month?” “Where are you going?” or “Have you eaten yet?”. Hence, teachers should put the English greeting forms in the concrete contexts, and then let students

figure out what is Vietnamese saluting by telling them or by using discovering techniques.

LIMITATION

Because of many inconvenient factors like time limit or participants, the study has limitation. The participants for questionnaires are not adequate because the participants of the study need to be friend. However, I carried out this study in Vietnam so there are only twenty Americans who are being friend together completing questionnaires. As the result, all American greeting forms do not mean to be used by all American people.

CONCLUSION

This paper is made in the desire to compare the Vietnamese greetings with the American one. Each greeting form is different from its cultural, social features so Vietnamese greeting and American ones are totally dissimilar. Vietnamese people can express greeting by asking private questions such as “Have you eaten yet?” or “Do you have girl/ boy friend?” Meanwhile, American greets informal or formal expressions like “Hi, how are you?” or “What’s up?”. Most of American people get shock to hear Vietnamese people greet each other “Hi, Have you gotten fat?” because in their culture it is not appropriate to greet people by talking about their appearance looking. Consequently, during in teaching process, teachers should give students both in Vietnamese and American ways to help students use English greeting appropriately to communicate with the native speakers successfully.

APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire

Dear sir/ madam,

The purpose of my research is to find out different greetings used by Americans and Vietnamese to help avoid any misunderstandings in communication. This will help make communication more successful and effective. Therefore, your answers will contribute to the success of my research.

Thanks for your contributions.

I. Your personal information:

- Gender : male/ female

- Your occupation :

How do you typically greet people?	never	sometimes	often	usually	always
1 what's up?	1	2	3	4	5
2 where are you living now?	1	2	3	4	5
3 Long time no see	1	2	3	4	5
4 What's going on?	1	2	3	4	5
5 Hi, How are you?	1	2	3	4	5
6 Good morning	1	2	3	4	5
7 How old are you?	1	2	3	4	5
8 Have you gotten fat?	1	2	3	4	5
9 Do you have a girl/boyfriend?	1	2	3	4	5
10 Have you eaten yet?	1	2	3	4	5

II. Your suggestions and/ or opinions:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX 2

Bảng khảo sát

Các anh/ chị thân mến,

Với mục đích tìm ra những cách chào hỏi khác nhau giữa người Mỹ và người Việt Nam để tránh sự hiểu lầm trong giao tiếp và giao tiếp thành công hơn, bảng khảo sát này sẽ giúp ích cho bài nghiên cứu của tôi và sự đóng góp ý kiến của các anh chị sẽ góp phần cho bài khảo sát này thành công hơn và đầy đủ hơn.

Xin chân thành cảm ơn.

Xin vui lòng điền thông tin vào bảng dưới đây

I. Phần thông tin cá nhân:

- Giới tính : - Nghề nghiệp :

II. Bảng khảo sát:

Bạn chào hỏi như thế nào?	Không bao giờ	Thỉnh thoảng	Thường thường	Thường	Luôn luôn
1 Bạn thế nào?	1	2	3	4	5
2 Bây giờ bạn đang ở đâu?	1	2	3	4	5
3 Lâu quá không gặp	1	2	3	4	5
4 Mọi chuyện sao rồi?	1	2	3	4	5
5 Chào, khỏe không?	1	2	3	4	5

Bạn chào hỏi như thế nào?	Không bao giờ	Thỉnh thoảng	Thường thường	Thường	Luôn luôn
6 Chào buổi sáng/ buổi trưa/ buổi tối	1	2	3	4	5
7 Bạn bao nhiêu tuổi rồi?	1	2	3	4	5
8 Đạo này mập lên phải không?	1	2	3	4	5
9 Có bạn trai/ bạn gái không?	1	2	3	4	5
10 Đã ăn (trưa/sáng/chiều) chưa?	1	2	3	4	5

Hãy đánh dấu hoặc khoanh tròn số chọn

III. Các ý kiến khác của anh/ chị:

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.....

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VIETNAMESE HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS' LEVELS OF ICT INTEGRATION IN TEACHING ACCORDING TO SAMR MODEL

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Abstract

These days, the seemingly irresistibly widespread of technology has highlighted the need for teachers to be technologically literate and updated. This study aims at identifying the levels of information communication technology (henceforth ICT) integration in teaching among Vietnamese high school teachers of English. A semi-structured interview was done with four out of six high school teachers of English at TESOL 10 class of Open University, Ho Chi Minh City who signed the consent form. The result indicated that most of their use of ICT was at Substitution, Modification levels and at the threshold from Enhancement to Transformation. Also, the findings affirmed good conditions for ICT use after class through Facebook and Skype as a facilitating factor for more teaching and learning activities.

Keywords: *ICT integration level, English teaching and learning*

INTRODUCTION

Using technology in the classroom turns out to be a trend in this era of smart phones, tablets, and interactive social networks. Vietnam is a country thirsty for innovative technology, which is proved by the expansion of the technology market earning it a position in the Power 4 of Asia in the development of smart phone with 43.9% of the population using the Internet (Wan, 2015). In that movement,

technology has woven its way into schools and become an integral part of Vietnamese nationwide teaching practice. Especially after the National Language Project 2020, many schools in Vietnam are equipped with an audio-visual room where computers, headphones, and projectors are installed to serve primarily English lessons. Courses of technology in education are organized in various schools to prepare teachers for integrating technology into teaching. However research on how much teachers of English use ICT in their teaching practice is extremely limited in Vietnam in both K-12 and tertiary education. One study on this topic was done investigating the level of use of technology in teaching and factors influencing that use of teachers in Hanoi University by Dang (2013). However, no research has been done on this topic for high school teachers of English in Vietnam. Therefore, it is necessary for this research to be done to scrutinize Vietnamese high school teachers' use of technology in teaching English through a discrepant lens of the SAMR model. The study found the answer to the research question: "What level of ICT integration do Vietnamese high school teachers of English perform in their teaching?"

BACKGROUND THEORIES

Definition of ICT

In this study, ICT (information and communication technology) is defined any technology that uses the Internet, computers, mobile devices, and their applications to search for, and store information as well as create materials, prepare lessons, communicate, practice language skills and developing knowledge in language areas (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation).

How is ICT used in teaching?

The technology assisting teaching has been developed at an increasing speed with new tools invented to enhance not only the layout of the materials presented but also the interactivity and the impressive experience of using it. Based on the purposes of use, there

are four types of tools summarized and adapted from Dang (2013, pp. 15-16) as follows.

Table 1. Types of technological tools for use in teaching

Tool category	Examples
Location and retrieval tools	Search engines: Google, Yahoo, Bing, Youtube, TeacherTube, TV, radio, and the like.
Material creation tools	Word processors, presentation software (Power point, Prezzi), authoring programs (Hot potatoes, Task Magic, and Fun with Texts), audio and video editing tools, e-lecture tools to merge movies into slides, make movies or mind maps, and the like
Interaction tools	Students' computers or smart phones connected with teachers' computer, Learning Management System or social networks
Teaching tools	PowerPoint or Keynote presentations Prezi used with projectors.

The SAMR model

A model of four components were developed by Ruben R. Puentedura in 2006 aiming at improving educational quality by integrating technology into teaching in the state of Maine in the US. The SAMR model assesses levels of technology use, and their influences on classroom activities. Four SAMR levels: Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition are described in detail below.

Substitution: ICT simply replaces books and boards and helps teachers present content in a different form without changing the function of the teaching and learning artifacts and activities. For example, the teacher uses the software Hot potatoes to make tests or exercises for students and then print them as handouts to students. The making of the test is different in that the teacher uses the

software specified for designing tests but the classroom activities utilizing the test is the same as those with a hand-written test. Another example is raised by Kelly Walsh(2015) describing substitution as giving students computers to type in instead of writing with pen and paper for a writing class. Some other examples are also given by Jude, Kajura, and Birevu (2014) sorting into this level the use of emails, social media, cell phones, interactive white boards and the like to replace face-to-face communication to give and submit homework, or disperse notices, lecture notes, and materials.

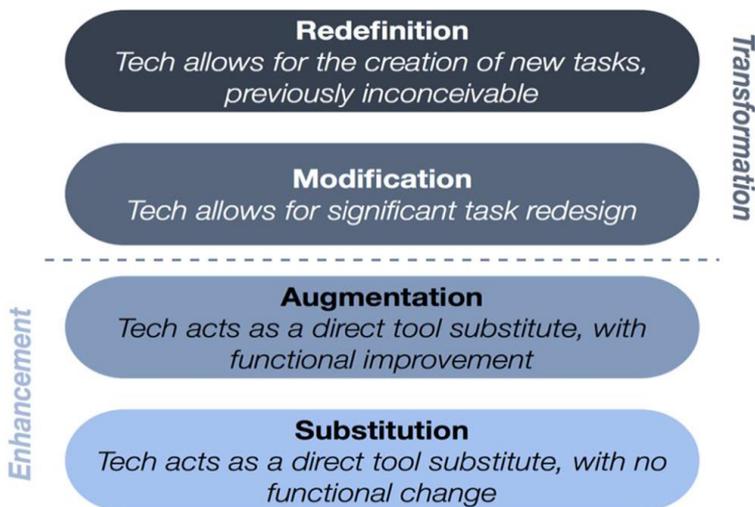
Augmentation: The technology improves teaching and learning activities to a limited extent. An example from Walsh (2015) is that a word processor is used with a text-to-speech function to improve the writing process. Also, the use of Google for searching information or sharing and co-editing Google documents, dictionary for looking up new words, word-processor for checking grammatical and spelling mistakes, or using Skype to teach speaking after class (Jude, Kajura, & Birevu, 2014)

Modification: The technology enables teachers to create more additions to the lesson to improve the efficacy of the activity (Nkonki & Ntlabathi, 2016). For example, a power point slide showing a reading text can be transformed from a Substitution to the Modification state if it incorporate a count-down timer to improve a reading comprehension task to a speed reading activity which does not exist in the book. Another example is that after text-to-speech software helps students write their exercise, the writing product is shared on a blog for feedback right in class or after class to improve writing (Walsh, 2015). In addition, using Facebook to post students' writing and call for comments and corrections is also adding a new activity into students' writing task.

Redefinition: The technology enable innovative teaching and learning activities that cannot be created in traditional classes. It remix and redesign the teaching and learning activities (Fabian & MacLean, 2014) creating a new one which involve very much real-

life substance such as interview with real people, or doing project with real-life information collection. Take project work as an example, teachers ask groups of students to study about a topic of their interest and then deliver a presentation. The activities are feasible thanks to students' use of the search engines on the internet in class or after class, and the activities designed can be considered as an extra part of the content in the course. Another example from Walsh (2015) suggests students' use of multimedia tools to make a presentation or video on the topic instead of doing a writing task.

In general, for the Substitution and Augmentation levels, the use of technology is considered as the Enhancement for the available learning tasks, “replacing and improving the existing tools” (Hilton, 2016, p. 69), adding motivation and creating interest in them. For this category, the new activity can still be fulfilled without technology. On the other hand, for the Modification and Redefinition levels of the taxonomy, the alternation of the existing teaching and learning activities are grouped as Transformation, going beyond the original forms. Indeed, for the former level, very few characteristics of the old tasks are kept while the latter indicates a complete invention of new learning tasks or activities (Hilton, 2016)



Rubén R. Puentedura, *As We May Teach: Educational Technology, From Theory Into Practice*. (2008)

Figure 1: The SAMR model (Puentedura, 2006)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was used for the study with semi-structured interviews for the participants. In-depth questions focusing on eliciting real examples were asked to find out the actual use of ICT in their actual teaching practice. Therefore, the interview answers can reflect a summary of highlights of ICT integration in the teaching practice of these participants throughout their teaching history.

Participants

The researcher approached his friends in the Master of TESOL class at Open University Ho Chi Minh City who were high school teachers. Out of six high school teacher in the class, only four of them agreed to participate in the interview. All of the participants are Master's students, so they are supposed to be proactive and innovative teachers at their institutions. They have taken the course of instructional technologies in the Master's program and have been, at different levels, exposed to or involved in presentations or teaching performances using different technological tools ranging from Power point to Prezzi, Audacity, video makers (Proshow or Camtasia), mp3 cutter- joiner, text-to-speech and speech-to-text software, Hot potatoes, Mentimeter, Lectora, and even Moodle, to name a few. Therefore, the participants were in the advanced conditions for practicing ICT skills and thus were expected to be confident in their integration of technology in teaching. These participants, hence, could form an interesting case of ICT integration in teaching English, from which that issue can be inferred for other Vietnamese high school teachers.

Research instrument, data collection, and analysis

The semi-structured interview (see appendix) was utilized on the ground that teachers' real teaching practice relevant to technological integration could be reviewed with more accuracy compared to surveys which cannot fathom different angles of the matter. Also, quantitative method is surely inappropriate for this small sample size

of only four participants. The interviews were conducted in a favorable conditions thanks to the rapport the researcher had built with the participants; thus, the interviews were similar to casual exchanges on the topic which yielded comfortable and trust-worthy answers. Also, talking face-to-face enabled the interviewer to probe for more information or expand the understanding of the issue by eliciting more details from the participants.

After being piloted and revised, the interview questions were used to collect data from participants. Then the recordings were transcribed and coded in NVIVO according to SAMR's four levels of technology integration. Finally, the analysis of the data was carried out.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

There was uneven record for levels of ICT integration mainly focusing on Substitution, Modification levels and the transitional stage between Enhancement and Transformation.

As for **Substitution** level, the use of technology simply helps the teachers show the content in a different form as illustrated in the following interview excerpts.

I experienced using Lextutor, or Hot potatoes to create exercises for my students.... After making these exercises, I print them and hand out to students. The students treat these exercises the same as other exercises, but it is convenient for teachers to make these exercises (Teacher 3).

If we use the board and write exercises on it, it will takes very much time and students will feel bored. Also, it helps teachers be more flexible and have more options of means of technology to help our teaching and also to help students learn better (Teacher 1).

Whatever software the teachers named, they used it to replace traditional formats of teaching and learning materials presented in textbooks written on the board or played by CD players, with more

handouts, supplementary materials, Power point slides, and web-based audio or video players. The purpose of these technological uses was to show the content in different forms, but there was no sign of emphasis on changing the function of the teaching and learning activities. Therefore, the teacher perceived these tools and products of technology use as what they have in a normal low-tech class.

As regards **Augmentation** level, there was a case as follows.

I mainly use Power points. I can get some video clips to add to the lesson, but clips about pronunciation can only be shown to good classes (Teacher 2).

Video clips of pronunciation lessons lend the teacher a more interesting way to teach pronunciation instead of the repeat-after-me drill. Therefore, the function of the learning material is still unchanged, but students are expected to be more motivated due to the lively practice given by native speakers with their teacher acting as a teaching assistant or explanation provider.

Interestingly, **Modification** level seems to describe most uses of ICT by the participants as shown in the following answers in the interview.

Sometimes I get some games from the internet. My school has wifi so I can show students the games right in class, or I can download them to test and choose the suitable games for students to play and introduce them to my classes later (Teacher 1).

I make audio recording when talking to students, and then I collect the recordings and play back to the whole class at another time and ask them to give comment to help them improve their pronunciation, grammar, and the reaction of the speakers. I only let the speaker listen to his/her speaking again when it is the speaking test for that student. Otherwise I can't play back for the speaker due to the lack of time (Teacher 1).

Previously I did video record some presentations of students, transferred to the laptop and showed them right after that to help them improve their own presentation. I think that was very time consuming because it was a replay of the presentation. The English program in high school does not give much time for such activity. Therefore, I stopped doing it (Teacher 2).

Other answers falling in this category can be recapitulated as adding Youtube clips to the lesson to create new activities, playing movies, music, or add new situations to the lesson using Power point slides.

As is indicated in the interview extracts above, teacher 1 gave additional web-based games for teaching the lesson, thus devised a new activity which can only be done with technology. The same applies to teachers 1 and 2 who recorded audio or video of students talk and played it back to them for comments and correction. This technique generates the interaction among students and between students and teachers going beyond the content of the textbook and generating interesting watching and analysis of the presentation. In other cases, ICT was used to add more situations, giving more food for thoughts which led to new activities beyond the scope of the textbook. Also, music and videos were played to add more activities in to parts of the lesson, making it more motivating and lively. However, these activities have not reached the Redefinition level, where the whole course of learning are connected stages of a real-life activity such as producing video clips or carrying out a project with input from and output for use in real life. For the participants in this study, the newly devised tasks were just a part of the multi-section lesson, so this addition of novel activities can only be sorted into the Modification level. In other words, in this set of data, there was a complete absence of the Redefinition level, which is understandable when this level usually entails huge time consumption and thus not applicable in a high school program.

Actually, there is a middle stage between the Augmentation and Modification levels of the SAMR model where although the actions

of the teachers created conditions for activities of the next level to happen, they were still pending on students' side. Some transitional activities between these two levels of the SAMR model are presented below.

THE THRESHOLD AUGMENTATION-MODIFICATION

I use some clips from Youtube, and sometimes I get some pages on Facebook or Google. I often give students the links to those pages on my Facebook. (Teacher 1).

I use Facebook to post some listening exercises and ask students to practice more at home when class time is limited (Teacher 2).

I also tell my students to install the dictionary into their smart phones and search for clips teaching pronunciation on Youtube to watch and practice after class (Teacher 3).

In this threshold stage, the new learning activities are generated, some of which are with supplementary authentic materials provided online via Youtube or Facebook and educational websites. Obviously, the internet has a central stage in these activities and serves as a channel through which exchanges and access to information and skill drills are enabled. These activities and practice are additional and require students' autonomy to do them. Due to the time constrain in high school, however, these activities cannot be counted as compulsory, so they remain optional suggestions mainly for hardworking students to improve their language skills. Generally, although the shared sources on the social media pave the way for new learning activities, students' equivalent actions in response to the action prompts of these shares of academic sources are not ensured. Because such self-learning activities are partly done by students, the appropriate level for ICT integration should be between the Augmentation and Modification levels where the lesson is partially transformed with new activities invented to supplement the original ones in the textbook, but the completion of such activities is not ensured. However, this self-learning is undeniably crucial in the

success of a language learner, and thus learning encouraged by the Modification and Redefinition levels grants students opportunities for comprehensive development of language skills in a much more authentic and practical manner compared to class-bound practice. The assertion of using social media for more teaching and learning activities indicates that the availability of favorable conditions for blended learning is not only in Ho Chi Minh City, but also in Di An town, Binh Duong province, and Can Duoc district, Long An province where the participants are teaching. The duty of educators in this situation is to break the pending condition half way between the Enhancement and Transformation levels for more realization of technology-assisted learning activities among students.

CONCLUSION

The research results have answered the question regarding the levels of ICT integration showing that high school teachers of English in the Master's class of TESOL at Open University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam had a predilection for applying ICTs at Substitution, Modification, and the threshold stage of transforming from Augmentation to Modification levels in the SAMR model. They used ICT to provide alternative forms of the learning content without radical change in the function of learning activities, but they also confirmed the introduction of new sources to assist learning, which led to new activities created in parts of the lesson inside and outside the class. These activities were enabled by the use of ICT, and were limited to Modification level as the highest level due to their low authenticity and the partial dependence on original activities in the textbook. The findings suggest more efforts need to be taken to upgrade high school teachers' use of ICTs to the Transformation levels for better learning activities. More examples of how to transfer from one level to another should be compiled and conveyed to the teachers so that they will be more aware of what to do to improve their ICT use in daily lessons.

The study findings are still limited owing to the lack of data triangulation from analysis of lesson plans and real-time class observations. Also, it was done with quite a modest sample which affects the breadth of the discovery and may leave some cases unreported due to the shortage of the data saturation. Therefore, more data collection should be done to reflect a full picture of ICT integration of Vietnamese teachers of English.

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INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What school are you teaching at?
2. What roles do you think technology plays in teaching? What are the benefits of using technology in teaching English at high school?
3. Do you use any kind of technology in your current teaching?
4. If you use technology in teaching, could you specify this?
 - a. How often do you use it?
 - b. Do you use learning management systems like Moodle or Edmodo?
 - c. Do you use social networks like Facebook or Youtube? If you do, please describe your use.
 - d. Do you make video or audio files of your own for your classes? If you do, how often do you do so?
5. Do you tell your students to use technology to improve their language skills? Please specify this?

ENGLISH MEDIUM INSTRUCTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RECENT DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The status of English as an international language exerts a considerable impact on educational policies and practices in educational systems all over the world (Nunan, 2003). Adopting English as a medium of instruction is one of the major educational trends in non-English speaking countries in the past decades. This trend is prominent in higher education institutions not only in countries in Europe but also in Asian countries. The paper reviews theoretical perspectives on EMI at the tertiary level in the global contexts with a particular focus on European and Asian countries, where EMI has gathered momentum in the past decades. The paper first defines EMI as an instructional approach which has similarities and differences from other bilingual models. It then sketches the exponential growth of EMI in higher education worldwide and provides the rationale behind this development.

ENGLISH MEDIUM INSTRUCTION: DEFINITION, DISTINCTION, AND RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER BILINGUAL APPROACHES

The medium of instruction refers to the language used to deliver the content of non-language subjects (e.g. Mathematics, Science, History at secondary schools and specialist subject areas such as Medicine, Architecture, and Engineering at tertiary level) other than the language studied as an object in itself. The default medium of

instruction in schools is often students' first language (L1). However, students' second language (L2) may be adopted instead (Ho & Ho, 2004). The use of an L2 to replace L1 for teaching discipline content has borne different labels such as Content-Based Instruction (CBI) in North America, Immersion in Canada, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in Europe, and EMI in post-secondary education in Europe and Asia. Though each of these approaches use L2 as the medium of instruction, these approaches are distinct from each other with regard to social context, linguistic status of the L2, and pedagogical practices (Lo & Macaro, 2012).

English Medium Instruction (EMI) is widely adopted at the tertiary level in non-dominant English speaking countries to teach non-language subjects in disciplinary areas such as Economics, Science, Engineering, Medicine and Information Technology. EMI has gathered its momentum in higher education in Outer Circle countries including India, Malaysia, Singapore and Expanding Circle countries including China, Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam (Denham, 1992; Doiz, Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2012b).

EMI shares some similarities with other bilingual approaches, but has its distinguishing features. While Immersion and CBI are mostly about using a second non-dominant language to deliver content subjects, both EMI and CLIL involve using a foreign language, often English (Dalton-Puffer, Nikula, & Smit, 2010). In addition, EMI and CLIL are similar in their pedagogical goal: both aim to enhance students' foreign language proficiency through learning non-language subjects via this foreign language as a medium of instruction (Wannagat, 2007). Both EMI and CLIL teachers tend to be content experts, not language experts. Students in EMI and CLIL classes are already proficient in L1 because they have already acquired literacy skills in their mother tongue. Both EMI and CLIL are a top-down approach and the implementation of such approach is driven by economic and political motives (Costa & Coleman, 2012).

EMI is different from other forms of bilingual education in that EMI

focusses less on pedagogical strategies and more on content, whereas other approaches focus on both content and language (Hamid, Jahan, & Islam, 2013). The language-learning goals in EMI class often are not made explicit. In other words, EMI is a content-driven approach which uses a foreign language. Also, EMI courses are targeted at post-secondary students while Immersion and CLIL are mainly targeted at primary and secondary students (Park, 2007).

Table 1.1 Distinctions between EMI and other bilingual approaches

Approach	EMI	CLIL	CBI Immersion
<i>Language of instruction</i>	<i>(English as a foreign language)</i>	Foreign language	Regional language, minority language
<i>Language objectives</i>	<i>L2 proficiency similar to that of native speakers is not aimed at/required</i>	L2 proficiency similar to that of native speakers is not aimed at/required	Reach L2 proficiency similar to that of native speakers
<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Non-native speakers of the target language</i>	Non-native speakers of the target language	Native speakers of the target language (majority)
<i>Students</i>	<i>Students who have acquired competence in the minority /local languages</i>	Students who have acquired competence in the minority /local languages	Majority of immigrant students
<i>Focus</i>	<i>Content</i>	Content and	Content and

Approach	EMI	CLIL	CBI Immersion
		language	language
<i>Teaching materials</i>	<i>Aim at native speakers</i>	Use abridged materials, require pedagogical adaptation	Aim at native speakers
<i>Primary motives</i>	<i>Economic and political</i>	Economic and political	Educational (to foster bilingualism)
<i>Starting age</i>	<i>post-secondary students</i>	primary and secondary students	primary and secondary students

Source: Coyle et al., (2010); Dalton-Puffer et al., (2010)

In summary, this section has described EMI as an approach that has some differences but also share some similarities with other bilingual approaches. The following section will refer to development of EMI in higher education worldwide and provide rationale behind the growth of EMI in higher education globally.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMI IN HIGHER EDUCATION AS A GLOBAL TREND

a. EMI in Europe

There has been a significant expansion of EMI in Europe in the past decades. Within the period of five years between 2002 and 2007, English-medium provision across continental European higher education has nearly tripled. Wächter and Maiworm (2002) surveyed the number of EMI programs in 1,558 institutions in 19 European countries where English is not a native language. They quantified

700 programs delivered partially or entirely in English across HEIs in Europe and reported that EMI programs accounted for only 1% of the total study programs provided. Those figures were described as ‘marginal’ (Wächter & Maiworm, 2002). However, a second study in 2007 documented a nearly threefold increase in the number of EMI programs in European HEIs. It was found that there were more than 2,400 programs delivered entirely in English at both Bachelors and Masters level in over 800 European HEIs in 2007.

b. EMI in Asia

In tune with the global trend, East and South East Asia have adopted EMI in education, especially at the tertiary level. The East Asian countries of China, South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan have appeared to embrace EMI enthusiastically.

In **China**, in 2006, there were 132 out of 135 universities providing EMI courses or programs, with an average of 44 EMI courses at each institution (Wu, 2010, as cited in Lei & Hu, 2014). In South Korea, there were 9,000 EMI courses which accounted for 2.2% of the total courses offered by Korean universities in 2002 (Byun et al., 2011; Byun & Kim, 2011). The **Korean** government aimed to raise the EMI percentage to 3.1% of all courses by 2010 (Byun et al., 2011). Some leading universities in Korea have started to introduce entire study programs in English to attract local and international students. **Taiwan** had more than 124 EMI degree programs offered by 45 universities and colleges in 2011. Taiwan has at least 170 English-taught programs at various levels (Hou, Morse, Chiang, & Chen, 2013). There were 74 EMI graduate programs on offer at 43 universities in **Japan** in 2005 (Huang, 2006; Manakul, 2007). The Japanese government aimed to increase EMI provision to 157 programs by 2014 as part of the ‘Global 30 Project’ funded by the government (Huang, 2006).

English medium education is common in higher education sectors of South East Asian countries which used to be colonies of English speaking nations. These include Hong Kong, Malaysia, the

Philippines, and Singapore. EMI education has enabled these countries to establish themselves as ‘local education hubs’ to attract international fee-paying students and to retain local students (Kirkpatrick, 2011a). For example, The Philippines and Singapore have used English as the official language in the government and education for decades. In Hong Kong, six out of the eight Government-funded universities are EMI universities offering 100% study programs in English. Malaysia, after abandoning EMI for three decades, reintroduced EMI in the teaching of science, engineering, and medical courses at the tertiary level in 1996 for private universities and in 2005 for public universities (Ali, 2013).

Table 1.2 Some statistics about EMI provision in higher education in some Asian countries

Countries	EMI in Asian higher education
<i>Bangladesh</i>	All 80 private universities established since the introduction of the Private University Act in 1992 have used English as the only medium of instruction.
<i>China</i>	The highest ranking 32 universities offer EMI programs in many disciplines including business, science and technology.
<i>Indonesia</i>	The majority of the 78 private universities and the growing public universities have introduced EMI.
<i>Japan</i>	At least 30 universities have introduced EMI programs to attract 300,000 international students as part of the Global 30 Project.
<i>Malaysia</i>	Over 100 private colleges and universities, particularly those which have partnership programs with foreign universities, and the majority of the 20 public universities have introduced EMI.
<i>South Korea</i>	EMI programs are available in the majority of the 420 universities

Source: Hamid and Kirkpatrick (2016)

c. EMI in Vietnam

Vietnam has been moving towards EMI since the early 2000s. Since the introduction of the “National Foreign Language 2020 Project” in 2008, at least 70 universities have introduced EMI programs (Hamid & Kirkpatrick, 2016). EMI has also been present in small programs for high achieving students at public universities such as Advanced Programs and Programs for the Gifted. In addition to EMI courses and programs, English medium-universities have been established to offer its entire degrees in English. Two English medium universities are currently in operation.

Table 1.3. EMI development in Vietnamese Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

EMI in Vietnamese higher education	
EMI programs/universities	Two (public) English medium universities, approximately 70 universities offer EMI courses/programs
Twinning programs	235 programs at 72 HEIs in partnership with 28 countries
Advanced Programs	35 programs (at 23 HEIs)
High Quality Programs	55 programs
Gifted programs	Undocumented

Source: MOET, 2013; HEIs' website

In brief, EMI has emerged as a global trend in higher education not only in post-colonial states but also in non-dominant English speaking countries throughout Europe and Asia in the past decades. The rationales behind this trend will be provided in the next section.

RATIONALES BEHIND THE ADOPTION OF EMI IN GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION

This section examines the rationales behind the increased adoption of EMI in higher education worldwide, with a focus on European and Asian countries. The move towards EMI are driven by local and global forces depending on the political, social and economic contexts in which universities are placed.

a. Global drivers of EMI

The growth of English-medium teaching in higher education is driven by two major forces: globalization and internationalisation (Baldauf, 2012; Coleman, 2006; Doiz et al., 2012b; Phillipson, 2009; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). For non-dominant English speaking countries, EMI is adopted in higher education because of the perceived benefits of globalization (Doiz et al., 2012b).

Globalisation is defined as ‘the economic, political, and societal forces pushing 21st century higher Globalisation spreads the use of English through mass media, through international collaboration in politics, economics, technology and science (Clyne, 1984, 1995, cited in Coleman, 2006). Consequently, English is largely adopted as the language for international communication in various domains. The global status of English impels universities to adopt English as the language for teaching and research (Coleman, 2006).

Internationalisation is one of the major impacts of globalisation on universities (Levin, 1999). Internationalization in higher education refers to “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight, 2004, p.11). Internationalization of higher education takes one of many forms such as introduction of EMI, adoption of curriculum from world-class universities in emerging and highly-developed countries, and international collaboration via study-abroad programs, foreign language programs, twinning arrangements, and branch campuses.

Internationalization can enhance the quality of education because universities (especially in developing countries) want to enhance their teaching and research capacity through academic and institutional collaboration with prestigious universities (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Coleman, 2006).

Internationalization of higher education creates opportunities for students go abroad through exchange or twining programs to enrich their learning experiences and cross-cultural knowledge. These experiences and knowledge gain can provide students with a ‘competitive edge’ in the local and international job market (Kirkpatrick, 2011b; Vinke, Snippe, & Jochems, 1998). In order to attract international students, universities are required to provide courses conducted in English and recruit lecturers who can teach in English. The recruitment of international students and staff contributes to enhancing the institutional profile (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

b. Local drivers of EMI

While the growth of EMI in higher education is the result of globalisation and internationalization, EMI development in higher education in individual countries is characterised by the particular political and social context (Doiz, Lasagabaster, Sierra, 2012a). The following subsections will examine motives for EMI introduction in higher education in European and Asian countries.

The expansion of EMI in universities across continental Europe, according to Coleman, (2006), has been linked to the following factors: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), internationalisation, student exchanges, teaching and research materials, staff mobility, graduate employability, and market in international students (pp. 4-6). CLIL resembles the North American ‘immersion’ approach, in which parts of the curriculum are instructed in a second or foreign language. CLIL aims to achieve double benefits: to enhance language learning through increased exposure of the target language as well as to provide knowledge of

the subject matter. CLIL is widely carried out in English. CLIL is adopted at primary and secondary levels in several countries throughout Europe but not yet widely adopted in higher education (see **Section 2** for more information about CLIL).

Internationalization of higher education in Europe is influenced by the European Union (EU)'s policies on convergence and harmonization of higher education systems to make the European system more competitive (van der Wende, 2007). The increase in EMI in Europe is a result of the 1999 Bologna Declaration. This led to the formation of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in which academic cooperation, and students and staff mobility are encouraged. To date, fifty countries have joined this area (European Commission, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2011b). The European Bologna Process allows for credit transfer and recognition of academic qualifications among European universities. The 'convergence' of EU's higher education systems through the Bologna process has facilitated English-medium teaching (Kirkpatrick, 2011a).

The European Union has funded several programs such as Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus to provide university students opportunities to pursue academic experiences outside their home country within the EU. As many European countries are linguistically heterogeneous, universities in these countries have to offer courses taught in an international language, frequently English, so that students from member states can participate in bilateral exchange programs (Coleman, 2006). Facilitation of academic cooperation and exchange activities is a major impetus for EMI programs (Coleman, 2006; Phillipson, 2009).

English increasingly is adopted as the language of research and international conferences. English now is the language of science, technology, and leading international academic journals (Nunan, 2003). Most of the prestigious journals are published in English, even domestic scientific journals in many countries begin publishing in English instead of the national language(s) (Nunan, 2003). EMI

provision in Europe is influenced by the availability of journals published in English language.

EMI also contributes to international job mobility among students and academic staff. Universities providing EMI recruit academics who can demonstrate an ability to teach and publish in English. Many EMI programs aim to prepare students for the international workplace by providing them with both professional knowledge in English and good command of oral English.

Universities across Europe are encouraged to offer EMI courses to attract international students as a way of compensating for inadequate government's funding and a shortage of local students. EMI enables universities to attract international non-European students to increase institutional income (Coleman, 2006). Statistics from a European-wide survey in 2007 revealed that international students account for 65% of the total enrolments in English-medium programs in HEIs across Europe (Wächter & Maiworm, 2008).

In Asia, there appear to be three reasons for increases in EMI programs in Asian higher education: to prevent outflows of domestic students; to attract international students; and to make national higher education systems more globally competitive (Coleman, 2006; Huang, 2006; Mok, 2007; The Observatory, 2007). In addition, English is associated with development and progress for many Asian countries.

Several governments in this region see 'English as a tool to strengthen the domestic economy and build their national identity' (The Observatory, 2007). Universities in these Asian countries have increasingly introduced EMI courses and programs as part of their strategies to minimize 'brain drain', to attract fee-paying international students, to diversify their student bodies, and to increase opportunities for knowledge exchange and technological transfer (Kirkpatrick, 2011a).

In post-colonial states in South Asia, such as India, Singapore,

Malaysia, Hong Kong and the Philippines, the impact of British and American colonization on language is strong. This is evidenced by the greater exposure to English in daily practice. The colonial linguistic legacy exerts a strong impact on language of instruction, characterised by the dominance of English-medium teaching at the tertiary level. There has been a tradition of using EMI at some or all levels of schooling in these countries.

For example, Hong Kong, as a former colony of Great Britain, uses English as the medium of instruction for universities (Nunan, 2003). Currently, six out of eight Hong Kong's government-funded universities are English-medium (Kirkpatrick, 2011a). Similar to Hong Kong, Singapore has adopted English not only as a medium of instruction in the entire education system but also as the official language of the government, legislature, and judiciary (Nunan, 2003).

The move to EMI in Asian higher education can be attributed to the influences of internationalisation and globalisation. In East Asian countries such as Korea and Japan the internationalisation of higher education has been regarded as the top priority (Mok, 2007) to raise the competitiveness of domestic universities in the global higher education market (Byun et al., 2011; Chang, 2010). East Asian countries began internationalization of higher education in the late 1990s to increase the diversity in student composition, to enhance institutional prestige, and to strengthen strategic alliances of universities with foreign partners (Hou et al., 2013).

In developing countries like China, Thailand, and Vietnam, language education initiatives are driven by the pressure to maintain a competitive edge in international trade and business. Governments of these countries want their citizens to achieve a high level of proficiency in English to keep pace with developments in Western countries. A high level of English proficiency among citizens functions as a bridge for developing countries to maintain relations with developed economies (Tollefson & Tsui, 2004).

In addition to building human resources and enhancing the competitiveness of national higher education, the move to EMI in higher education in many Asian countries is driven by a desire to share the lucrative market in international university students by becoming exporters of educational services. The lion's share of this market has traditionally been split among several English-speaking countries including the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia.

The flow of Asian students to universities in English-speaking countries has negative effects on their home countries. Money goes overseas and often students choose to remain in those countries after graduation (Kirkpatrick, 2011a). To prevent these losses and to reap the benefits of international education, several 'highly developed knowledge economies' (Marginson, 2011) such as Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan want to style themselves as 'regional education hubs' to attract fee-paying students (Mok, 2006).

In Vietnam, EMI is encouraged by the Vietnamese government because the government considered EMI as one of the drivers of Vietnam's higher education (Manh, 2012; Nha & Burns, 2014). Recent government documents (MOET, 2008) summarized some primary reasons for the encouragement of EMI in Vietnamese higher education, which included: to improve the quality of the programs, thereby retain local students and attract international students; to create opportunities for students and staff to take part in exchange programs; to promote cooperation between Vietnamese universities and their overseas counterparts; and to enhance graduate employability in the local and international market.

Vietnamese universities consider EMI as a strategy to enhance the quality of academic research and teaching, to produce qualified graduates for the country's industrialization and modernization, and to compete with other higher institutions for student enrolment and income (Manh, 2012).

CONCLUSION

English medium education has emerged as a prominent phenomenon in higher education in non-dominant English speaking countries. There has been a substantial increase in the number of English taught courses and programs in universities in Asia and Europe. EMI is driven by the forces of globalisation and internationalisation.

At the national level, EMI is part of policies on human resource development, enhancement of national competitiveness, and reform of higher education. At the institutional level, EMI is seen as a means to improve academic quality and standards, to facilitate internationalisation, to raise the competitiveness of universities in the local and international education market, and to gain economic profits. At the student level, EMI is seen as a means to enhance individual English proficiency, and thus would open up the opportunity for global employability, professional mobility, and further studies abroad.

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USING E-PORTFOLIOS ON GOOGLE SITES AS AN ASSESSMENT TOOL TO HELP ENGLISH STUDENT-TEACHERS DEVELOP THEIR AUTONOMY

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Abstract

The main purpose of the study presented in this article is investigating if using e-portfolios on Google Sites as a tool to continuously assess English student-teachers' learning process after class can help them develop their autonomy in terms of their willingness to study independently, and their willingness was examined in some personal qualities such as responsibility, motivation and self-confidence. Participants (N=100) took part in this study in the summer course of 2015. A questionnaire was used to collect the data about the participants' independence of learning after they finished the course 'English Testing and Assessment Methods'. In addition, the instructor (also the researcher) observed and recorded participants' activities by following their e-portfolios during the course. The results from participants' questionnaire indicated that working with e-portfolios had positive effects on participants' responsibility and motivation, but these participants did not highly evaluate their self-confidence in studying independently. The analysis of the instructor revealed that positive motivation could be seen in 67% of participants; both positive motivation and responsibility in about 34 %; and less positive in both motivation and responsibility. Therefore, it is recommended that e-portfolios as an assessment tool should be investigated in the coming years, and

student-teachers' autonomy should be examined in both willingness and ability to work independently.

Keywords: *E-portfolio; autonomous learners; responsibility; motivation; self-confidence*

INTRODUCTION

Internet users in Viet Nam are familiar with Google and its various features such as Gmail, Google Maps, Google Calendar, Google Drive and especially Google Sites, a free web application for creating websites. Users can develop a website by themselves or collaborate with others to create content of the pages. In addition, users can decide the level of sharing they would like to specify, who the owners of the websites are, and whom they would like to give permission to edit or revise. Website owners may also provide permission to visitors for viewing purposes only. Google Sites is a great application for creating e-portfolios because of the following reasons (Schaefer, 2016). The first one is its great privacy controls. Thanks to Google, a user can easily make his/her personal site private, share it with selected individuals, or make it entirely public, and open to the world. The second reason is that Google Sites provides many benefits. For example, it is free, has no ads, and is customizable. Because it is a Google product, it works smoothly with Google Docs, YouTube, Google Calendar, Picasa web albums, and the like. Moreover, a portfolio created in Google Sites is never married to a school's servers, so long after a teacher or student is no longer affiliated with a school, s/he can keep updating and accessing his/her portfolio, without worrying about eventually being pushed out to make way for current faculty and students. Finally, like many Google products, Sites is very simple to edit and maintain. If a user wants his/her own domain name, s/he can purchase it and have it redirected to his/her Google Sites page (Schaefer, 2016).

E-portfolios, standing for electronic portfolios (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005), is a personal and digital collection of artefacts of an individual

including ‘demonstrations, resources, and accomplishments’ for a variety of contexts and time periods, which can comprise text-based, graphic, or multimedia elements archived on a Web site or on other electronic media such as a CD-ROM or DVD. Today, e-portfolios involve positioning a portfolio within a web-based interface and the use of a web-based interface makes the portfolio process more flexible and dynamic, and allows individuals to contribute to, alternating their e-portfolios in a way that is immediately accessible to employers or instructors. The word *artefacts* can indicate text-based work, reflections, video demonstrations, and other multimedia elements such as blogs and wikis that are included in e-portfolios to both promote and demonstrate learning (Brandes & Boskic, 2008).

With the above benefits of Google Sites, student-teachers can create e-portfolios for their personal, professional and academic work. They can also collaborate with other students around the world to share ideas, create content and communicate ideas. In addition, student-teachers can assemble, present, and share information online for documenting academic growth, career evaluation, and course preparation. Finally, they can maintain and expand individual e-portfolios over the duration of a class and beyond university years.

An e-portfolio has been used as a continuous assessment tool for students’ independent learning in the world; however, there has not been any research on using it in universities in Viet Nam although some teachers have recommended using it as a tool to assess students’ learning process. How lecturers in Vietnamese universities monitor and assess students’ independent learning has been a question since Decree 43 (On the credit-based training system) was issued by the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam (2007) because this training system requires students to self-study after classes and their learning outcomes must be evaluated in different ways such as assignments, a mid-term test, and final term test. This question has also been in the author’s mind for many years; therefore, with benefits of creating e-portfolios on Google Sites, she wished to investigate if using e-portfolios on Google Sites as an

alternative test to assess student-teachers' learning process could help them to develop some personal qualities of autonomous learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Benefits of e-portfolios

A great number of benefits associated with the use of e-portfolios have been suggested by many authors such as Barrett (2005), Tosh, Light, Fleming and Haywood (2005), and Wetzel and Strudler (2008). These authors believed that e-portfolios can help student-teachers improve technology knowledge and skills, facilitate distribution, store many professional documents, and increase accessibility. With e-portfolios, student-teachers not only can showcase the best work as a professional, but also exhibit their knowledge and skills in using technology. Moreover, e-portfolios can, on the one hand, serve as an administrative tool to manage and organize work created with different applications and to control who can see the work. On the other hand, E-portfolio encourages personal reflection and often involves the exchange of ideas and feedback (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005).

Steps in instructing students to develop their E-portfolios

Barret (2000) suggested the following nine steps in developing e-portfolios:

- (1) Define the aim of the portfolio. That is, to decide whether e-portfolios will be used for formative or summative evaluation because the content and organization of the portfolio will depend on its aim.
- (2) Consider the type and extent of technology available to students.
- (3) Take students' consent for the portfolio development. It is essentially learner-centered, so students must be involved right from the beginning to the assessment.

- (4) Define an audience for the portfolio because this will motivate and boost students to work harder on their portfolio.
- (5) Empower students. They should include the first draft and the final draft to show progress, or they may choose to include multiple drafts.
- (6) Involve students in peer correction or review. Students can learn through their peers' comments on their works as well as their own comment, making up an essential part of the process of portfolio development.
- (7) Incorporate feedback mechanism into students' portfolio. Feedback could also be posted on their e-portfolios if students do not mind and find it encouraging.
- (8) Encourage reflective practice. Documentation of thoughts makes the portfolio more personal and provides a view into student's performance and abilities.
- (9) Enhance the presented portfolio. The main aim of assessment can be to evaluate the work included in the portfolio and to see if there has been significant progress from the first draft.

If used as an assessment tool, as stated by Carney (2003) (as cited in Barret, 2005), e-portfolios must have six following characteristics:

- (1) Purpose(s) of the portfolio;
- (2) Control (who determines what goes into the portfolio and the degree to which this is specified beforehand);
- (3) Mode of presentation (portfolio organization and format—including the technology chosen for authoring);
- (4) Social interaction (the nature and quality of the social interaction throughout the portfolio process);
- (5) Involvement (the degree of involvement by the cooperative teacher important for preservice portfolios; when considered

more broadly, other important portfolio participants might include university teachers, students and parents, and others);

(6) Use (can range from low-stakes celebration to high-stakes assessment)

Definitions of autonomy

There are many well-known definitions of autonomy according to different authors. Benson (2006) cited many different definitions. For example, Holec (1981) is considered the ‘father’ of learner autonomy, and he states that autonomy is ‘the ability to take charge of’. Dickinson (1987) defines autonomy as ‘a situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his [or her] learning and the implementation of those decisions’. Little (1991) states that autonomy is ‘essentially a matter of the learner's psychological relation to the process and content of learning (cited in Benson, 2006). In addition, Benson argues that autonomy is a recognition of the rights of learners within educational systems.

Thornbury (2006) defines autonomy is one’s capacity to take responsibility for and control of, his/her own learning in either an institutional context or completely independent of a teacher or institution; it is also called self-directed learning (2006). In addition, Knowles states self-directed learning as, ‘individuals [who] take initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes’ (Knowles, 1975, p. 18, cited by Cavana & Lusia, 2012).

Autonomous learners

William (1997) argues that autonomous learners possess both willingness and ability to act independently. More specifically, learners’ willingness to work independently depends on the level of their motivation and confidence; also, their level of knowledge and skills positively affect their ability to act independently (William, 1997). Moore (2008) suggests that conceptualizing learner autonomy

involves two factors: (1) an autonomous learner has developed the capacity to take at least some control over their learning; and (2) the learning environment provides opportunities for learners to take control of their learning. To develop this capacity, autonomous learners are required to have a set of personal qualities like confidence, motivation, responsibility, and ability to take initiative. This capacity also involves a set of skills: academic, intellectual, personal and interpersonal. According to Mascaskill and Taylor (2010), elements of responsibility for learning, openness to experience, intrinsic motivation with an element of self-confidence in tackling new activities are core components of autonomous learning or independence of learning.

Reinders and Balcikanli (2011) recommended that to study successfully, autonomous learners should spend eight stages, all of which forms a cycle and they always impact learners' reflection, motivation and interaction with the language and other learners. One of the stages of the autonomous learning cycle is planning learning, and it can be supposed that effective learners should know how to organize their learning, which is in line with Moore's view (2008): autonomous learners can organize their learning to prove their responsibility for their own learning. In addition, Mascaskill and Taylor (2010) argue that autonomous learners should own good learning habits including effective time management and positive attitudes towards lone working. Also, autonomous learners must be able to self- assess their learning outcome in order to reflect their ability to choose materials as well as learning methods, to plan and to monitor their learning process.

E-portfolios and learner's autonomy

In comparison with traditional assessment, there are some advantages of using e-portfolios as a tool in developing learner autonomy (Brown, 2004; Richards & Romandie, 2002; Spratt, Pulverness, & Williams, 2011). Many authors such as Mascaskill and Taylor (2010), Moore (2008), Reinders and Balcikanli (2011), and William

(1997) pointed out the relations between E-portfolios and learner autonomy. E-portfolios offer students opportunities to evaluate their work, which emphasizes students' participation in the evaluation process; and students are also requested to be responsible for their learning and evaluation. Therefore, the process of working on e-portfolios helps learners to develop self-assessment skill, an important skill of an autonomous learner, as well as to become responsible for their own learning, and responsibility is also among important personal qualities of an autonomous learner. Another important feature of using e-portfolios is that learners take active control of their learning process by using metacognitive strategies such as planning, organizing, monitoring, observing and reflecting, and the use of these strategies can enhance their learning autonomy. Finally, e-portfolios emphasize students' participation, so they have opportunities to reflect on their performance, show their learning process and progress, to present the results of their learning; therefore, they will have a sense of achievement, which motivates them to continue their autonomous learning, and motivation is among personal qualities of an autonomous learner.

Previous relevant research studies

Tosh, Light, Fleming and Haywood (2005) believed that motivation, assessment and e-portfolio technology are major emerging themes that need to be addressed to make using an e-portfolio a more rewarding experience for many students. Also, the results of their study show that an institution or more specifically a course, needs to identify the learning outcome of using e-portfolios and ensure that e-portfolios are aligned with the rest of the course.

According to Kocoglu (2008), e-portfolios have been potential tools for enhancing reflective thinking and professional development of student teachers. The results of Wetzel and Strudler (2008) identified many benefits of e-portfolios such as increasing opportunities for students to reflect and learn, helping students to understand teaching standards and increasing faculty communication with students.

Despite some existing disadvantages, these authors concluded that faculty satisfaction with e-portfolios appears strongly associated with their values for student-centered in teacher education and in some cases, their willingness to sacrifice individual preferences to accomplish program goals.

Also, the findings of Young's study (2008) prove that the use of e-portfolios promotes a greater impetus for the student to assume a personal responsibility for his/her own development, in the process of taking of individual control over his/her progression towards becoming a teacher; the student-teacher is, therefore, provided with the opportunity for constant reflection rather than the periodic reflection offered by traditional paper-based portfolios.

The results of Akçil and Arap (2009)'s study show that students have positive attitudes towards using e-portfolios for educational purposes because it provides them permanent learning and gives them the possibility of controlling themselves and increases their motivation to study. Smolyaninova (2010)'s conclusions prove that e-portfolios help student-teachers improve self-evaluation skills, form critical view on the personal achievement, and raise level of profession ambition. Cavana and Lusia's research (2012) is concerned with the role of reflection in autonomous learning and with how learners can develop awareness of their own learning style through self-assessment. In particular, it explores the use of an electronic version of the European Language Portfolio (eELP) to assess learning styles, reporting on a pilot project with distance students in higher education that enabled students to reflect on their individual language learning process. According to these authors, the use of reflection and self-assessment with a focus on learning styles is useful for learners because it provides relevant information to improve their language learning. They also suggest that eELP is a valuable instrument to assess individual learning styles, and that it can be considered as an alternative to tests.

The findings of the study conducted by Cakir and Balcikanli (2012)

indicated that both student-teachers and teacher-trainers found the use of e-portfolios beneficial in terms of reflection, self-assessment and awareness. Also, Douglas (2012) found that e-portfolios were effective in developing self-directed learning skills. Particularly, e-portfolios had positive effects on students' intrinsic motivation, self-assessment, self-confidence and self-esteem. Khoosf and Khosravani's research (2014) proved that *E-portfolios* had positive influences on the encouragement of learners' autonomy and their classroom interaction. Therefore, these authors support the role of e-portfolios as a way of on-going assessment of one's own work and the role of technology as a useful tool for language teaching.

The results of the study conducted by Hakki Mirici and Hergüner (2015) revealed that the use of e-portfolios is helpful in developing student-teachers' metacognitive strategies as autonomous learners, which is a key factor in becoming teachers of foreign languages adopting the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the European Profile for Language ELP principles in their classes. Although Wuetherick and Dickinson (2015)'s conclusion supports positive influences of e-portfolios on their continuing students, these authors identified two major concerns that need to be addressed. Firstly, it is the level of computer literacy in their students due to their variability in age and their previous educational backgrounds. Secondly, the support for portability of e-portfolios for students and teachers should be noted.

To sum up, many authors in the literature have believed the positive effects of e-portfolios on the development of learner autonomy in terms of personal qualities and some relevant skills. Also, the findings of many researchers in many different countries from 2008 to 2015 have proved the benefits of e-portfolios if used as an assessment tool in helping learners becoming autonomous. Therefore, if e-portfolios can help learners develop their autonomy would be investigated in the study conducted by the author of this article during the English Testing and Assessment Methods Course in Ho Chi Minh City Open University in the summer term of 2015.

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the presented study is to investigate if the use of e-portfolios as a continuous assessment helps student-teachers develop their autonomy. In other words, the author wished to examine the answer to the following research question:

Did the use of the E-portfolio on Google Sites help student-teachers develop their willingness to work independently after class?

This research question is divided into two sub-questions:

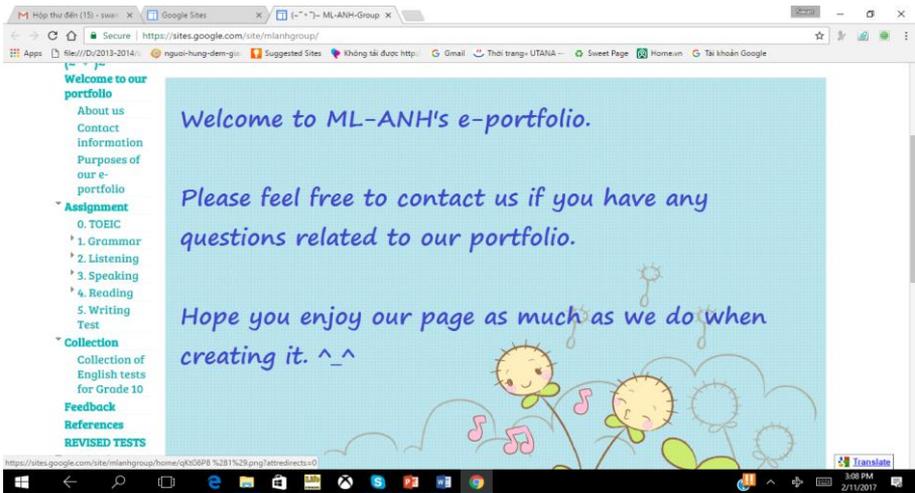
- a) Did student-teachers believe that the process of working with e-portfolios help them to develop their willingness to study independently?
- b) Did the instructor highly appreciate student-teachers' willingness to study independently during the process of working with e-portfolios?

Setting and participants

The presented study was conducted in the English Testing and Assessment Methods Course in the summer term of the academic year 2015-2016. This course lasted 11 weeks. There were totally 101 student-teachers (in their third year) in this study. Their learning outcome was assessed twice: (1) continuous assessment (30%) and (2) an objective test (summative assessment) after they completed the course.

The implementation of the E-portfolio

Student-teachers were formed into groups of three or five students to create their group's e-portfolio on Google Sites which was used as a continuous assessment tool during the course.



Picture 1. *The interface of the E-portfolio on Google Sites created by a group of student-teachers*

Picture 1 illustrates the interface of one of the e-portfolios created by one group of student-teachers. On the left column is a list of sub-pages:

- (1) home page including personal information, aims of the e-portfolio;
- (2) assignments where student-teachers posted all of their assignments of the course;
- (3) collection consisting all relevant materials students collected;
- (4) feedback including self-evaluation sheets, peers' feedback and the instructor's feedback on each of their assignments;
- (5) references like links to other websites, pictures, audio or video files, PPP files, books, etc.;
- (6) revised tests including five English tests (listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar) selected from the assignments for the instructor's assessment.

Steps for student-teachers to create e-portfolios on Google Sites

Week 1: The instructor introduced general information about the course (e.g. course aims, textbook, detailed schedule and the assessment of their learning outcome), and then instructed student-teachers how to create the e-portfolio on Google Sites.

Week 2: Student-teachers started creating their e-portfolios, posted the summary of the textbook (in assignment sub-page). They chose to write five English tests for learners who are supposed to study that textbook and invited the instructor as well as other groups to give comments on their e-portfolio and book summary.

Week 3: Student-teachers continued making some changes on the interface as well as on sub-pages and posted English tests written by different teachers on their collection sub-page, and posted all relevant collected materials on reference sub-page. They also invited the instructor and their peers to post comments.

Week 4: Student-teachers posted their grammar test on the assignment sub-page and then invited the instructor and their peers to give feedback. Also, they posted their self-evaluation sheet on the feedback subpage. After getting feedback from peers and the instructor, students could revise their grammar test.

Week 5,6,7, and 8: Student-teachers followed the same procedure as the grammar test above for their listening test, speaking test, reading test and writing test.

Week 9: The instructor instructed student-teachers how to self-evaluate their e-portfolio (major elements including information in homepage, selection of artefacts, descriptive text, reflective commentary, citations, usability and accessibility, writing conventions, multimedia elements; each was examined in four levels: exemplary, proficient, emerging and unsatisfactory). Student-teachers were also encouraged to invite their instructor and peers to have feedback on their e-portfolio. After getting feedback, they could make some changes (in content and Interface) in their e-portfolios.

Week 10: Student-teachers completed their E-portfolios, especially their five selected tests for the instructor's assessment.

Instruction and data collection

The questionnaire including seven items labeled as *Independence of learning* was used as tool to

collect the data for the answer of the first research question. Student-teachers' responses were recorded on a 5- point scale with higher scores indicating greater levels of *autonomy*, more independence and more positive attitudes to learning. Moreover, student-teachers were asked to give a short answer to a question about their difficulty during the time they worked with the E-portfolio. The questionnaire was distributed and collected in the last class meeting (week 10). In addition, the instructor sent this questionnaire to absent students on this day and they sent their responses back to the instructor about two or three days after they received it through email. Every week, the instructor recorded student-teachers' processes of working on their e-portfolios. The instructor recorded if students posted their assignments late or on time, if they revised or made changes in their products after getting feedback from their peers or the instructor. Student-teachers' motivation was examined in their stated objectives in their e-portfolios and collection of relevant learning materials; and their responsibility for completing given assignments was observed and recorded every week. This recorded raw data would qualitatively be analyzed to find the answer to the second sub-research question.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

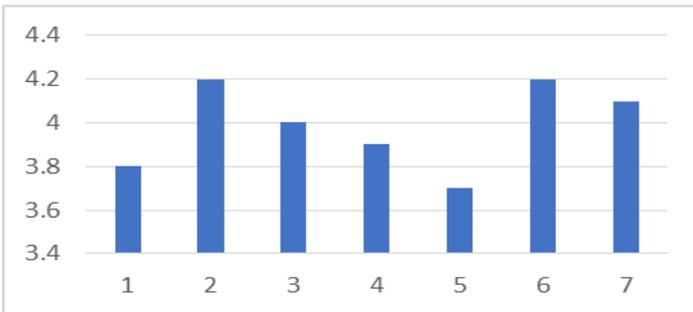
Results of student-teachers' responses in the questionnaire

The responses of 100 student-teachers were processed by the SPSS software version 23.0 and were interpreted as follows.

Table 1. Student-teachers' willingness to work independently

Personal qualities of autonomous learners	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Self-confidence (5)	100	2.00	5.00	3.7	.08391	.83913
Openness (1)	100	2.00	5.00	3.8	.07255	.72551
Motivation (4)	100	2.00	5.00	3.9	.08741	.87409
Responsibility (3)	100	2.00	5.00	4.0	.07437	.74366
Motivation (7)	100	2.00	5.00	4.1	.08200	.81995
Openness (2)	100	2.00	5.00	4.2	.06559	.65590
Responsibility (6)	100	2.00	5.00	4.2	.06679	.66788
Valid (listwise)	N 100					

Chart 1: Student-teachers' independence of learning



1. *I enjoy finding information about new topics of my own.*
2. *I am open to new ways of doing things.*
3. *Even when tasks are difficult I try to stick with them.*
4. *I enjoy new learning experiences.*
5. *I enjoy being set a challenge.*
6. *I take responsibility for my learning experiences.*
7. *I tend to be motivated to work by assessment deadlines.*

As presented in literature review, learners' willingness to work independently can be found in some personal qualities such as self-confidence, openness to a new learning experience, and intrinsic motivation. The number in Table 1 above indicates that the means scores of these qualities are ranged from 3.7 to 4.2 out of 5. The highest means score (4.2 out of 5) can be seen in columns 2 and 6. That means student-teachers' responses for responsibility and openness to a new way of learning are very positive. This result is like Young's findings (2008). Another means score (4 out of 5) in column 3 stands for student-teachers' responsibility. Therefore, it can be concluded that when working with e-portfolios, student-teachers have developed their responsibility for learning, and this finding is supported by many authors in literature such as William (1997), Moore (2008), and Mascaskill and Taylor (2010). The scores for student-teachers' motivation when working with e-portfolios can be seen in column 4 and 7 (3.9 and 4.1 out of 5); as a result, it can be stated that student-teachers' motivation was very positive when working independently. This finding is like that of many authors such as Akçıl and Arap (2009), Smolyaninova (2010), and Douglas (2012); and this is also supported by several authors mentioned in the literature review. The lowest score in this chart (3.7 out of 5) can be seen in column 5 standing for student-teachers' self-confidence. This result is different from Douglas (2012)'s conclusion. The numbers of Table 2 below indicating student-teachers' responses to the open question in the questionnaire about their difficulties when working

with e-portfolios can partly explain why the means score for self-confidence is the lowest. 62 student-teachers (62%) had difficulties about techniques when working with e-portfolios on Google Sites because this was the first time they had to create a web page on Google Sites. Moreover, they had to work with other students in a group, so those who were not good at creating the e-portfolio as well as uploading files onto it always depended on their partners who could perform these tasks easily. Therefore, it can be concluded that student-teachers computer skills had a negative influence on their self-confidence when working independently. This finding is in line with the conclusion of Dalton (2007, cited from Yastibas & Cepik, 2015) and Wuetherick and Dickinson (2015); that is, computer skills are challenges of working with e-portfolios.

Table 2. Student-teachers' difficulties in working with the e-portfolios.

No response	Students' responses (78)			
	<i>Content</i>	<i>Content and technology</i>	<i>Groupwork</i>	<i>Techniques</i>
22	4	2	10	62
22%	4%	2%	10%	62 %

In brief, from the findings from student-teachers' responses in the questionnaire, it can be said that student-teachers believed that the process of working with the e-portfolios could help them to develop their willingness to study independently. In particular, their willingness can be seen in their responsibility and motivation in learning independently.

Results of the instructor's records

The results presented below are from the synthesis and analysis of the instructors' records on student-teachers' motivation and responsibility during their independent learning process. The findings from the instructor's records reveal that only eight groups

(34%) accomplished their assignments excellently. The instructor highly evaluated their responsibility and motivation. For instance, they always finished and posted their assignments before the deadlines, and they also eagerly posted their feedback on other classmates' tasks after getting the invitation from these classmates. Their high motivation can be found in their statements of the objectives of working on their e-portfolio. In addition, the collection of these students consists of a variety of relevant and useful materials for their learning.

The results from the instructor's records also show that seven groups of participants (33%) were highly evaluated in their motivation; however, their responsibility was not high because they uploaded their assignments about two or three days after the deadlines set by the instructor. Finally, about 10 groups of participants (43%) were not responsible for their learning as they always submitted their assignments on time; they rarely posted comments on their classmates' assignments.

Moreover, they were not motivated in their unclearly stated objectives and very limited collections. They did not revise e-portfolios after getting feedback from peers and before submitting for the instructor's final evaluation, either. In general, the instructor's evaluation of participants' responsibility was about 34%, motivation about 67% and 43% of participants did not seriously take responsibility and lack motivation for their independent learning when working on the e-portfolios.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The analyzed results above proved that using e-portfolios as tool for assessing English student-teachers' self-studying process after class helped students to develop their responsibility and motivation although students did not highly evaluate their self-confidence because of their difficulty in working with the e-portfolio on Google Sites. In spite of differences between student-teacher's self-assessment and the instructor's assessment, the researcher has found

the answer to the formulated sub-research questions before conducting this study. However, there are some limitations in this study. First, student-teachers' ability to work independently, or essential skills of autonomous learners. Second, the research findings would be persuasive and significant if there was a correlation between student-teachers' willingness and ability of self-studying and this issue was not investigated in this research.

With such limitations, the author suggests that e-portfolios should be used as an assessment tool in the coming years and there should be empirical studies on the effectiveness of this alternative form of continuous assessment for English student-teachers in Ho Chi Minh City Open University.

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USING AUTHENTIC READING MATERIALS IN THE IN-SERVICE EFL READING CLASSES

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Abstract

For most students, reading academic texts is difficult and boring. Then teaching reading in the in-service EFL classes is much more difficult to lecturers because the students in class are from different fields of work and they all need practical vocabulary to use in their own jobs. To address this issue, a research has been carried out in an in-service reading class at Dong thap University, Vietnam. This paper presents the attitudes of in-service students towards using authentic reading materials as extra materials to study autonomously in accordance with the curriculum for upper-intermediate reading. Quantitative data collected from 50 participants after the reading courses will be shown to give some pedagogical suggestions on using authentic reading materials for extensive reading outside the in-service EFL reading classes.

Keywords: *authentic reading materials, extensive reading, in-service students, EFL reading classes*

INTRODUCTION

In the new working context of the 21st century, English is really the key to success if people want to be global citizens. For most people who are in different fields of work, reading is an important skill when they need to use English in their daily work. Every day they read many things from different sources such as newspapers, magazines, books, and even the news or professional materials on the

internet. From these sources, students can learn autonomously without the control of the lecturers. For this reason, in addition to the course books in the curriculum, it is necessary to supply authentic reading materials for extensive reading outside EFL reading classes

Defining authentic materials

Wallace (1992) defined authentic texts as real-life texts, not written for pedagogic purposes. Peacock (1997) also defined authentic materials as materials that have been produced to fulfill some social purpose in the language community and it in contrast to non-authentic texts that are especially designed for language learning purposes. Morrow (1997) stated that an authentic text is a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of one sort.

There are many sources of authentic reading materials such as newspapers, menus, magazines, the internet, brochures, comics, literature (novels, poems, and some short stories).....

Definitions of extensive reading

There have been several ways to define *extensive reading*. *Extensive reading* is in contrast with *expeditious reading* and *intensive reading*.

Grabe and Stoller (2012) stated that *extensive reading* is an approach to the teaching of reading in which learners read large quantities of materials that is within their linguistic competence. Day and Bamford (2004) also contended that *extensive reading* is a teaching approach through which students read a lot of easy materials in the new language. In an *extensive reading* environment, students can choose books that interest them and that they enjoy reading for pleasure. Students can develop the habit of reading, which will make them confident in language learning in general and reading in particular. Nation(2009) mentioned that *extensive reading* is an approach in which language learners can focus on the meaning of the text they read and develop their fluency through reading.

In brief, *extensive reading* involves four categories: Large quantities of easy reading materials, reading for enjoyment and pleasure, reading to build confidence in language learning, and reading for fluency development.

Reasons for extensive reading

Guariento & Morley (2001) stated that extracting real information from a real text in a new/different language can be extremely motivating, therefore increasing students' motivation for learning by exposing them to 'real' language.

Nuttall (1996) also stated that authentic texts can be motivating because they are proof that the language is used for real-life purposes by real people.

Day and Bamford (2004) described ten characteristics that are found in successful extensive reading programs. These features are:

1. The reading material is easy.
2. A variety of reading materials on a wide range of topics is available.
3. Learners choose what they want to read.
4. Learners read as much as possible.
5. Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower.
6. The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding.
7. Reading is individual and silent.
8. Reading is its own reward.
9. The teacher orients and guides the students.
10. The teacher is a role model of a reader.

Based on these characteristics, it is clearly that *extensive reading* can be an effective approach to motivate students, especially those who

are studying English in non-English environments, to be involved actively in learning the language target.

Nation (2009) emphasized that the teachers should introduce appropriate reading materials that the students feel comfortable with and motivated about when they are asked to read.

Krashen (2004) mentioned that *extensive reading* can take place outside the classroom where students can enjoy reading pleasurably on their own time in any place they want.

Day(2012) also confirmed that through extensive reading, students' language skills are improved, which can lead to positive changes in students' attitudes and motivation towards reading.

When the researcher was in charge of the reading courses for the in-service students at Dong Thap University, she found that most of the students were usually too tired after work and went to the reading class with negative attitude. Then she tried to encourage them to read. First she asked them to read the news in English from the internet or elsewhere so that they could tell their classmates what was new on that day. The students just tried and tried to read from any materials, they had to find some new things/stories to share with their classmates, they also shared to one another links to their favorite websites. Then she asked the in- service students to read longer and more difficult materials as they found more pleasure and confidence to read.

In this study, the researcher explored the attitude towards the advantages of authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL classes. Also, this research found out the problems they usually encountered when using authentic reading materials for extensive reading outside EFL reading classes.

In order to investigate the in-service students' attitude towards the advantages and the problems they encountered when using authentic reading collections for extensive reading outside the in-service EFL classes, the researcher tried to find out the answers for the following

questions:

1. What do the students think about the advantages of authentic reading materials for extensive reading outside the in-service EFL reading classes?
2. What problems do they usually encounter when using authentic reading materials for extensive reading outside the in-service EFL reading classes?

METHOD

Design

This research was of a descriptive one in which the researcher collected the information and describe the facts. In this descriptive research, the researcher divided the questionnaire into two clusters:

1. The attitude of students on the advantages of authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL classes.
2. The problems that in-service students had when using authentic reading materials.

There are eight questions for each cluster, so there are sixteen questions altogether in the questionnaire.

Procedure

First of all, the researcher chose fifty in-service students in her reading classes. Then, to monitor the questionnaire, twenty of the students were chosen to answer the questionnaire. From the result selected from SPSS, *Cronbach's alpha* (α) was .800, it was quite reliable, so the researcher continued asking other thirty students. After all the other students had received and answered the questionnaire, the researcher typed all the answers in the SPSS table to check the frequencies, descriptive statistics, means comparison and correlation between the two constructs. Last of all, the researcher interpreted the output from the quantitative data.

Instruments

Questionnaire:

To answer the two research questions in the study, the researcher used the questionnaire to measure the quantitative data on the students' attitude toward the use of authentic reading materials and the problems that they had when using authentic reading materials for extensive reading outside the in-service EFL classes..(We can see the content of the questionnaire in the appendices).

Participants

The subjects involved in the research were fifty in-service students from reading classes. Most of them were teachers of English in primary schools and secondary schools, the others were working as office - workers in some foreign companies in Dong Thap, Tien Giang and Ben Tre. They took the FCE examination for B2 many times but only few of them got the certificate, most of them failed because of the reading skill. All of them were eager to improve their reading scores in their next examination.

Materials

The researcher designed lesson plans based on the course books in the curriculum. Besides, the researcher also suggested some websites for extensive reading outside EFL reading classes.

Monitoring the study

To ensure the reliability of the research, the researcher chose twenty in-service students to answer the monitoring questionnaire. The students involved were the representatives for primary school teachers, secondary school teachers, and office workers, which increased reliability of the quantitative data. After checking the reliability of the questionnaire from SPSS, the researcher used the questionnaire to ask the other thirty students to get the full data.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.800	.745	16

FINDINGS

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude towards the advantages of using authentic reading materials	50	3.38	4.50	4.0725	.23432
Attitude towards the problems when using authentic reading materials	50	2.25	4.63	3.4025	.81413
Valid N (listwise)	50				

Table 2

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Attitude towards the problems	3.496	49	.001	.40250	.1711	.6339
Attitude towards the advantages	32.365	49	.000	1.07250	1.0059	1.1391

The attitude of students on the advantages of authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL classes

Table 1 shows the results of a one-sample t test. A one-sample t- test was conducted on the students' attitude towards the advantages of using authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL classes to evaluate whether the mean was significant different from 3.0, the accepted mean for the students' attitude . The sample mean $M = 4.07$ ($SD = 0.234$) was significantly different from 3.0, $t = 32.365$, $df = 49$, $p = 0.000$.

The 95% of confidence interval of the difference ranged from (4.07-3.0) and the effect size $d = 1.07/0.00 = 0.000$, a large effect. It means that the in-service students' attitude towards the advantages of using authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL classes was really positive as seen from the result in table 2.

The problems that in-service students had when using authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL classes

Table 1 shows the results of a one-sample t test. A one-sample t- test was conducted on the students' attitude towards the problems that in-service students had when using authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL classes to evaluate whether the mean was significant different from 3.0, the accepted mean for the students' attitude . The sample mean $M = 3.40$ ($SD = 0.814$) was significantly different from 3.0, $t = 3.496$, $df = 49$, $p = 0.001$.

The 95% of confidence interval of the difference ranged from (3.40-3.0) and the effect size $d = 0.40/0.00 = 0.001$, a small effect. It means that the in-service students' attitude towards the problems that they had when using authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL classes was really negative as seen from the result in table 2.

CONCLUSION

From the research, the researcher found that most in-service students had positive attitude towards using authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL classes. The research also showed that they did not care much about the problems they encountered when using authentic reading materials for extensive reading. Using authentic reading materials for extensive reading was a good way to motivate the reading ability of the in-service students. Nevertheless, it was not easy at all for lecturers to select the suitable materials for their in-service students. To motivate the reading ability of the in-service students outside the EFL reading classes, lecturers should select materials with simple vocabulary and structures for them to read first, then step by step enhance their reading skill as they get more and more knowledge on vocabulary and expressions. The selection of authentic reading materials should also be changed when necessary to meet the need of the students, especially the in-service ones.

This is just a descriptive research on the in-service students' attitude, there should be further research on lecturers' attitude to suggest the *motivational strategies* for lecturers to help the in-service students improve their extensive reading outside EFL reading classes so that they can make more progress in intensive reading inside EFL reading classes.

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Useful Websites

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<http://extensivereading.net/what-is>

<http://sdkrashen.com>

<http://ijflt.com>

www.nflrc.hawaii.edu/rfl/

<http://www.extensivereading.net>

www.erfoundation.org

http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF

APPENDICES

QUESTIONNAIRE

A. The attitude of in-service students on the advantages of authentic reading materials for extensive reading outside the in-service EFL classes

Dear all,

I am Bui Thi Cao Nguyen, a lecturer of English from Dong Thap University. I am doing research on using authentic reading materials for extensive reading in the in-service EFL reading classes .Please mark on your answer in the following questionnaire. Thank you very much.

Question 1: Authentic reading materials can enhance your motivation for learning.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 2: Authentic reading materials can help you more confident when reading.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 3: Authentic reading materials can set your habit of reading.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 4: Authentic reading materials can make you find pleasure in reading.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 5: Authentic reading materials can make you more successful in your reading examination.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 6: Authentic reading materials can make you more successful in my career.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 7: Authentic reading materials can help you enlarge your knowledge .

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 8: Authentic reading materials can help you satisfied when you understand something in real English.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

B. Problems that in-service students had when using authentic reading materials

Question 1: Reading in English is difficult and boring.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 2: Reading the texts in the course book is so difficult that you can't do any more exercise after class.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 3: It's much more difficult to read the texts in newspapers, magazines or on the internet.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 4: It is very difficult to select the suitable free reading materials for extensive reading outside EFL reading classes.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 5: There's no reason to read the materials that will not be assessed.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 6: Reading authentic reading materials outside the reading classes is really time consuming.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 7: It's not interesting at all to look up the new words in the dictionary to understand the whole text.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 8: The reading course usually lasts in a short time and there is not enough time for any other extra activities.

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

USING VISUAL AIDS IN CLASSROOM: A MOTIVATIONAL TOOL FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS (ACTION RESEARCH)

Nguyen Binh Nguyen

Abstract

This research was set out to explore the use of visual aids in enhancing motivation of non-majors of English at Nguyen Hue University (a military education institution). The 10 week-investigation was conducted on 37 student participants rotated to study on weekly basis in two separate classes (artificial material class and visual material class). The material for control class will be artificial or contrived materials from “American English File” while the material for experimental class will be visual aids at the researcher’s discretion such as pictures, flash cards, charts, graphics, picture books, computers, videos, short movies and clips and the like. The data were collected using two methods of diary and questionnaire. The data will be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The finding revealed that the students were motivated when being exposed to a certain types of visual aids. However they faced some sorts of difficulties due to inappropriately designing activities, teaching methods and technical problems in the visual material class. The reflections were provided to those who are interested in teaching the language using visual aids.

Keywords: *Visual aids, artificial materials, students’ motivation*

INTRODUCTION

It is believed that teachers always wish to work with motivated students because, as do we all know, motivation is a key factor leading language learning to success (Dörnyei, 2001; Ellis, 1994).

The term “motivation” has been defined from various perspectives and in complicated manners, however in the research context, motivation is described in a simple and straightforward way as “to be motivated is *to be moved* to do something” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 54). As far, the research on enhancing motivation for foreign language learning has evolved considerably. Language experts and classroom teachers have worked with great efforts to motivate students by applying a variety of techniques such as creating interesting and engaging classroom activities, bringing authentic materials in classroom and the like in which using visual aids, a part of authentic materials (Kilickaya, 2004), is a case in point. At Nguyen Hue University, visual aids have been used to teach the students of English, though the teaching activities are not conducted systematically. Especially, no research has ever been carried out in terms of using visual aids in promoting learners’ motivation at this military education institution. This practice inspires the researcher to come up with an idea of how to use visual aids to motivate the students in learning English. In this regard, the investigation is aimed at seeking the solutions to the research questions below:

- *How are the students motivated through exposure to visual aids?*
- *What difficulties do they face when learning with visual aids?*

LITERATURE REVIEW

For ages, researchers have examined the positive impacts of using visual aids on English teaching and learning from different viewpoints and achieved valuable outcomes. In one study, Natoli (2011) states that “audio-visual materials are rich opportunities for students to develop communication skill while actively engaged in solving meaningful problems” (p. 102). Students’ competence of using the language can also be improved when visual aids are used in language instruction. This argument is further proved by Idris (2015) in a piece of research on the students of Junior Secondary School in

Katsina local government area of Katsina State, Nigeria. The author pointed out that the students' ability to use English language was developed as visual aids were brought in classroom. Idris (2015) also concludes that using visuals makes the classroom interactive and interesting, motivates the learners as well as facilitates language skills. Unlike other types of materials, visual aids help make learners engaged with lessons.

Regarding positive effects that visual aids have on learning outcomes in general and enhancing motivation in particular, Wright and Haleem (1991) observe that visual aids are one of the most significant factors of language teaching because using visual aids makes teaching activities more effective, interactive and interesting. The advantages of using visual aids are also recognized by many researchers as concrete, inspirational, vivid, motivational and exciting (Mannan (2005); Kemp and Dayton (1985 as cited in Arif and Hashim, 2009); Mayer and Moreno, (1998); Hill (1990). Also, exposed to visual aids, young learners often find learning English more achievable as their knowledge of real world and abstract concepts is still limited. In this case, visual information assists them to express the ideas that they want to convey (Inhelder (2000, as cited in Arif and Hashim, 2009).

It is evident that using visual aids is an effective way in improvement of the learners' motivation. However, in order to generate positive outcomes, visual materials should be selected to suit the students' level and their learning topics. Additionally, the aids should contain related information and clues so that the cadets can find it approachable and the factors such as the quality of materials and teachers' technological expertise are supposed to be taken into account.

METHODOLOGY

Context of the Research

The research was implemented to one English class with thirty-seven

students at Nguyen Hue University (a military education institution) in Bien Hoa Dong Nai. The students are in mixed level but in general, they have good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. They study general English in semester one and two, and English for military purposes in semester three. Despite having learnt English for years at middle and high school, the students cannot speak English communicatively. What is more is that they find it so challenging to use the language, which negatively affect their learning motivation, however, it can be recognized that as youngsters, the students wish to improve their English in order to address the challenge of their present and future jobs.

Research Methods

The mixed method was used in the investigation. First, the researcher implemented the qualitative method as it was conducted in a natural setting and the researcher becomes the instrument for data collection (Creswell, 2007). The quantitative method was also applied to cope with the statistics from the questionnaire related to the level of the participants' motivation. It could be inferred that the method suits the research purpose since the researcher attempted to analyze and interpret the data collected from the instruments that comprise the diary and the questionnaire.

Participants

The experiment was conducted in an English class of 37 students at Nguyen Hue University, where English is compulsory subject in the curriculum. The students are non English majors who take the first semester of a four-year course. The students' level of English is mixed and all of them are males since females are not permitted into this military university. They had 3 class meetings a week during the research, which lasted for 10 weeks.

Materials and Procedure

Visual aids were used in the experimental class and artificial materials were used in the control class. The material for the control

class came from American English File by Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson (2008). For the experimental class, the teacher or researcher used his own visual aids. To control the variables, the teacher seriously consider the the topic and contents of the curriculum in material selection. The investigation lasted for 10 weeks with 3 class meetings in a week. The participants studied in the two classes during the experiment and it is one effective way to control the research variables. In addition, the participants were required to rotate learning from the experimental class to the control class on weekly basis to make the investigation results reliable. The subjects were asked to keep a diary as their homework on a daily basis which described in detail their emotions and experiences of individual class meeting. The questionnaire was administered in week 9 which was used to explore the participants' attitudes and opinions on using the visual and artificial and unnatural materials which were already arranged in the textbook. In order to obtain reliability of the data, the researcher did not reveal the investigation in detail but just informed that he carried out the research to test general effectiveness of different teaching materials.

Research Instruments

Learning Diary

On the first class meeting, the participants were provided with a notebook and were required to keep a studying diary during the course as their everyday homework. The participants were shown a PowerPoint presentation describing how they should write in their diary. They were given two samples in Vietnamese, one was positive feedback and the other was negative. They were asked to write down at least 3 sentences for each entry showing their feelings of teaching and learning events such as topics, materials, activities, teacher, classmates and background knowledge of the lessons. The diaries were handed in to the teacher at the beginning of individual class meeting. The participants were allowed to use either Vietnamese or English in their diaries. Only the points relevant to the treatment

were selected for analysis and they were put into emerging themes.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire (see appendix 1) was distributed once a week to individual participant to measure levels of motivation created during the investigation with the artificial and visual materials in use. This instrument consists of six closed items involving *topic, material, activity, teacher, fellow students and background knowledge*. The participants report their extent of interest based on a 5 semantic various scale of adjectives showing motivation, arranging from uninteresting to very interesting. For every item, each scale is coded according to increasing level using percentage. It means scale 1 that is *uninteresting* is equivalent to 20% and *very interesting* is equivalent to 100%. Every week, after data collection, the mean score of six issues was calculated for each class in separation (see appendix 2).

DATA DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The part below describes and analyzes the data from the diaries and questionnaires. The diary data were coded and analyzed using textual analysis whereas, the questionnaire data were processed using SPSS software to calculate the percentage and mean score.

Diary Data

It clear from the data that approximately two thirds of the diaries related to materials were mentioned to the experimental class in which the majority showed eagerness and excitement with one comment stating below:

Today, we saw many interesting pictures and watched some funny movies. The most interesting movie is the one in which a couple talking about different English accents. My friends and I liked to speak in English about the film. I wish to see one film in every lesson.

However, not all comments are positive about visuals. Some students

complained that they could not know how to make sentences or to start a conversation due to difficulty of the photos given by the teacher and the following is an example:

We are asked to make sentences about actions in the past. The teacher showed us the pictures on PowerPoint. Despite looking carefully, we found it very hard to make a sentence using past simple. I wish the class finished as fast as possible.

What is more, some students expressed in their diaries that they felt inconvenient when they saw the movies with terribly violent actions with negative idea as follows:

I feel headache when seeing the violent actions. People fought each other a lot. I hate seeing blood shed in action movies. I wish the teacher changed for a happier film.

Considering the control class, many comments showed negative opinions on the artificial materials as boring, outdated, not authentic and routinely. As stated, the material used for the control class is the textbook named American English File in which most pictures and texts are old fashioned so it may cause boredom to the students. There was a total of 12 most related comments stating negatively and one was noted as below:

I don't want to listen to the phrase "Open the book, page". I feel tired with the book because it consists of too many words. Pictures are very small and they almost look the same. I have to do too many exercises. I feel stressed and have a headache.

Given the finding, it could be established that visual materials were more motivating than artificial in this investigation. It may be because they recognized that the materials were relevant to their life. The comments were closely linked to Peacock's (1997) observing that students like visual materials since they find them authentic.

For the topics and background knowledge, the data revealed the students' preferences. In reality, the participants found it motivating

and enjoyable when they were asked to work with the topics such as famous people, tourist destinations, shopping, foods, cities in the world, well-known novels in the world and music in “American English File”. Together with the relevant topics, the participants also realized that the background knowledge in the book was quite familiar with that in their real life situations. For that reason, the majority of the participants expressed their interest with a comment presenting below:

Today we talked with each other about famous travelling destinations in the world. We watched a video about famous tourist attractions in the world. Then we talked about our plans to travel the world. We talked a lot and we have a lot of fun, too. I love travelling so much.

In terms of activities, teacher, fellow students and background knowledge, it could be inferred that the participants preferred the activities such as watching video clips, working with their classmates using colorful pictures or PowerPoint presentations to the activities which required them to work with efforts. In fact, “American English File” consists of many activities focused on teacher-student interaction. However, in the experimental class, the students were provided with chances to work in pairs and groups. For this reason, the students showed their preference for the activities using visuals over those with the textbook. The students reflected their preference for the experimental class thanks to the interaction with their classmates and with their teacher. There were 16 favorable comments out of a total of 21 notes in the experimental class and below is one example with positive connotation:

It is a great lesson. I practiced speaking English with my teacher and my friends so much.

I love to speak English with my classmates and I also like talking in English with my teacher. He helped me a lot.

Beside positive expressions, a certain number of participants showed

their displeasing feelings and emotions on the quality of technical devices. The following complaint showed that mood:

I have to wait for the projector to work. I feel displeased with my eyes when looking constantly on the screen that is unclear. How uncomfortable it is!

In respect with the unfavorable connotations, among 17 notes in total of the control class, there were 14 negative comments concerning to activities, here is one of the notes

I have to learn a lot of new words about foods around the world. We have to make sentences using the new words. It is extremely difficult because I don't know what words to fill in the blanks. It is a boring lesson. I don't like writing. It is not fun at all. I prefer watching movies and talking with my friends. I wish the teacher changed the activities.

Considering the themes of teacher and fellow students, the data revealed that the majority of the comments in the control class (6 out of a total of 11 comments) stated negative connotations showing conflict among their classmates. This indicated that the structure of the textbook with artificial activities may result in negative impacts on the learning environment as one students noted here:

I have no chance to answer the teacher's questions. Whenever the teacher asked the questions, some strong students in the class volunteered to answer. I felt angry with them and I didn't feel pleased with the teacher. I felt like the teacher did not care about me.

Inferably, the materials used in instruction have a tremendous influence on the relationship among the students and between the teacher and students which plays a crucial part in generating motivation and interests of learners. As noted, the majority of comments from the experimental class in which visual aids were used expressed their positive connotations about their teachers and fellow students whereas, most of the notes made in the control class showed negative emotions and feelings.

Questionnaire Data

This section describes and analyses the frequency of emotion that the participants expressed during the control and experimental weeks. The data of artificial materials weeks will be presented first followed by the data analysis of the visual materials.

Data collected on artificial materials weeks

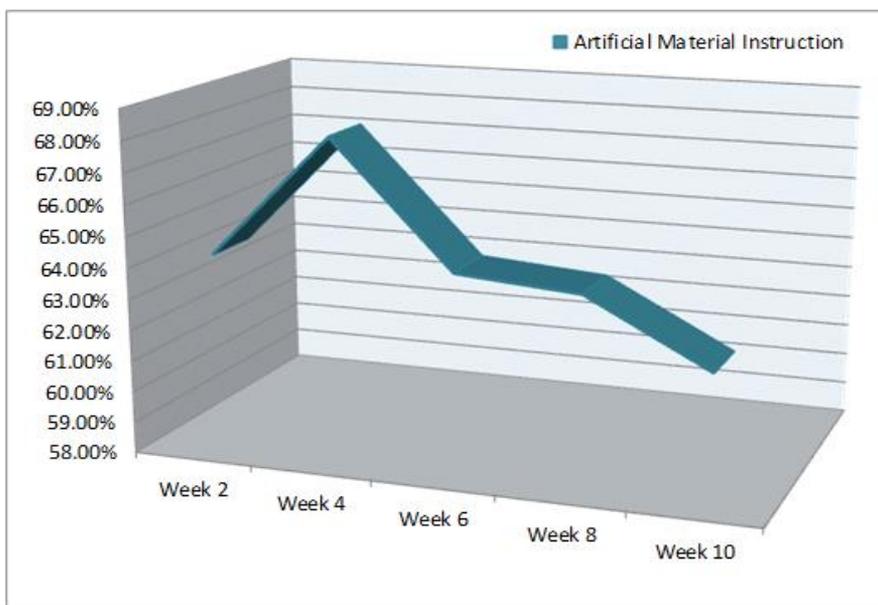


Figure 1: *Students' level of motivation on artificial materials weeks*

As can be seen, the figure above shows the participants' self-reported motivation measured based on 6 aspects, namely *topics, materials, activities, teacher, fellow students and background knowledge*. The chart indicates that the tendency of motivation reported increased from week 2 to week 4 with the average percentage of 64.23% to 68.19% respectively. However the level of motivation was on sharp decrease to the succeeding week (week 6) down to 64.27%. Then the trend fluctuated during the three subsequent weeks with 64.27%, 63.97% and 61.94% respectively. In general, the students' motivation went down during the non-visual materials weeks. The finding revealed the fact that the

participants were first impressed and motivated when they learned with the materials in the textbook but afterwards, the more they worked with this type of material the less interested they felt. The mean score for 5 weeks studying with the artificial materials was 64.52%.

Data collected on Visual materials weeks

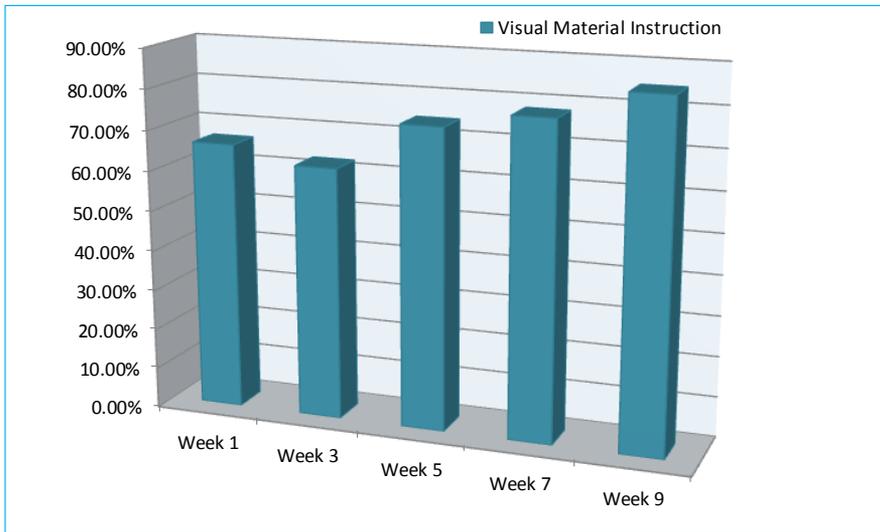


Figure 2: Students' level of motivation on visual aids weeks

Figure 2 illustrates the trend of the participants' extent of motivation during 5-week exposure to the visual materials. The graph indicates that the mean score of the students' extent of motivation was down from 66.42% in week 1 to the lowest point of 62.51% in week 3. However, unlike the level of the artificial materials weeks, the trend of motivation in the visual materials class rose steadily during the following weeks and reached the peak of 84.95% in week 9. It could be inferred that at first, the students felt difficult working with visual aids in the class since this type of materials was not familiar with them. As a consequence, they did not find it attractive and appealing and it was not until they got used to the material, the participants were motivated and interested to the end of the experiment. The mean score of the visual material weeks was 73.24 %.

Comparisons

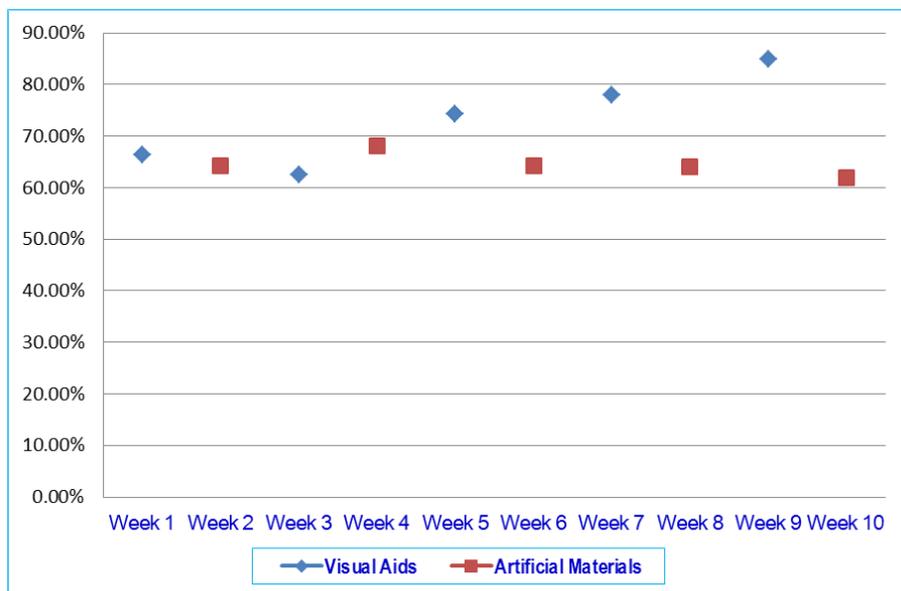


Figure 3: Overall class motivation during the experiment

This part demonstrates the comparison and contrast of the participants' motivation expression during the 10-week experiment. As can be seen from the graph, the mean score for the student's level of motivation on the artificial materials weeks is 64.52% and on the weeks using visual aids materials is 73.24%. After collecting and analyzing the data, the researcher put the mean scores of the weeks teaching with artificial materials and the weeks using visual aids to analyze applying pair-sample T-test on SPSS to identify whether the difference is statistically significant or not. The results analyzed in the software demonstrate that $t = 1.797$, $n = 5$, $df = 4$, Sig. (2-tailed) or $p\text{-value} = 0.147$. It can be inferred from the $p\text{-value}$ that the difference in terms of the mean scores of the weeks using artificial materials and the weeks instructing with visual materials is not significant. Statistically, the null hypothesis could not be rejected or using visual aids could not increase the participants' level of motivation. It cannot be based on the statistics to determine ineffectiveness in using visuals to enhance the learners' motivation.

It is likely that the limited time of a ten-week treatment is not sufficient for a significant difference between using artificial materials and visual materials in promoting the students' motivation.

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

Firstly, the finding indicates that using visual aids help motivate the students as the material is proved to be concrete, inspirational, vivid, motivational and exciting (Mannan (2005); Kemp and Dayton (1985 as cited in Arif and Hashim, 2009); Mayer and Moreno, (1998); Hill (1990). During the experiment, the teacher used different types of pictures, videos clips, real objects, PowerPoint presentations and the like relevant to the students' life and work that offer them opportunities to get more involved in learning. As a consequence, the participants felt more excited when they were given chances to expose themselves to the target language culture. In addition, the students felt interested and motivated as they have many activities different from those when learning from textbooks. The students' motivation may be thanks to interesting atmospheres with vivid and exotic pictures, graphics and so on which provided them with the contexts and motivated them to perform actively. Inferably, visual aids used in the treatment could be more easily comprehended and remembered than the textbook materials. Especially, the videos consisting of interesting sounds, vivid scenes and conversations have made great impressions on the participants, engage and motivate them to work actively.

However, due to the limited time of experiment, the p-value was not statistically significant, though it was not meant visual materials did not motivate the participants. Despite reporting positively about learning with visual aids, a number of participants complained that they felt so challenged and confused with certain types of visuals like some photos and video clips. It can be interpreted that the information contained in some kinds of visual materials was not sufficient for the participants to process their activities. That some students expressed confusion may lead to the implication that some

sorts of visual aids was beyond the students' level. Concerning to the activities, as stated in a number of the diary comments, the participants reported that they were dominated by the strong students, this indicates that when designing learning activities, the teacher did not pay sufficient attention to the students whose level is low and often feel shy finding themselves challenged to get involved in the activities. Although the visual materials were selected quite carefully, some of them may not be suitable with the students in terms of culture and as a result, some participants revealed that the materials were strange making them feel uncomfortable.

It could be reflected from the finding that future research should be conducted with a smaller size class and in a larger time frame. For teachers, it is advisable that classroom activities should be held in the way strong students are mixed up with and are encouraged to assist their weak fellows. The issues of the quality of technical devices and visuals, and culture balance should be also taken into account.

CONCLUSION

A conclusion has been drawn out that using visual materials in classroom has improved the students' learning motivation. This success is presented with the high proportion of the participants showing that they have been motivated and impressed with using visual aids in the class, which motivated them to use English more successfully in communication. Apart from the benefits visuals bring to the students, applying this type of materials sometimes may cause challenges to the learners due to the low quality of sights and sounds, the unsuitability of culture from the visuals used in classroom, technical problems, teachers' control of classroom activities and performing distribution between weak and strong students. There exist certain shortcomings, though the treatment has been successful in motivating the students at the university. In a broader sense, using visual aids is likely to improve learners' motivation in other institutions providing necessary changes will be made in order to be more perfect and comprehensive.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear student,

You are invited to complete the following questionnaire. For each issue given, please circle from 1 (low) to 5 (high) to show the extent to which you think the topic is appropriate to you in terms of interest. Your effort in completing this questionnaire would be highly appreciated and of great use to my study. Please be positive that you are not identified in any discussions of date. Thank you so much in advance.

UNIT 1 (Unit 1 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

UNIT 2 (Unit 2 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

UNIT 3 (Unit 3 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

UNIT 4 (Unit 4 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

UNIT 5 (Unit 5 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

UNIT 6 (Unit 6 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

UNIT 7 (Unit 7 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

UNIT 8 (Unit 8 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

UNIT 9 (Unit 9 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

UNIT 9 (Unit 9 in American English File)

Topic

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Material

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Activity

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Teacher

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Fellow students

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

Background knowledge

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interesting*

APPENDIX 2

Average Percentage by 6 during 10-week experience

ISSUES	DURATION and PERCENTAGE (%)									
	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10
Topic	72.68%	71.22%	67.52%	71.15%	74.43%	71.03%	75.45%	70.71%	81.01%	76.88%
Materials	63.14%	60.36%	62.00%	69.11%	75.23%	60.62%	83.38%	59.78%	89.79%	58.90%
Activities	61.70%	58.19%	59.66%	67.46%	71.70%	59.81%	78.89%	59.29%	87.93%	53.61%
Teacher	69.79%	65.71%	68.57%	68.52%	75.69%	65.74%	80.68%	63.72%	89.35%	61.19%
Fellow students	61.85%	59.51%	56.10%	62.72%	72.32%	60.08%	73.51%	60.09%	80.69%	59.88%
Background knowledge	69.31%	70.40	61.23%	70.18%	76.27%	68.33%	76.28%	70.25%	80.91%	71.20%
Average percentage	66.42%	64.23%	62.51%	68.19%	74.27%	64.27%	78.03%	63.97%	84.95%	61.94%

COGNITION AND LANGUAGE TRANSFERS: A COGNITIVE STUDY OF PREPOSITION ERRORS

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Abstract

Vietnamese people have never taken prepositions seriously because they think that a preposition is a non-notional word (Ilyish, 1969). The noticeable point (Na, 2005) that makes Vietnamese learners misuse English prepositions in their communications needs analyzing and interpreting clearly. In this article, the author points out the traditional ways that prepositions are defined and taken into consideration, and compares with the ways they are paid much attention to the assumptions that they reflects patterns of thought. In other words, the prepositions are viewed under the cognitive perspective basing on the experiences and cognitions of human beings about the world objectively as well as their ways cognizing and conceptualizing everything in the world. The author makes an attempt to point out the serious prepositional errors made by Vietnamese people and gives the pedagogic implications in helping students to avoid making such kinds of errors via the process of learning and teaching.

Keywords: *Cognitive Linguistics, prepositional errors, domain, schema image, containment*

INTRODUCTION

Although there are a very small number of prepositions in English, prepositions play a very important role in this language. Prepositions

are so important because most of the sentences cannot lack of them. In fact, they work as a means to connect various parts of a sentence. They may show us location (where something is in relation to something else - *in, on, atop, under, next to, etc.*) or space (how things are related in space —*in, on, to, with, over, under, onto, into, beside, etc.*). Others tell us physical connections or possession between nouns or pronouns and another word such as *of, with, by*. Some refer to relationships in time: *while, during, after, until, before, since* and many other aspects. English prepositions are found about 30 percent in almost every English text (Nacey, 1984). It is not surprising that English is considered as the language of prepositions. However, prepositions are richly polysemous words and some of them are not related to the others in the different contexts or collocations with nouns and verbs. Taking an example of preposition *over* in the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (OALD). It has 10 prepositional senses although “so as to cover somebody/something *completely*” (OALD) is thought to be the most dominant sense of it. It is listed at the fourth common use of all.

Vietnamese people have learnt English as a foreign language at schools from their early ages since 1990s. During their learning process, they encounter a lot of problems. One of them is that learners focused too much on nouns, verbs and adjectives because they generally assume that these kinds of words are crucial. They have spent most of their time learning nouns, verbs and adjectives to actively master English vocabulary; consequently, they put the other parts of speech aside. By the way, they assume that prepositions and adverb particles are easy words, and they just tend to foster ‘the translation’ from the ‘equivalent words’ in their mother tongue into English. The negative effect of these processes is so popular that it may negatively affect the fluent native-like mastery of English language for years. That is why there have been many prepositional errors made by Vietnamese people. There are many perspectives on prepositional errors and each of these gives different suggestions to deal with the learners’ errors.

Since the 1960s Error Analysis (EA) has been introduced by Stephen Pit and his colleagues in the work of "*The significant of the learners' errors*" as an alternative to Contrastive Analysis (CA) for the shortcomings of CA hypothesis in identifying the language errors ~~that~~ ~~were~~ made by ~~the~~ English learners. However, both of these perspectives also do not give a clear-cut picture of the kinds of prepositional errors made by Vietnamese people. In CA hypothesis, Lado claimed that "*those elements which are similar to [the learner's] native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult*" (Lado, 1957) while it is very difficult to distinguish the prepositions with particles in Vietnamese language. Another perspective soon reveals its limitation to recognise the learners' errors is EA. Many researchers use EA to distinguish between errors, which are systematic, and mistakes, which are not. It means that they seek to develop a typology of errors which are normally classified according to basic types: omissive, additive, substitutive or related to word order; errors are also identified by their levels of language such as phonological errors, vocabulary or lexical errors, syntactic errors, and so on. Therefore, EA typologies are problematic because linguistic data are examined alone. It usually becomes less reliable to determine what kind of error a learner is making.

One more perspective on viewing prepositional errors is Cognitive Linguistics. Cognitive linguists have recently paid much attention to the semantic nature of English prepositions. It is clear that '*they are notoriously hard to learn and frequently subject to negative transfer*' (Lakoff, Tyler & Evans, 1987). The meanings of prepositions and adverb particles vary according to the ways they appear such as in ~~the~~ time, space, manner, or even abstract and are often unpredictable and arbitrary. The traditional perspective suggests that the best way to learn prepositions as a foreign language should be through rote learning. Although this approach has several advantages, it sees prepositional meanings as unrelated to each other. A Cognitive Linguistics Perspective (CLP) offers an approach by arguing that the multiple uses of prepositions and adverb particles can be seen as

related in systematic ways, implying important pedagogic implications. That is also the best perspective to help Vietnamese ESL learner understand the figurative uses of English prepositions and adverb particles clearly and exactly. That is the reason why we choose CLP for viewing the preposition errors made by Vietnamese people.

COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE ON PREPOSITIONS

As it is stated above, when teaching prepositions in Vietnamese contexts, teachers ask students to learn by heart. Teaching by rote method helps students repeat rather than involve the mental storage of items being associated with existing cognitive structure. Therefore, in some cases, teachers are going to say “that is the way it is” to force students to memorize it without understanding the meanings of prepositions, especially with collocations. That is why students find it difficult in understanding the different senses of prepositions and often make prepositional errors in their productive skills. Students even feel bored when they are being asked to repeat correct sentences without understanding them. CL meaningful learning, oppositely is, “*created through some form of representational equivalence between language (symbols) and mental context*” (Cooper, 2009). It means that CL meaningful learning is the way of knowledge acquisition applying the “*prior knowledge to new situations by construction of mental model*” (Mayer & Moreno, 2003, p.43). In this paper, we focus on the extended uses of prepositions as motivated polysemy networks of Vietnamese people based on the CLP that helps Vietnamese people better master the use of English prepositions in their communications.

Domains

The term *domain* is known as a cognitive linguistic term during the year of 1980s which was introduced by Langacker (1987). The domain referred in this article is regarded as cognitive domain, but not the domain in the other fields of taxonomy. Langacker described it as “*mental experiences, representational spaces, concepts, or conceptual complexes*” (Langacker, 1986). Mental experience is

consisted of all processes that may take place within the mind of a sentient being. Representational spaces are presupposed by the conceived spatial relationships and conversely create the potential for such relationships. One concept (or conceptual complex) is typical to serving as a domain for the characterization of another. To domains for English prepositions in this article, the author follows the groups of Radden and Dirven (2007), who further classified prepositional meanings into three domains: spatial, temporal and abstract domain. It is important that each preposition relate to more than one domain in actual daily usages. For example, the concepts of *in* is classified as **the spatial domain** “*in the class*”; or **the temporal domain** “*in 2015*”. In some cases, it may relate to **metaphorical mappings**, in which the distinction between the source domain and target domain must be taken into account. In other words, we have to put it (preposition *in*) is directly grounded in embodied experience is regarded as the general standard to define the source domain and the target domain. The notions of domain are quite large to discuss in this article, but we may find it helpful in the work of Langacker (1987) *The Theory of domains*. In order to modify what the article refers to, there English prepositions (*in, on, at*) are presented across the three domains: spatial, temporal and abstract domain.

Table 1. The domains for three English prepositions: AT, ON and IN

Prepositions	Spatial	Temporal	Abstract
AT	At the theater	At noon	At war
ON	On the street	On Monday	24 hours on call
IN	In the class	In 2015	In love

Image Schema

Because of the different understanding about the “image Schema” notion in CL, the categorization of the image schema of English prepositions are induced to many different terms and categories.

However, the most common of image schema is partial schema: the concrete structure to extend to abstract prepositional senses. Lakoff and Johnson originally defined image schema by emphasizing the bodily experience:

“Image schemas are relatively simple structures that constantly recur in our everyday bodily experience: CONTAINERS, PATHS, LINKS, FORCES, BALANCE, and in various orientations and relations: UP-DOWN, FRONT-BACK, PART-WHOLE, CENTER-PERIPHERY, etc.”

(Lakoff, 1987, p. 267)

Johnson (1987) also proposed some of the schemas by linking with physical experience such as: PART-WHOLE, CENTER-PERIPHERY, LINK, CONTACT, ADJACENCY, SUPPORT, BALANCE, and CONTAINER. It is clearly explained through three common prepositions: CONTAINMENT for in, CONTACT for on, and ADJACENCY for at.

Metaphor

Since 1970s, the research on metaphor has been paid much attention to by many researchers (e.g: Gibbs, 1994; Johnson, 1987, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Turner, 1989; Sweetser, 1990; Turner, 1991). Many researchers proved that metaphor is cognitive in nature. In other words, a metaphor is a specific mental mapping that influences how people think, reason, and imagine in everyday life. Taking an example of the two sentences: ‘*He is happy*’ and ‘*He is feeling up*’. They are expressed in the different ways, but the meanings of them are the same. In fact, we cannot find the abstract sense of ‘*happy*’ and ‘*up*’ but these words in the above examples are synonymous. Thus, a new method, Cognitive perspective, is highly appropriated to explain the polysemy nature of preposition. It is a kind of conceptual metaphor or ‘a figure of thought in nature’ (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 2006) Conceptual metaphor theory emphasizes ‘the experiential basis of

many of the metaphors described' (Evans, 2007, p. 137), and 70% of our ordinary language is based on conceptual metaphors. In other words, metaphor is pervasive in our daily life, which is grounded in the nature of our everyday interaction with the socio-physical world of embodied experience. Because 'the thought itself is fundamentally metaphorical in nature' (Evans, p.35), metaphor is regarded as 'a basic and indispensable instrument of thought' (Evans, p.136). In this paper, the suggesting way of understanding a relatively abstract subject in term of a more concrete subject via metaphor is based on the cross-domain mappings. That is also the way metaphor can govern the structure from the source domain onto the target domain.

COGNITIVE VIEWS OF NEGATIVE TRANSFERS OF ENGLISH PREPOSITIONS MADE BY VIETNAMESE PEOPLE

The intercommunicative errors caused by the users' native language interference

English language strictly requires the existence of prepositions for every sentence to link between the other kinds of speech but Vietnamese language does not. Besides, Vietnamese does not have distinct makers for recognizing and categorizing prepositions as clearly as English does. That is the reason why Vietnamese people may use prepositions and adverb particles incorrectly. This assumption is already mentioned and developed by of scholars such as Rice (1996), Vandeloise (1999). These errors are structurally defined as follows:

- (i) Some prepositions are mistaken for verbs such as *against*, *past*, *without*, *across*, etc.

She acrossed the road. (INCORRECT)

She walked across the road. (CORRECT)

- (ii) Some following verbs are often mistakenly followed by prepositions such as *marry*, *lack*, *discuss*, *doubt*, *suspect*,

consider, lower, demand, requested, resemble, accompany, regret, blame, emphasize, concern, remember, raise, contact, exceed, reach, equal, enter, phone, etc.

She will marry with him. (INCORRECT)

She will marry him. (CORRECT)

- (iii) The prepositions are often left out after some verbs or adjectives such as *wish, listen, knock, explain, apply, look, search, hear, object, consent, confess, arrive, consist, wait, care, apologize, prevent, escape, explain, glad, say, present,*

He knocked the door. (INCORRECT)

He knocked at the door. (CORRECT)

- (iv) The prepositions are often mistakenly used with expressions of time such as *last, this, next, today, in + time, every, the day before yesterday, the day after tomorrow* and *every*.

She went shopping on the day before yesterday. (INCORRECT)

She went shopping the day before yesterday. (CORRECT)

These crucial errors are quite flexible enough to discuss on the surface of the two languages but very challenging and problematic in reality, especially related to the thoughts of the users. The main reason may relate to the native language interference and English users' unawareness the English word class, knowledge of these functional words, and multiple meanings of prepositions. The sufficient acquisition load is the other possible source of these kinds of errors.

Usage of prepositions vs. adverb particles and training errors

Teachers are often getting confused to explain the meaning of prepositions *at, in, on, up, down, onto, into, off*, etc. The materials in Vietnamese schools are not clear enough to make distinction between prepositions and particles. In some situations, they put them aside or ignore them in their class time. Students are advised to learn by heart inseparable indicators for time, seasons, years, months, places, and items in most of the situations and purposes (locative and spatial), whether exact or general. However, students cannot distinguish the different meanings between prepositions in the following examples:

(i) The boy lives up / down the road. (Prepositions)

(ii) He looked up / down. (Adverb particles)

The pedagogic goal to teach the two prepositions ‘*up*, and *down*’ fails because students are not exposed to the SOURCE DOMAIN and TARGET DOMAIN. Taking an example for categorization of EMOTION SENSE based on the SOURCE DOMAIN and TARGET DOMAIN as follow:

SOURCE DOMAIN

up
down

TARGET DOMAIN

happy
sad

The other spatial orientational prepositions that students may have same problems are: *front – back, left – right, in – out, above – below*. Students need providing the knowledge of the psychology, quantity, quality and social senses of the pair of prepositions because most of the students cannot identify the meaning of them in the phrasal verbs.

Table 2. The target domains for the prepositions UP – DOWN

TARGET DOMAINS		MEANINGS	
		UP	DOWN
		<i>denoting upwards movement with positive change</i>	<i>denoting downwards movement with negative change</i>
Psychological Senses	Mood	Becoming more cheerful, happier. <i>Ex: feel up, cheer up, lighten up</i>	Being/ Getting depressed, in low spirits. <i>Ex: feel down, weigh down</i>
	Health, life	Developing or increasing in stages or by degrees. <i>Ex: build up</i>	Having a disease. <i>Ex: Be down, drop down, put down</i>
	Consciousness/ unconsciousness	Becoming awake or conscious <i>Ex: Get up, wake up</i>	Placing oneself at rest in a flat, horizontal, or recumbent position; in unconscious mood <i>Ex: Lie down</i>
Quantity Senses	More/ Less Senses	Increasing the quantity or adding something rapidly. <i>Ex: Take up, put up, go up, pump Up</i>	Decreasing the quantity. <i>Ex: Slow down, quiet down, go down, pipe down</i>
	Improvement /Worse sense	Improving or increasing greater quantity. <i>Ex: dig up, dress up, touch up</i>	Worsening or decreasing quantity <i>Ex: Be down, break down</i>

	TARGET DOMAINS	MEANINGS	
		UP	DOWN
	Completion/ depletion sense	Being full of container. <i>Ex: Fill up, eat up, well up, drink up</i>	Running out of container. <i>Ex: run down, draw down</i>
Quality Senses	Good/ Bad Sense Virtue/ Depravity Senses	Being more well- being, prosperous in the society. <i>Ex: Fix up, live up, look up</i>	Business down. <i>Ex: look down</i>
Social Senses	High / low status Having control of force / being subject to control of force	Having higher power in social hierarchy. <i>Ex: climb up</i>	Having lower power in social hierarchy. <i>Ex: Step down, bring down</i>

Errors caused by Embodied meaning and Spatial experience

In the book *The Semantics of English Prepositions Spatial Scenes, Embodied Meaning and Cognition*, Tyler (2003) defines the nature of our experience has non-trivial consequences for survival. Therefore, the nature of human behaviour has profound consequences for our ecological viability as a species.

“Embodied experience constitutes the notion that human experience of the world is mediated by the kinds of bodies we have, and hence is in large measure determined by the nature of the bodies which mediate how we experience the world. Moreover, many cognitive scientists are increasingly suggesting that it is this embodied experience that gives rise to conceptual structure.”

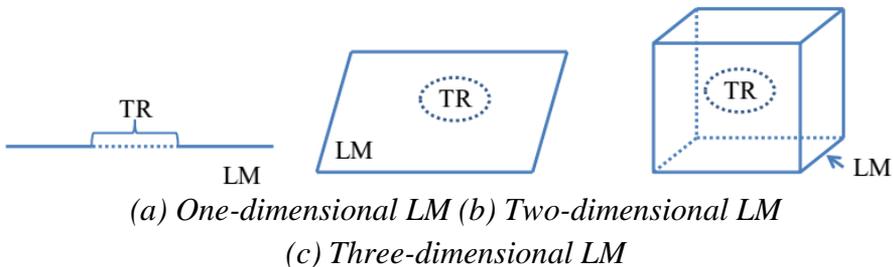
(Tyler & Evans, 2003, pp. 23-24)

It is clear that our perception of the world is meaningful in various ways to us as human beings. In other words, our world, as mediated by our perceptual apparatus our physiology and neural architecture, in short, our bodies, gives rise to conceptual structure, that is, to thought and concepts. The different contexts bring the different expressions for a certain meaning, while a single utterance in different contexts can convey different meanings. In this article, we focus on the prepositional errors made by Vietnamese people under the light of Cognitive Perspectives.

(i) ***Errors caused by misrecognizing dimension on the landmark.***

In our test survey the surprising result that most of Vietnamese people usually fail to identify the metaphorical mappings of the preposition *in*. In our example, we asked 50 participants to fill in the missing prepositions in the sentence: *Mr. Tuan is living _____ 142 Le Trong Tan street* [1]. 82% responses are given to the option *at* while not more than 8% given to the correct answer *in*, and others choosing nothing or other options. It means that participants cannot describe metaphorical enclosures with the image schema CONTAINMENT (see ‘*the house*’ in this example) and transfer this structure from the spatial relations to the temporal and the abstract domain. The literal meaning of the sentence [1] is to indicate the containment with houses (the TRAJECTOR (TR)) within these areas (the LANDMARK (LM)). Herskovits (1986) defines the *interiority* for the preposition *in*, based on the relation to TR and LM, in the three ways; one-, two-, or three dimensional geometric construct.

Figure 1. The illustration of the CONTAINMENT schema for in (Herskovits, 1986)

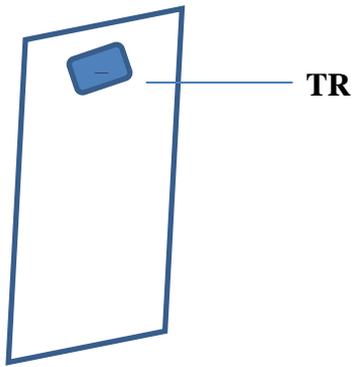


While the preposition *at* is mainly reflected in the ADJACENCY schema. It can be metaphorically understood the time as a point (TIME, as in *at 6 o'clock*) in the temporal domain (such as a special time or rough time or holiday and age, as in *at noon, at Christmas, or at your age*) as well as a concept of point in the abstract domain reflected from the value of *at* in space domain, to express STATE (*John's on call today*), ACTION (*An idea suddenly dawned on me*), ASPECT (*During the next two days I advised on industrial relations problems in catering, computers and property services*).

(ii) ***Errors caused by misrecognizing 'surface' and 'contact' on the landmark.***

Another error related to the preposition *in* is the jumble with *on* when they refer the surface. 38.7 percent of the 50 participants choose *in* for their answers instead of *on*, where it should be appeared. Students are asked to complete the sentence with the missing prepositions: "*I can't know which room he is in because there is no name _____ the door*" [2]. The preposition *on* describe the three main metaphorical images: CONTACT, SURFACE and SUPPORT. The initial hypothesis was developed from the concept basing on their experience with objects in general, and on the contact of their bodies with those objects. For the reason that all objects in any situation have SURFACES, people perceive these SURFACES all the time, no matter how the objects are constructed by the speaker in a situation at a particular moment. In the example we took in the survey, the *conceptual schema* of this lexical unit the following configuration is posited: The TR of *on* is an entity that can be conceptualised as capable of self-motion control, or whose motion is controlled by using the LM. It means that TR resting side faces or is directed towards the LM in order to achieve that control. This is achieved through CONTACT of the resting side of the TR and the outside part of the LM.

Figure 2. Image schemas of prepositions ON given in the present study



*“I can’t know which room he is in because there is no name
_____ the door”*

(TR: name; LM: the door)

By the way, the TR uses the LM as a SELF-SUPPORT tool to find the rest status, or standing point. Some of the other prepositions do not have the SUPPORT e.g. *over, above, etc.* for they do not have image scheme of metaphor CONTACT.

There seems to be a lot of prepositional errors found under the light of cognitive linguistics perspective. It is difficult to give a complete analysis to this problem. With the view of narrowing the gap between the theory and practice in cognitive linguistic, some suggestions are given in the hope of minimizing students’ errors related to the prepositions. However, that is not the list of prepositional errors made by Vietnamese people.

CONCLUSION

Prepositions are the limited words that are unchangeable in forms, pronounced softly, and unstressed syllables, but they causes more problems for non-native speakers or learners of English than any other part of speech. They appeared to be not important in some

ways; such as, they aren't even given capital letters in book titles. Native speakers can choose the correct ones without thinking because they are exposed the whole of their lifetime to the environment in which they are as tools of communication. However, prepositions are very difficult for learners to study because they don't have any regulation. One may have many metaphor schema images based on the context they appear. Besides that, Vietnamese culture is also quite different from the British culture. One experiences the language use on their own language system interacting with their cultures and social relations. That causes it too difficult to find one-to-one mappings between the prepositions in Vietnamese and English. The fact that teaching the use of English prepositions normally follows some of exceptions. There are a few rules which can be applied in a number of cases but not all. That's why students are advised to learn by rote. It has also been the predominant way of teaching English prepositions for Vietnamese students so far. This kind of teaching leads to non-stable improvements. In contrast, if we use the domains, the notions of image schemas and the conceptual metaphor theory in the field of Cognitive Linguistics perspective, there will be remarkable effects on the performance of learners. They can predict the use of prepositions in certain cases that are constrained by model of TR and LM for some common pre=position such as in, on at, over, above, under, etc.

Although the paper of this research is only referred to some of common prepositional errors based on the Cognitive Linguistic perspective, the author hope it contribute to the effectiveness of language teaching by a CL-approach. In future studies, the author will design and set up a pilot study for applying this perspective in real teaching and evaluate its effectiveness not only for prepositions but the other parts of speech as well.

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A2-LEVEL ENGLISH LISTENING LEARNING BY NON-MAJOR ENGLISH VIETNAMESE STUDENTS AT DANANG UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This article studies the actual situation of learning A2-level listening in English by non-major English Vietnamese students at the Universities of Polytechnics, Economics and Pedagogy of Danang University. The survey is carried out with 1500 students coming from these universities, who completed the questionnaires. The study describes and discusses the students' perception in learning listening in English and the difficulties they may face and then suggests some implications in order to help these students improve their A2-level English listening competence and do their A2-level English listening test better. In this way, they could be well-prepared for their B1-level learning of listening in English and doing their listening test at this level successfully as a requirement for their graduation.

Keywords: *A2-level English listening learning, non-major English Vietnamese students, Danang University*

RATIONALE

Decision N^o 1400/ QĐ – TTg by Vietnam Prime Minister [4] has pointed out the goal of “entire modification of the teaching and learning foreign languages in the national educational system in order that by 2020 most of young learners in Vietnam graduating from the intermediate, college and university - level courses will have equipped themselves with good foreign language competence to be independent, self-confident in communicating, learning, working

in a multi-lingual and - cultural integration environment in order to harness foreign language as a useful tool for the industrialization and modernization of Vietnam”. For reaching this goal, Decision 1400 has set a lot of missions, among which mission 5 states: “for non-major English university-level educational institutions, the new training program has to help learners get the minimum level 3 in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) after graduation”. As a result, the minimum level of foreign language competence

of non-major English learners of the members of the University of Danang has to reach level 3 (equivalent to B1 level of CEFR). In fact, most of learners at these constitutional universities k A1 or A2 level in the entry examination [3]. At A1-level listening, the students could learn and prepare for their end-module exam more easily thanks to the simpler exam format: listening to the familiar phrases, the basic phrases about person and family with the familiar specific situational contexts from the speaker speaking slowly and clearly. However, the A2-level English listening test structure could be a challenge to a majority of them. Truly; for the A2-level English listening, these students have to be able to catch the key words or phrases about jobs, localities, and even understand the gist of the message or short announcements besides the familiar words or phrases relating to the basic information about person, family in specific situational contexts as for the A1-level English listening. This may cause quite a lot of difficulties for them when they have to learn and prepare for their B1-level English listening exam for their graduation. Therefore, this study is carried out to investigate the actual situation of learning A2-level listening in English by non-major English Vietnamese students at the constitutional Universities of Danang University and then to suggest some solutions in order to help improve the learning of listening in English at this level for these students in order to help them prepare for and do their A2-level English listening test better. In this way, students could prepare for and do their listening test in English more successfully at B1 level.

OBJECT OF THE STUDY

The object of the study is the actual situation of learning A2-level listening in English by non-major English Vietnamese students surveyed via a 1500- questionnaire survey out of 2550 students from Universities of Polytechnics, Economics and Pedagogy of Danang University.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study is carried out in order to find out the answer for the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of non-major English Vietnamese students on the learning and practising the A2-level listening in English?
2. What are the problems encountered by these non-major English Vietnamese students on the learning and practising the A2-level listening in English?
3. What are the solutions for the problems?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Method

The main research method is descriptive combined with the statistic approach of the answers withdrawn from the questionnaires about the perception of the non-major English Vietnamese students learning A2-level listening in English at the Universities of Polytechnics, Economics and Pedagogy of Danang University. The questionnaire consists of 22 questions including 2/3 closed and 1/3 open. The closed question is the multiple choice one with the given answer relating to the school the students are learning at, the A2 English listening level that the students have to reach, the perception of students on the importance of A2-level English listening, their listening competence, the frequency of attending A2-level English

listening classes, their self-study at home, the number of listening classes, the types of listening and exercises, the techniques for doing these exercises and students' attitude to the A2-level listening in English. The closed question is to ascertain the actual situation of learning A2-level listening in English by non-major English Vietnamese students at the above members of Danang University. In addition; the open questions about the listening materials, the teaching facilities, the factors causing difficulties for the students and their suggestions to their university could be helpful for putting forwards the recommendations to improve the teaching and learning A2-level listening in English for non-major English Vietnamese students at these member universities.

Data collection methods

The data are collected from 1500 valid responses given by 500 students from the Poli-technics, 500 students from the Pedagogy and 500 students from the Economic University.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

General results on the homogeneity in the member university students' answers

Through the survey of 1500 valid questionnaires and 1500 answers (including 1 question about the school the students are learning at, 21 questions about the A2-level listening in English) delivered to and collected from the students from the Universities of Polytechnics, Economics and Pedagogy of Danang University; the researcher has gained the following results:

Table 5.1. Students' overwhelming results

Questions	Students' answers					
	Answer	Frequency %	Answer	Frequency %	Answer	Frequency %
1	The Politechnic		The Economic		The Pedagogic	
2	d	87	d	68	d	97
3	g	61	b	39	g	59
4	b	51	b	47	b	63
5	e	40	a	35	e	43
6	a	57	a	66	a	63
7	b	57	a	55	a	60
8	a	54	a	31	a	59
9	d	42	d	39	e	43
10	c	64	c	63	c	63
11	b	57	b	65	b	76
12	a	53	a	45	a	61
13	a	72	a	68	a	66
14	f	45	f	46	a	49
15	a	78	a	81	a	85
16	h	23	h	27	h	32
17	a	45	a	61	a	60
18	a	49	a	47	a	56
19	a	55	a	40	a	58
20	a	63	a	64	a	59
21	c	55	b	41	c	44
22	c	51	c	50	d	58

Table 5.1 shows the homogeneity in the answers to most of the questions in the questionnaires from the above-mentioned constitutional universities' students. Except for the 1st question asking about the school the students learn at, a majority of students (23% - 97%) gave similar answers to 15/21 (71.2 %) questions. Table 5.1 is highly reliable with the homogeneity in the answers from students of the constitutional universities or from those of at least 2 out of 3 counterparts. For the sake of better clarification, the researcher analyzes the students' perception, their difficulties and the solutions to solve their problems.

Students' perception of their A2-level English listening skill

Table 5.2 Students' general knowledge of A2-level English listening skill

Questions	Questions' content	Students' answers from			Notes on answers' content
		The Politechnic	The Economic	The Pedagogic	
2	For graduation, what certificate in English do you need?	d	d	d	d. B1
3	Do you know what the A2-level English competence you need to have in accordance with the CEFR?	g	b	g	b.Elementary g. Do not know

Questions	Questions' content	Students' answers from			Notes on answers' content
		The Politechnic	The Economic	The Pedagogic	
4	Do you know the format of the A2-level listening test in English?	b	b	b	b. Not yet
5	What competence do you need to achieve at the end of A2-level English listening session accordance with CEFR?	e	a	e	a. Students could listen for gists and key words or expressions and important information in spoken language at intermediate level of difficulty e. Do not know
6	What is your attitude for the importance of A2-level English listening skill?	a	a	a	a. Very important

It could be seen from table 5.2 that all the surveyed students from the member universities realize B1 certificate as a requirement for their graduation (question 2). Nonetheless; when asked about A2 certificate (question 3), an adjacent level for B1, most of them are confused and show their uncertainty. Noticeably, most students from Economic University think that A2-level is the elementary in the CEFR while the majority of the students from the other two member universities reveal that they do not know about it. Apart from this, the general format of the A2-level listening test is quite unfamiliar to the students of the three member universities, which is indicated through their answers to question 4. This may be the reason why almost all of them are uncertain of the competence they need to be assessed via A2-level English listening test (question 5) except for most of the students from Economic University thanks to their self-probing. When asked about their perception of A2-level English listening skill (question 6), all the surveyed students from the three member universities realize that this skill is of vital importance. This positive result reflects Danang University's non-major English students' right perception of the importance of A2-level listening skill in English.

Difficulties encountered by non-major English students in learning A2 -level English listening

The actual situation of learning A2-level English listening by students at the constitutional universities of Danang University could be reported through the answers to questions 7 to 19 below, relating to time allocation, teaching material, teaching aids as well as the exercise type that students have experienced:

Table 5.3. Actual situation of learning A2-level English listening by surveyed non-major English students

Question	Questions' content	Students' answers from			Notes on answers' content
		The Politechnic	The Economic	The Pedagogic	
7	How often a week do you go to your A2 English classes?	b	a	a	a. Once b. Twice
8	How often a week do you self-practise your A2-level English listening outside class?	a	a	a	a. Once
9	How do you assess your A2 -level English listening competence?	d	d	e	d. Average e. Weak
10	Are you hard-working for learning A2 -level English listening?	c	c	c	c. no
11	What is the length of your A2 -level English module?	b	b	b	b. 105 periods
12	What is your A2 -level English listening material?	a	a	a	a. Textbooks
13	What is the type of A2 -level English listening that you	a	a	a	a. Conversation

Question	Questions' content	Students' answers from			Notes on answers' content
		The Politechnic	The Economic	The Pedagogic	
	have had in class?				
14	What is the type of A2 -level English listening exercises that you have done in class?	f	f	a	f. Multiple choice a. Blank fill-up
15	What are the teaching aids that your teacher has used to teach A2 - level English listening?	a	a	a	a. Cassette-players
16	What techniques do you use for listening in English effectively?	h	h	h	h. All (Read the instructions, guess information from key words, syntactic features, take notes of gist and listen words by words tũ)
17	What is your attitude in the A2-level English listening class?	a	a	a	a. Active (Participate in all activities)

Question	Questions' content	Students' answers from			Notes on answers' content
		The Politechnic	The Economic	The Pedagogic	
18	What internal factors do you think have caused difficulties for your learning A2 -level English listening?	a	a	a	a. I do not really like learning A2 -level English listening.
19	What external factors do you think have caused difficulties for your A2 -level English listening?	a	a	a	a. Voice and speaking speed of speakers

The answers to questions 7 and 8 from table 5.3 reveal that the students from the Politechnic, the Economic and the Pedagogic Universities attend their A2-level English classes twice a week (within 5 periods during 12 weeks in the second phase) and do their self-practice once outside class. However, “90% of success in communication in English depends on the learners’ effort and 10% on the teacher’s guidance and teaching method. As a result, the learners of English should practise English two to three days a week and 2 hours per day” (Cephan [6]). In fact, the students’ answer to question 9 indicates their average or even worse weak listening competence level. Accordingly, the lack of regular practice for A2-level English listening could be one of the problems that needs to be overcome in order to help improve the English listening capacity of students from the three-mentioned member universities.

In terms of A2-level time allowance, according to [5], it is from 180 to 200 hours in accordance with the CEFR. Yet, in response to the actual situation of learning English of non-major English students from the three above member universities of Danang University, the time length for A2-level English teaching and learning is 105 periods [3]. The survey shows a homogenous result among students from the surveyed constitutional universities when they confirm they have experienced that amount of periods divided into 2 phases: the first within 45 periods and the second 60 periods, during which listening skill is integrated with such other skills as speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. This is a good thing reflecting the teacher's seriousness in their teaching time and content.

Regarding learning materials, the students report having used the recommended textbooks by teachers [1], [2]. For the questions 13, 14; the surveyed students say the main type of listening exercise they have done is listening to conversations with traditional question types such as multiple choice or blank fill-up. The main point in its favour is that students can easily do this type of listening in English for they did it in their high-school time. Nevertheless, one main disadvantage in its disfavour is that the A2-level English listening test is much more difficult and complex than the listening task students have done at school. Turning to the teaching aid, apart from some objective inconveniences of learning facilities concerning textbooks, cassettes, discs (question 15), the native speaker's voice, speaking speed (question 19); there still remain some of the student's subjective problems: the lack of students' self-learning outside class (questions 8 and 10) and that of students' interest in learning A2-level English listening (question 18) despite their concentration on listening lessons and participation in all English listening activities in class (question 17).

Recommendations

Table 5.4. Students’ recommendations

Question	Question’s content	Students’ answers from			Notes on answers’ content
		The Politechnic	The Economic	The Pedagogic	
20	Do you want your teacher to introduce extra materials for further practising listening English at A2-level?	a	a	a	a. Yes b. No
21	What do you think the University could do to help students learn A2-level English listening better?	c	c	c	c. Native speakers of English are needed to teach students learning A2-level English listening better

Table 5.4 shows most of the non-English major students at the member universities of Danang University want their teachers to introduce extra materials for further A2-level English listening practice (59% students from The Pedagogic, 64% students from The Economic and 63% students from The Politechnic). This is a proper

recommendation since students really need the extra material to do further English listening practice for improving their listening capacity. In addition, students need native speakers of English to teach them listening more effectively at A2-level.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In general, non-major English students from the Universities of Polytechnics, Economics and Pedagogy of Danang University face quite a lot of objective and subjective difficulties in learning A2-level listening in English. As a result, in order to help achieve the educational aims set by the Vietnam Prime Minister and to assist these students learn and do A2-level English listening test well, the University and students need more effort.

- For the University

- The University needs to have the native speakers of English teach students learning A2-level English listening in addition to the Vietnamese teachers in order to help students get accustomed to the native-English voice and accent to help improve their listening competence.

- It is necessary for the member Universities to equip besides the cassette-players more modern teaching facilities namely projectors, labs, to ensure students could have more chance to improve their English listening competence in general and do their A2-level English listening test well in particular. This depends on the financial budget of each member University but once feasible it could be greatly effective.

- For the teacher

- The teacher should introduce briefly at the beginning of the A2-level English module the English language skill requirement that students have to meet at the end of it.as well as the test format so that the students could have the appropriate approach and well-prepare for it.

- Teachers should teach students the strategies or the way to do the A2-level listening task or test to help them avoid wasting time listening to words to words; instead, teachers could ask students to pay attention to the key words in the question, in the answer and to depend on the situational context and co-text to choose the right answer.

- More importantly, teachers need to introduce to their students extra listening material sources, to remind them of having regular listening practice in order to help them get used to the listening task type or test, to the voice, accent and natural speaking speed of the native speakers of English to help them do the A2-level listening task in general and the A2-level listening test better.

- For the student

It is necessary for students to ascertain the A2-level listening test format through the media, to frequently practise doing the listening tests at this level in order to get familiar to the A2-level listening test type.

Hopefully, this study could help teachers and students have a better insight into the actual situation of learning A2-level listening of the non-major English students from the Universities of Polytechnics, Economics and Pedagogy of Danang University. In this way, the teacher could have better teaching methods in order to help students learn English listening and do their A2-level listening tests more efficiently, which could underpin their effective B1-level listening test preparation for their graduation.

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BUSINESS ENGLISH STUDENTS' USE OF WEBSITE-BASED RESOURCES FOR TRANSLATION

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Abstract

The paper aims at discussing the growing trend of using web-based resources for translation among trainee translators. Then, it describes the real situation of how the senior Business-English students (BESs) at the University of Finance – Marketing (UFM) use these resources for translation. Its findings reveal that though most BESs do not find themselves good at information technology (IT) and claim that their IT literacy is self-taught, they deploy it as the principal tool to get advice for their translation. However, very few students use IT as a channel to make contributions to the virtual community for future reference. Finally, along with the data analysis, some discussions on what should be done to improve the situation will be included, with much focus on formal training of dictionary and web-based resource use.

Keywords: *translation; communication-based; product-based; process-based; proficiency; web-based resource skill;*

BACKGROUND

Even though translation dated from the early date of the language teaching, it has been the focus of many research works on the process and strategy just in the two past centuries, followed by its application in teaching translation (Thu and Ngoc, 2014; Law, 2009). Thu and Ngoc (2014) continue that translation and interpreting courses are so popular that it is easy to find them in the curriculum in the English

language at universities, not only in Vietnam but also in the world; they play a role in earning a bachelor's degree in this field.

The UFM, based in Ho Chi Minh City, has been granted the permission to train Business English for nearly seventeen years. Besides business-related English as the core, the curriculum always attaches its priority to translation and interpreting with a considerable number of credits in the hope that the graduates-to-be can find appropriate jobs in corporate settings. Due to the nature of the training code associated with current business matters, translation and interpreting should focus on the on-going issues of today's market such as management, finance, banking, commerce, import and export, and the like. This, in fact, becomes far too challenging not only for the students but the lecturers of translation as well to translate highly specialized texts where English for Specific Purpose (or ESP) vocabulary is frequently used. With the flourishing formation of new words and new terminologies associated with business matters all over the world, most English dictionaries, consisting of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, lag far behind the true development. It is common practice that students frequently cannot find the right entry representing the equivalent in the source language text and/or in the target language one that they expect to look up. However, web-based resources have proven to be the solution via providing an immense resource of materials for translation assignments and ease of direct access to various dictionaries of all types and references. As a result, this paper focuses itself on discussing the use of web-based resources that BESs at the UFM usually make in translation and its implication for BESs' using these online resources effectively for developing communication-based translation at this institution.

The paper is completed, based on the three following research questions:

1. How do the BESs at the UFM behave when facing unfamiliar words?
2. What do they do with web-based resources for translation?

3. How should lecturers of Translation do to take advantage of BESs' use of web-based resources to develop their communicative proficiency?

It is highly believed by the author that the above-mentioned questions will be good enough to guide the whole paper to its completion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Translation teaching approach

The translation was given the priority as early as with the advent of the Grammar-Translation Method, which associates language competence with translation competence, (Thu and Ngoc, 2014). In this method, grammar is emphasized and taught deductively in the mother tongue. It is hoped that, through the study of the grammar of a language, students would become more familiar with the grammar of that language and that this familiarity would help them speak and write the native language better, (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p.11). He continues to explain that language learners are expected to do a lot of translation practice right after grammar rules. However, the history of language teaching methodologies has witnessed some major shifts to the dominance of communicative language teaching approach, placing the importance on communicative competence of the language user, (Thu and Ngoc, 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p.11). The same case is true to translation as the communication-based translation has prevailed in teaching foreign languages, (Ngoc, 2014). Tennent also adds that many university courses in translation aim at language proficiency, (Tennent, 2005, cited in Thu and Ngoc, 2014).

Recently, there has emerged the translation theory centering itself on two phenomena: the former one is product-oriented and the latter one mainly competence-oriented, (Lörscher,1995, p.884, cited in Law, 2009). In defining translation competence, theorists focus not only on its product but also on the processes involved, which implies that

translation is a skill that can be trained and investigated in terms of relevant strategies and/or competencies (ibid). In fact, translation now centers more on communicative competence which can be formed through the process of translation, (Breen and Candlin, 1980, cited in Thu and Ngoc, 2014). Agreeing with what Davies (ibid) describes as a model of a translation class in a communicative context through pair work and group work, Thu and Ngoc (2014) assert that communicative language teaching is applicable in translation classes. In short, the teaching of translation should focus on both the outcome and the process where communicative proficiency is developed.

Web-based resources for translation

With regard to web-based resources, according to Allen and Seaman (2010; cited in ChauAnh, 2015) in 2010, over 5.6 million students did at least one online course in the fall of 2009 and nearly 30% of the students at tertiary level took at least one online course in the United States. Then, Nghi (2014, p.545) considers the virtual learning environment as a tool “to bring dynamic, media-rich content into courses and assignments”. He also highlights the importance of integrating digital media education into universities’ curriculum (ibid). In fact, since the early 1960s, there has been a dramatic change in the way language is taught and the very change has entailed the teaching facilities and aids. Warcheur and Kern (2005) describe the change as “one of the most significant areas of innovation in language education, together with the fast spread of the Internet.

Although there have been a considerable number of research works on dictionary use recently, few have focused on online ones, (Tseng, 2009). Tseng (2009) considers the web-based dictionary as a good resource for language learners to look up unknown words in Taiwan. Recent research surveys found that the hand-held electronic dictionary, including the web-based dictionary, is gaining acceptance among students, and has become one of the reference tools that they often use, especially in translation, (Chi, 2003; Li, 1998; Li, 2003;

cited in Law, 2009). What is more, Aust, Kelley & Roby's (1993, p.64) study compares online electronic aid and conventional paper dictionary use on the measures of consultation frequency, study time, efficiency, and comprehension and they found that readers consulted hyper-references much more frequently than comparable paper references. The findings of the studies by Amiriyan and Heshmatifar (2013, cited in Ahangari and Dogolsara, 2015), moreover, show that the electronic dictionary has better effect on learning and long-term retention of words among lower intermediate EFL learners in Iran and Flin (2007, cited Ahangari and Dogolsara, 2015) concludes that the electronic dictionary results in superior gains on the comprehension and vocabulary than the printed one. From these discussions, the benefits of consulting web-based dictionaries for vocabulary in translation, especially for terminologies, can be foreseen.

Besides supplying teaching materials and lookup functions, the website provides a lot of resources that assist translation, making it not only easier but also faster, (Translation Team, 2016). In fact, the Internet can serve as the forum which students can join to study to develop their English communication, (Nghì, 2016). As a result, the web can actually offer a wide range of resources for translation teaching and learning in the modern world.

TRAINEE TRANSLATORS' USE OF WEBSITE RESOURCES FOR TRANSLATION AT THE UFM

The responsive community and the instrument

The instrument used to collect relevant data for this paper is an online questionnaire delivered to BESs. They were surveyed on what online sources they used in translation and how they behaved when they faced unfamiliar words/ word phrases. All the items were multiple-choice questions with five options based on Likert's five-point scale and were marked compulsory to avoid missing information. More specifically, the responses were ranked from 1 to

5, namely *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *no idea*, *agree* and *completely agree* respectively. All the data were then processed by the SPSS software and will be discussed in detail in the subsequent part.

The number of BESs at Foreign Languages Department at the UFM who registered for Translation 2 in 2016's Final semester³ is 129. All of them were requested to answer the questionnaire; nonetheless, 121 out of them responded to the survey. More specifically, the majority of these respondents were females, representing approximately 85%. This high proportion of female students who dominate the entire sample is quite typical in Foreign Language majors.

To understand more about the background of the sample, the author decided upon exploring the student subject's possessions for translation (Figure 1). As can be seen, cell phones with Internet access are the most preferred among their possible tools for translation, forming almost 86%; next comes the laptop computer with nearly 70% of the respondents who claimed to own this type of possession. These gadgets are more connected with the Internet access than the others in the chart.

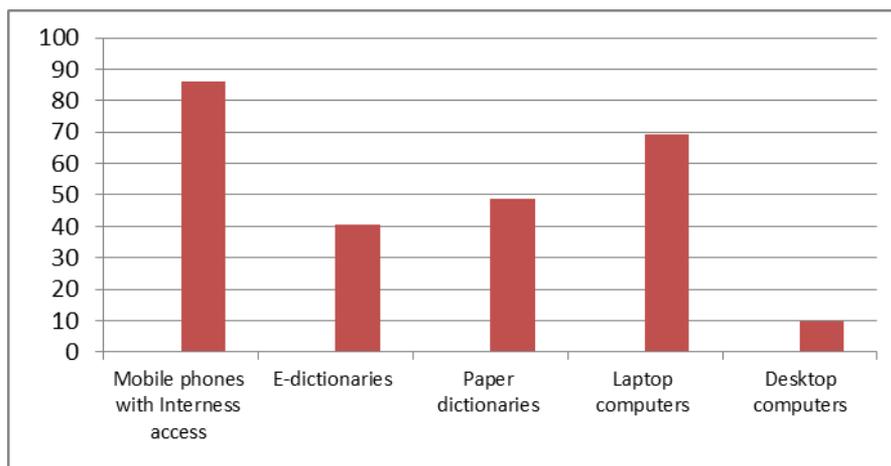


Figure 1. BESs' possessions for translation

³ The UFM academic year, based on the calendar one, is divided into three semesters, namely First, Middle, and Final.

The author, then, explored what social media sites that the student subjects deployed to stay in contact with others. The statistical results in Figure 2 show that Facebook is used by around 97% of the responsive students in the survey. Then comes the email deployed by nearly 79%. Also popular are Zalo and Messenger which both represent a little more than 60 %.

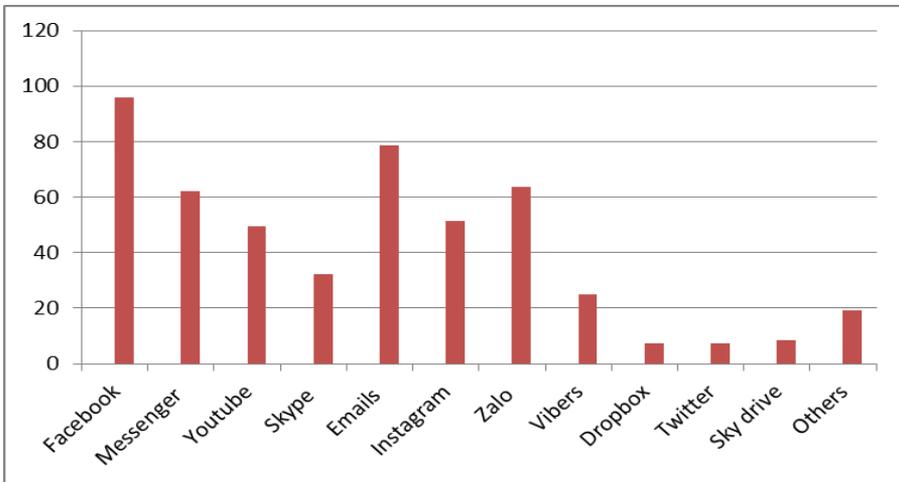


Figure 2. BESs' use of online tools

In summary, the background of the responsive students reveals that they are inclined toward IT use. The more traditional tools like paper dictionaries, e-dictionaries, and desktop computers have become less commonly used. While the 9X generation is considered as IT natives (Xuan, 2014); this is good news because they do possess some essential tools to connect themselves to the outside world. The IT devices are good not only for getting information from the outside world but also for sharing their ideas, opinions or suggestions with others out there.

3.2 Data analysis and discussion

The dictionary plays a crucial part in studying a language, especially, in learning vocabulary. It is actually considered as an indispensable tool and “faithful companions to language learners, especially to second and foreign language learners because they provide a quick

and direct access to the meaning of unknown words” (Al-Qudah& Al-Qudah, 2001; cited in Hasan et al, 2013). As a result, the first questions focus on the students’ use of dictionaries.

Table 1 provides the information on BESs’ dictionary use in translation classes. As is shown, 71.9 % of the respondents agree that e-dictionaries are their most preferred tool for translation. A little lower are Internet-based dictionaries that make up 71%, while 24% of the responsive students affirm that they use paper dictionaries. In addition, only one-fifth to one-third of the respondents claim that they were taught to use dictionaries by their instructors, and 33.1% of them feel satisfied with their dictionary skills, which is really disappointing. Consequently, it is interesting to know that BESs are quite familiar with IT tools and utilize them in their studying English; however, the dictionary skills provided by their instructors fail to meet their demand.

Table 1. BESs' dictionary use

Question items	1	2	3	4	5
I often use a paper dictionary in translation.	7.4	28.1	40.5	19.0	5.0
I often use an e-dictionary in translation (including the one on the mobile phone).	6.6	11.6	9.9	42.1	29.8
I often use Internet-based dictionaries in translation.	2.5	8.3	22.3	46.3	20.7
I have been taught dictionary skills in translation by my instructors.	11.6	28.9	32.2	22.3	5.0
My dictionary skills are often reinforced by my instructors.	7.4	25.6	41.3	24.0	1.7
My mates show me how to consult a dictionary.	14.0	30.6	34.7	15.7	5.0

Table 2 shows BESs' web-based resource use during the translation process. In fact, just 17.3% of the respondents think that they are good at IT. More particularly, while 29.8% of the sample believes that they were equipped with the web-based resource searching skills by their instructors, as many as 71.1% claim that they learnt to use web-based resources for translation on their own. In addition, 67.8% of the respondents seek web-based resources for translation; however, very few work with ESP websites; alternatively, they seek more help from open resources (56.2%) and Internet-based dictionaries (60.4%).

Table 2. BESs' web-based resource use

Question items	1	2	3	4	5
I am good at IT.	12.4	20.7	49.6	16.5	0.8
My instructor shows me how to use web-based resources for translation.	9.1	25.6	35.5	27.3	2.5
I am pleased with web-based resource searching skills taught to me.	5.0	19.0	43.8	31.4	0.8
My mates show me how to use web-based resources for translation.	14.9	25.6	46.3	11.6	1.7
I learn how to use web-based resources for translation on my own.	0.8	7.4	20.7	53.7	17.4
When seeing an unfamiliar word, I often use web-based resources for translation.	3.3	6.6	22.3	52.1	15.7
When seeing an unfamiliar word, I am good at seeking web-based resources for translation	3.3	12.4	52.1	27.3	5.0
When seeing an unfamiliar word, I	2.5	7.4	29.8	52.1	8.3

Question items	1	2	3	4	5
often seek Internet-based dictionaries in translation.					
When seeing an unfamiliar word, I often seek ESP websites suggested by professionals for translation.	6.6	24.0	47.9	19.8	1.7
When seeing an unfamiliar word, I often seek professional materials for translation.	5.0	16.5	38.8	36.4	3.3
When seeing an unfamiliar word, I often seek other open resources (e.g. Wikipedia) for translation.	2.5	15.7	25.6	48.8	7.4
When finding an interesting technical term or a nice translation, I post it online as a source of references.	11.6	30.6	35.5	19.0	3.3
Web-based resources are helpful for translation, especially for Business English students	2.5	3.3	18.2	53.7	22.3

Regarding their trust in web-based resources, 76% of the subjects assert that web-based resources are helpful for translation, especially for BESs; nevertheless, when finding an interesting technical term or a nice translation, only 22.3% of them post it online as a source of reference for others. On the whole, students rely much on web-based resources for consultation; they receive little help with online research skills from their mates and their instructors. This has led to the fact that students frequently work with open online resources.

Table 3 provides the information on how students behave towards unfamiliar words and what they look for. The data reveals that the sample differs in their behaviors. In fact, about a half of them deploy

word strategies to deal with the unfamiliar words; on the contrary, the rest look them up in dictionaries or look to web-based resources immediately. In short, students should be better equipped with vocabulary strategies and cooperative learning to foster communication.

Table 3. BESS' behavior toward unfamiliar words

Question items	1	2	3	4	5
When seeing an unknown word in translation, I use word strategy to deal with it at once.	0.8	9.9	40.5	45.5	3.3
When seeing an unknown word in translation, I look it up in the dictionary immediately.	0.8	14.0	33.9	39.7	11.6
When seeing an unknown word in translation, I look it up in the web-based dictionary immediately.	0.8	15.7	32.2	43.0	8.3
When seeing an unknown word in translation, I consult the search engine (i.e. Google) to look for equivalent terms.	0.8	17.4	31.4	42.1	8.3
When seeing an unknown word in translation, I ask for help from my mates.	4.1	18.2	36.4	35.5	5.8
When I locate an entry, I look for the sound.	2.5	8.3	41.3	48.8	9.1
When I locate an entry, I look for the meaning.	1.7	4.1	9.1	55.4	29.8
When I locate an entry, I look for the form.	0.8	12.4	24.0	57.0	5.8
When I locate an entry, I look for the use.	0	9.1	21.5	56.2	13.2

Table 3 also delineates what BESs get from the resources, either online or offline. The statistical data indicates that 85.2% of the respondents need the meanings of the entries. A much lower percentage of the sample locate the form and the use of the unknown words, which account for 62.8% and 69.4% respectively. The fewest informants decide upon the sound. As a result, BESs show their less expertise in consulting dictionaries of all types and dealing with unfamiliar words in translation.

Table 4 reveals more about the responsive community's expectation of what they should do with the Internet. The data shows that BESs are more interested in consulting the web-based resources via getting the entries or discussing the entries with others instead of making contributions via sharing their suggestions online.

Table 4. BESs' behavior toward online resources

Question items	1	2	3	4	5
I use web-based resources to share my suggestion on translating technical terms	6.6	23.1	42.1	20.7	7.4
I use web-based resources to ask for help with translating technical terms	4.1	15.7	33.9	41.3	5.0
I use web-based resources to discuss my suggestion on translating technical terms with other people	11.6	21.5	37.2	23.1	6.6

Concerning dictionary skills and web-based resource consulting skills, up to 62.8% agree that these skills should be included in the syllabus on Translation (see Table 5). In addition, 55.4% of them claim to be pleased with the skills at using their dictionary and web-based resources in translation even though most of them are not good at IT and had to explore the skills of using web-based resources by themselves (see Table 2).

Table 5. Students' self-perception of web-based resources

Question items	1	2	3	4	5
The syllabus on translation should include dictionary skills and web-based resource consulting skills.	1. 7	5. 8	29. 8	47. 1	15. 7
In general, I am pleased with skills at using my dictionary and web-based resource in translation.	1. 7	9. 9	33. 1	43. 0	12. 4

In summary, BESs differ in their dictionary and web-based resource skills and the data analysis shows that they are playing a passive role in getting entries from the web rather than an active one in contributing their ideas, suggestions, and/or discussions to the virtual community. Accordingly, they should master the skills of exploiting the very resources for their intent, particularly in translation, which will function as the initial step, where cooperative learning and critical thinking can be incorporated to develop BESs' translation skills as well as their communicative proficiency.

Suggestions

Based on the discussion in 3.2, the author of this paper would put forwards some suggestions on improving the situation in terms of *the what* and *the how* as below.

Firstly, the lecturers of Translation should really master the skills of using dictionaries and IT resources to train their students. In fact, dictionary use is normally seen as a way of promoting learner's autonomy and provided a possibility to continue word acquisition outside the formal study of the language, (Thornbury, 2008, cited in Ahangari and Dogolsaara, 2015, p1) and the statistical results in 3.2 show that besides using electronic dictionaries when resorting to the web, they can do such things as posting their suggested translation, searching for source texts, and the like. Then, the lecturers of Translation should take the lead in IT use in order that they can help their students.

Secondly, due to the contribution of dictionary use to language learning, dictionary skills should be instructed formally to BESs, especially for those in Translation who need more specialized skills with dictionary use and this should be included in the syllabus on Translation, too. When consulting dictionaries, they should be highly skilled at the procedure to get the entries they need in terms of meanings, sounds, forms, and uses and the functions that modern dictionaries offer. Then, the BESs' dictionary use skills should be reinforced every now and again to ensure the effectiveness of instruction.

Thirdly, web-based resource skills, together with dictionary skills, should also be included in the syllabus on Translation to help the BESs work with the web more effectively. The Internet not only provides the tools for learning but also contains the immense recourses for teaching and learning activities, (ChauAnh, 2014). Because of this, the BESs should really master how to consult the online resources and be more selective about what to get from them.

Fourthly, the BESs should be provided with critical thinking skills to judge what they get from web-based resources and the vocabulary strategy to better address the problem that may arise. In fact, the students mostly consult the web-based resources where they might be subject to non-accredited materials available on the Internet, and they may get several entries for one single technical term. Then cooperative learning can be employed to judge their entries consulted via discussing, arguing, reasoning, and the like. Thanks to these activities, the students' language proficiency will be developed gradually and they can have the best choice of vocabulary use.

Finally, the BESs should take a more active role in building up the online language store for future reference, especially technical terms. The Internet should be where BESs do their task on Translation and simultaneously where they learn how to cooperate with others to share social responsibility through uploading their discussions, arguments, opinions, ideas, and suggestions on certain online forums

for the virtual community.

In short, the web-based resources can support the input, the process, and also the outcome of translation; furthermore, university students of English as IT natives today (Xuan, 2014) cannot live without IT. As a result, translation classrooms supported by web-based resources are very important for trainee translators to develop their English in general and translation skills in particular.

CONCLUSION

The paper has presented the situation of BESs' use of web-based resources for English to Vietnamese translation and vice versa. At the UFM, although most of the BESs perceive themselves as not good at IT, they deploy IT tools to address translation problems. As a result, better use of web-based resources for translation and cyber classrooms are highly recommended for trainee translators at the UFM. Then, when IT literacy helps out, they can have opportunities to take part in other activities to develop their communicative competence.

Biodata

The author earned his BA degree in TESOL at Quy Nhon University in 2003 and then his MA degree in the same field in 2010 at Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities. He is currently the lecturer of English at the University of Finance-Marketing's Foreign Languages Department. His major area of interest involves translation, writing skills, IT use in instruction and entrepreneurial education and training for business school students.

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**UNIVERSITY OF FINANCE – MARKETING
FOREIGN LANGUAGE FACULTY
QUESTIONNAIRE ON WEB-BASED RESOURCES FOR
TRANSLATION**

(For Business English majored students)

Dear the responsive community,

I am carrying a research paper on “Business English-majored students’ using web-based resources in translation classes at the University of Finance –Marketing”; accordingly, your information is really needed for completing this work. I promise that what you provide on this questionnaire will be kept extremely secret and will be used for the purpose of research.

Thanks for your participation.

A. Personal information

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Year: One Two Three Four
3. Years of learning English: _____.

B. Study questions

Please, circle the number from 1 to 5 (1: strongly disagree; 2: Disagree; 3: no idea; 4: agree; 5: completely agree).

Seq	Question items	Scale				
	I often use a paper dictionary in translation.	1	2	3	4	5
	I often use e-dictionary in translation (including the one on the mobile phone).	1	2	3	4	5
	I often use Internet-based dictionaries in translation.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I have been taught dictionary skills in translation by my instructors.	1	2	3	4	5

Seq	Question items	Scale				
	My dictionary skills are often reinforced by my instructors.	1	2	3	4	5
	My mates show me how to consult a dictionary.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am good at IT.	1	2	3	4	5
	My instructor shows me how to use web-based resources for translation.	1	2	3	4	5
	I am pleased with web-based resource searching skills taught to me.	1	2	3	4	5
	My mates show me how to use web-based resources for translation.	1	2	3	4	5
	I learn how to use web-based resources for translation on my own.	1	2	3	4	5
	When seeing an unfamiliar word, I often use web-based resources for translation.	1	2	3	4	5
	When seeing an unfamiliar word, I am good at seeking web-based resources for translation	1	2	3	4	5
	When seeing an unfamiliar word, I often seek Internet based dictionaries in translation.	1	2	3	4	5
	When seeing an unfamiliar word, I often seek ESP websites suggested by professionals for translation.	1	2	3	4	5
	When seeing an unfamiliar word, I often seek professional materials for translation.	1	2	3	4	5
	When seeing an unfamiliar word, I often seek other open resources (e.g. Wikipedia) for translation.	1	2	3	4	5
	When finding an interesting technical term or a nice translation, I post it online as a source of references.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Web-based resources are helpful for translation,	1	2	3	4	5

Seq	Question items	Scale				
	especially for Business English students					
5	I use word strategy to deal with the unfamiliar words.	1	2	3	4	5
	I look it up in the dictionary immediately.	1	2	3	4	5
	I look it up in the web-based dictionary immediately.	1	2	3	4	5
	I consult the search engine (i.e. Google) to look for equivalent terms.	1	2	3	4	5
	I ask for help from my mates.	1	2	3	4	5
6	When I locate an entry, I look for the sound.	1	2	3	4	5
	When I locate an entry, I look for the meaning.	1	2	3	4	5
	When I locate an entry, I look for the form.	1	2	3	4	5
	When I locate an entry, I look for the use.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I use web-based resources to share my suggestion on translating technical terms	1	2	3	4	5
	I use web-based resources to ask for help with translating technical terms	1	2	3	4	5
	I use web-based resources to discuss my suggestion on translating technical terms with other people	1	2	3	4	5
8	The syllabus on translation should include dictionary skills and web-based resource consulting skills	1	2	3	4	5
9	In general, I am pleased with skills at using my dictionary and web-based resource in translation.	1	2	3	4	5

End

TT-SET AUGMENTED WITH POT: A STRUCTURED PROCEDURE FOR ACADEMICS' REFLECTION

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Abstract

Reflexivity is one of the qualities of a creative teacher. Promoting reflection may require varied lenses. This paper, which draws on one of the findings from a doctoral study investigating the impact of teacher-tailored student evaluation of teaching (TT-SET) augmented with peer observation of teaching (POT) in tertiary quality teaching, reports on academics' perceptions of the intervention for their reflection. Participants were eleven academics teaching business English at a university in Vietnam. The study used a qualitative case study with complementary data collection methods: interviews, peer observation protocols, recorded debriefings, digital video-recordings of teaching, and researcher journal. Data were analysed inductively and thematically. One of the key findings of the study was that participants perceived that their reflection was promoted through structured steps of TT-SET augmented with POT. It suggests that the formative structured process may be a mechanism for academics' reflection and impetus for improving teaching.

Keywords: *reflection; student evaluation of teaching; peer observation of teaching*

INTRODUCTION

For promoting creativity in teaching, one of the qualities a teacher should possess is critical reflexivity (Richards, 2013). Reflective

teachers tend to examine their practice and gain understanding of practice that will be applied in their classrooms. This reflects my experience whereby I used the teacher-tailored SET (TT-SET) augmented with reciprocal peer observation of teaching (POT) with other colleagues in my department. My learning from the experience suggests that if academics reflect on practice and gain deeper understanding of practice, their teaching capacity may develop and changes may be made for improving practice. Students and peer colleagues are those who are in direct contact with academics' performance and thus appear to be a useful information source about teaching. They may be useful lenses for teachers' reflection on practice.

The reflective teacher

The development of the capacity for reflection and reflective practice has been considered an important determinant of the emergence of a capable reflective teacher. Wheatley (2006, p. 179) emphasised the importance of capacities for reflection: "It's hard to look at modern life and see our capacities for reflection or meaning-making.... We change only if we decide that the change is meaningful to who we are." This capacity involves the ability to build a sound knowledge base for reflection and the necessary skills for effective actions, without which reflection will not yield improved practice (Jones, 2007).

An effective reflective teacher has the ability to make a distinction between reflection and rationalisation of practice, which is crucial to the development of teachers' professional knowledge (Loughran, 2002). Loughran suggested that rationalisation may disguise itself as reflection, by which he meant that rationalisation of practice is apparent when a problem is dominated by existing perspectives and is not examined from varied viewpoints. Contrasting effective reflection with rationalisation of practice, Loughran asserted that reflection is effective when it facilitates a teacher's meaning-making of a situation in ways that enhance understanding in order that the

teacher comes to examine and understand the context of practice from a variety of viewpoints. To examine practice through many different lenses, reflective teachers need “competence in methods of evidence-based classroom enquiry” (Pollard, 2005, p. 14). For instance, collaboration and dialogue with colleagues can lead to the enhancement of reflective teaching, professional learning, and personal fulfilment (Pollard, 2005).

Reflection and reflective practice provide teachers with a means of building self-knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning, through which they are able to constantly examine and refine practice with attention to goals and outcomes of actions, thus making a valuable contribution to their ongoing process of learning about teaching. Because effective reflection and professional learning require teachers to seek recourse to external sources of information on teaching such as students’ and colleagues’ lenses in order to examine their practice, forms of feedback collection and collaboration might be needed.

Lenses for reflection

In order to gain insight into practice, reflective teachers need a variety of lenses (i.e., multiple viewpoints) to effectively reflect on practice. Brookfield (1995) suggested the four lenses for academics to examine teaching, including autobiographies as teachers and learners, students’ eyes, colleagues’ experiences, and theoretical literature, which are associated with the processes of self-reflection, student feedback, peer professional conversation, and reading of the relevant literature respectively. Examining practice through these lenses can highlight distorted aspects of teachers’ assumptions and allows them to enhance their understanding and further define assumptions. Though the four lenses are valuable to teacher reflection, students’ and colleagues’ lenses are viewed as external sources of evidence on practice and may generate confrontation that triggers reflection. Therefore, they are the focus in this study situated within the broader spectrum of evidence-based inquiry into teaching

practice and are discussed now.

Students' eyes: Gaining the understanding of teaching and learning through students' eyes is, for Brookfield, "of utmost importance" to responsive and good teaching (p. 35). Gaining a deeper understanding of what students are experiencing helps teachers consciously confirm or challenge their pedagogic assumptions and check if students understand their intended meaning. Brookfield believed that it is hard for teachers to teach well without knowing students' perspectives on methodological choices; without knowing if these work for students, teachers may risk making ill-informed and inappropriate methodological choices.

Colleagues' experiences: For Brookfield, although critical reflection can be a solitary activity, "it is ultimately a collective endeavour" (p. 36). Critical dialogues with colleagues can help teachers learn from others' experience and perspectives. By getting information from colleagues' observations, feedback, or critical dialogues, teachers can examine the hidden aspects of their practice.

SET as a complementary source used with POT

Previous studies have shown that formative SETs are one possible source of information that can be used to promote reflection (Beaty, as cited in Winchester & Winchester, 2011). Formative SETs are used for academics' teaching improvement and personal development (Aultman, 2006; Ramsden, 2003). These SETs focus on academics' desired goals (Winchester & Winchester, 2011). When teachers design their own ratings form for desired information, rather than use standardised tools, they may gain a better understanding of teaching areas that need improving (Rotem & Glasman, 1979). Feedback targeted to specific teaching problems may bring about improvement (Marsh & Roche, 1993). Thus, TT-SET may be useful for reflection.

In addition, SETs are more helpful if teachers discuss them with a consultant or a peer (McKeachie, 1997). There is ample evidence that

SETs used in conjunction with forms of consultation can be effective for teaching improvement (Brinko, 1993; Dresel & Rindermann, 2011; Lang & Kersting, 2007; Marsh & Roche, 1993; Marsh & Roche, 1997; Penny & Coe, 2004; Rindermann et al., 2007). POT appears to be a relevant form of peer support to complement SETs. Profound pedagogical reasoning and teaching improvement are determined by reflection which can be triggered by internal factors like problems in practice and external factors like collegial interaction (Korthagen, 2001; LaBoskey, 1993).

POT has been deemed effective for academics' professional development (Barnard et al., 2011; M. Bell, 2001; Donnelly, 2007; Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004; Shortland, 2004). POT is commonly used to inform teaching because there are "substantive aspects of teaching that only faculty can judge" (Hutchings, 1996, p. 224). Problems relating to student feedback can be moderated through the support of a trusted and thoughtful colleague who conducts observation and shares his/her perspective (A. Bell & Mladenovic, 2008; Hendry & Oliver, 2012; Moore, Walsh, & Riskey, 2007). This means that academics can triangulate information on their practice from both students and peers to appropriately inform future practice. As colleagues serve as one of the lenses for reflection from collaborative experience and as a source of possible pedagogical strategies, information from observations, feedback, or critical constructive dialogue allows academics to examine aspects of practice. Thus, peer observation of teaching as part of consultation appears to be relevant when coupled with SETs for academics to improve teaching.

The use of formative TT-SETs augmented with POT aligns with the assumption that examining practice from a variety of viewpoints can facilitate effective reflection and subsequent changes. Thus, this paper aims to discuss how the structured intervention helped promote academics' reflection.

METHODOLOGY

The intervention process of this study involved academics in steps such as targeting teaching aspects for improvement, planning observations, reciprocally observing teaching, debriefing with their peer, and writing reflection reports. All the steps were designed to promote academics' reflection. The study used a qualitative case study which provides insights into the meaning of social phenomena in natural settings (Merriam, 2001b). The research context facilitates a case study within the constructivist paradigm (Yin, 2009). One of the research questions the study aims to answer is: *What are academics' perceptions of TT-SET augmented with POT for promoting their reflection in the process of pedagogical reasoning?*

A variety of data were collected for the study; yet, the data used to justify the finding presented in this paper is based on teaching dialogue in the debriefing session, teachers' reflection reports and the interviews with individual academics. The participants chose SET items from a SET inventory and collected students' feedback, identified teaching aspects for POT, and joined in post-POT debriefing about teaching. Purposive sampling was used to select "the most productive sample to answer the research question" (Marshall, 1996, p. 523). Participants were eleven academics who had at least three years of teaching experience and were teaching business English.

The data analysis followed an inductive approach which allowed the data to be constructed into themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) independent of those initially identified from the literature review. A thorough review of the data allowed the data to be broken into meaningful parts or bits of information and assigned to codes (Maxwell, 2005). These multiple codes were compared and contrasted and sorted into groupings that have something in common (Merriam, 2001a), forming groups of categories. These descriptive categories allowed easy access to information in the analysis and interpretation phase (Merriam, 2009). Going through the data set

multiple times and reviewing the coding facilitated the formulating of codes that were then condensed into categories, and the themes were identified across categories. Exploring and refining the data analysis framework involved logical, intuitive, and critical thinking about the meaning, applicability, importance, and underlying connections between ideas. Eventually, a summary was drawn from the analysis and synthesis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Academics perceived that the intervention promoted their reflection through the structured steps, including TT-SET, reciprocal observation of peer teaching, debriefing with peers, and reporting through the teachers' reflection report form. The finding was supported in two ways: (i) the participants valued all the steps involved in the intervention as a whole, and (ii) they also indicated particular steps they thought most contributed to their reflection, which implied that these steps all contributed to academics' decision making. Participants systematically identified problems of practice within actual teaching contexts from early-term TT-SET and POT. They were provided with clearly proposed steps in the process to support reciprocal POT such as facilitating collaborative dialogue about teaching after POT and proposed timeframes. They also participated in the development of tools such as TT-SET and POT protocol (pre-observation form, peer observer's feedback form, and teacher's reflection report form). Then, the exercise of debriefing and end-of-term interview helped academics make their pedagogical reasoning explicit.

Most academics valued all the steps as a whole. However, in answering the question regarding which steps in the intervention process were particularly useful to academics' reflection and learning about teaching, participants indicated particular steps that most contributed, although they said that the whole process was useful (Table 1).

Table 1: Usefulness of steps in the current intervention for reflection and learning

Participants	Collecting TT-SET	Pre-observation meeting	Doing reciprocal observation	Post-observation meeting	Writing reflection reports
Binh					
Cuc					
Dieu					
En					
Phung					
Giang					
Hang					
Nga					
Dang					
Khoa					

Table 1. indicates that in their perception of which steps contributed to their learning, academics put weight on collecting TT-SET, doing reciprocal observation, debriefing, and writing reflection reports. Counting the comments through content analysis shows that eight participants supported the usefulness of TT-SET, seven participants supporting debriefing, and five supporting doing reciprocal observation. Particularly, Dieu, Nga, Dang shared a common view that all the steps are useful for reflection. For example, Nga said: “All the steps in the process influenced my decision-making” (Nga—teacher’s reflection report 1 - TRR1). The study shows that reflection was promoted through a structured intervention embedded with formative information from student and colleague as contexts for

learning. The academics perceived the structured steps as useful for their reflection. They valued all the steps involved as a whole, which implies that the overall process contributed to academics' decision making, but academics also indicated there were steps which they felt had most impact.

First of all, TT-SET was a structured step that helped academics collect student feedback systematically. For example, "TT-SET is supportive to my teaching in that it guides me to adjust my teaching appropriately" (Dang—INT). Some participants particularly emphasised the importance of collecting early-term TT-SET and engaging in dialogue with their peer at the debriefing. Binh said: "Collecting TT-SET helped me gain understanding of student needs whereas talking to a colleague offered an opportunity to learn teaching ideas for better practice" (Binh—TRR1). TT-SET prioritised what the academics needed to find out about because it is a form of formative SETs which focused on academics' needs (Winchester & Winchester, 2011) and helped "identify areas where there is scope for improvement" (Hounsell, 2009, p. 198). TT-SET used in this present study provided academics with information on targeted aspects of teaching and stimulated their teaching aspirations (i.e., for a change and improvement) from identifying teaching problems. This finding aligns with several studies such as Winchester and Winchester (2011) and Aultman (2006) which used weekly and early-term formative SETs. For example, the use of TT-SET had a similar result to Aultman's use of early-term SETs in that the participants learned about students' expectations and preferred way of academics' teaching that contributed to their reflection and decision on making changes. Although there were in several cases concerns about TT-SET reliability, TT-SET was perceived as a source of information on teaching to be considered. Thus, it is possible to say that TT-SET, designed to be complemented by other steps in POT, focused on the academics' needs and aspirations for practice and provided them with formative information that they could use to reflect systematically.

Undertaking reciprocal observations helped academics focus on their practice in two ways: learning new teaching ideas from their peer or learning from their peer's teaching problems. Seven found observing their peer's teaching useful because they could learn new teaching ideas, whereas the others said they could not learn new ideas but recognised their peer's teaching problems and referred to their own situation. For example, "In collaboration with Nga, I learned much from observing her teaching" (Hang—INT). Nga explained why the experience of observing the peer's teaching was useful:

I expected Hang to figure out my weaknesses, but she did not. There must have been teaching aspects that needed improving. It is a pity... However, I could learn something observing Hang's teaching by analysing why some of her techniques were not effective and then did differently in my class. For example, in teaching new words in a reading passage, instead of explaining their meaning deductively as Hang did, I let students interpret their meaning by eliciting them from different contexts. (Nga—INT)

This finding replicates the finding from other studies that teachers can obtain new teaching ideas from observing their peer (A. Bell & Mladenovic, 2008; Hendry & Oliver, 2012). For example, A. Bell and Mladenovic (2008) discussed in a study on POT partnership for tutor development that observing a peer teaching was a key benefit and appeared to be more highly regarded than peer feedback because it could provide tutors with new ideas and help them reflect on their teaching. Although there may be differences in the ways POT is implemented in studies such as Barnard et al. (2011), Hammersley-Fletcher and Orsmond (2005), and Bell and Mladenovic (2008), the common finding is that POT develops reflection and reflective practice. Watching how the lesson was delivered, how students engaged and reacted in the peer's classroom helped the academics perceive what strategies worked and are worth trying (Hendry & Oliver, 2012; Moore et al., 2007). Thus, it is evidenced that reflection can be triggered by the nature of observation of a peer's teaching.

The debriefing session also contributed to academics' awareness of their teaching. Seven academics reported that they could learn from the debriefing session whereby they had discussion about teaching based on TT-SET and the observation. For example, "I recognize that I need to promote the aspects which my peer highly valued and make changes to what really needs improving" (En—TRR2). Binh valued the dialogue about teaching: "Debriefing is very useful with dialogue about teaching where I could hear explanations on teaching aspects" (Binh—INT). The debriefing session facilitated academics' sharing of teaching experience made explicit through observation (Atkinson & Bolt, 2010; Carroll & O'Loughlin, 2014). Peer feedback can complement student feedback because academics provide a different viewpoint (Hutchings, 1996). POT in this study is reciprocal, which means it created spaces for mutual or reciprocal learning. POT was structured to promote peers sharing teaching ideas and reflection. It is argued that the principal role of the peer observer in collaborative POT is framed not as a knower who provides solutions but as a supportive colleague who supports academics' reflection by describing observations, offering feedback and asking questions (Barnard et al., 2011; Gosling, 2014; McGill & Beaty, 1995). The finding concurs with Korthagen's (2010) idea that peer-supported learning promotes collaboration and exchanges between colleagues. Korthagen (2010) believed that learning to teach is "a socio-cultural process relying on discursive resources" (p. 104). Therefore, teaching dialogue between peers was supportive of their reflection.

Writing reflection reports was viewed as a way to look back on teaching. Five academics valued writing their reflection after POT because it was useful for consolidating what was reflected on and another way to consciously think about their practice. Dieu said: "Writing the reflection report is a useful way to consciously evaluate teaching" (Dieu—INT). Nga mentioned another aspect of teacher's reflection report: "It is useful for memorising what was reflected on" (Nga—INT). Dang viewed writing reflection reports as useful for

reflection: “It [writing the teacher’s reflection report] was useful for looking back on my performance.” (Dang—INT). This finding is also supported by evidence from Donnelly’s (2007) report that “in writing reflectively about the experience you were subconsciously trying to figure out why you would do this and whether you were doing it better” (p. 124). It was also found in Bell’s (2001) structured teaching development programme employing collaborative POT and educational developer, that the participants reflected on the POT experience in writing. This is what Fullerton (2003) described as the fourth stage of POT which consolidates the main points of the teaching conversation, responses to the peer’s written feedback, and plans for future practice. Thus, writing reflection reports appeared to be a systematic way of reflecting on the POT experience.

Furthermore, there is a special case: An did not appear in the table above because she contradicted herself. Although An did not have a positive experience of the intervention, she gave her evaluation of the process: “All steps systematically interact with one another, helping academics to draw out an overview of their teaching. The conversation between peers was important” (An—INT). An seemed to contradict herself in that on the one hand she did not value TT-SET or POT, on the other hand she considered the process as useful. This may mean she thought the intervention process itself to be useful or at least made her aware of teaching, but maybe not in this particular experience of it. In brief, the academics perceived several aspects of the process, or the overall process in some cases, as useful for their reflection. Reflection may be encouraged through these structured steps in the intervention process.

CONCLUSION

The intervention appears to contribute to the academics’ reflection and self-directed learning about teaching. They perceived several aspects of the process of TT-SET augmented with POT, or the overall process in some cases, as useful for their reflection. These structured steps may support academics in choosing strategies to

improve practice or evaluating the changes they made. TT-SET may provide academics with information about their teaching so that they could identify teaching problems or diagnosing their learning needs. POT provided a chance to learn from peer feedback and teaching observation where academics gained pedagogical knowledge: useful teaching techniques or strategies through dialogues and/or watching peers teach. Reporting through written forms may raise academics' consciousness in their evaluation of or reflection on practice. Although the academics had different perception about steps (e.g., TT-SET, reciprocal observations, debriefing, and writing reflection reports) which they felt had most impact on their reflection and learning, they valued the whole process. This finding is again important for academics' changes in pedagogical reasoning because in an environment like this university where academics are often overwhelmed with workloads and teach in isolation, such intervention stimulated their reflective thinking and made them become aware of practice.

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DEVELOPING HOU ENGLISH MAJORS' CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING SKILLS THROUGH PHOTO-BASED ACTIVITIES

Bui Do Cong Thanh

Abstract

Tertiary education lays heavy emphasis on students' critical and creative thinking abilities which are deemed two indispensable learning skills in the twenty-first century. To have this in mind, rather than being restricted to the transfer of the linguistic resources to learners, language pedagogy ought to empower them with the capability to make use of these available resources to foster critical and creative thinking skills. In an effort to optimize English majors' critical and creative thoughts, multimedia visual aids, especially digital photos are fully deployed in the language classroom with a primary focus on meanings. These are abundant and fluid sources – a fertile land – for language lecturers to adapt their lessons and make the best of such sources to enable learners to think out of the box. Inputs into how to utilize digital photos to enhance English majors' criticality and creativity are under discussion with some careful notes for language lecturers.

Keywords: *critical thinking, creative thinking, digital photos*

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BILINGUAL ENGLISH - VIETNAMESE EDUCATION IN VIETNAM

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Abstract

The trend of bilingual development which indicates that there are more second language speakers of English as a lingua franca or an international language than native speakers has been identified and documented worldwide. This globally dual language education and a pedagogical paradigm shift from EFL teaching to ESL teaching have been identified as being developed in a reciprocal manner. The main aim of the article is to make a descriptive analysis of the development of bilingual education for majority (Kinh group) in educational practice of Vietnam. The article starts with briefly reviewing the global trend of bilingual education and the pedagogical paradigm shift from EFL teaching to ESL teaching. In this theoretical light, the article investigates how bilingual education has been shaped and how teaching English as second language has been proceeding in educational practice in Vietnam, particularly in HCMC.

From this analysis, the article finds that there has seemingly been a both spontaneous and adaptive tendency which is driven by sustainable public needs in the process of the development of bilingual English-Vietnamese education in Vietnam. Such educational practice indicates that dual language education and ESL in Vietnam has been theorizing in their particular way.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as an international language is a challenging task

in developing countries in general and in Vietnam- our country in particular. The problem that most of our students do not have the capacity to use English in their tertiary study and work in spite of their learning English for seven successive years (from the first year of junior to last year of secondary school) has been facing us for a rather long time. However, in addition to such an apparent failure inside the formal education system, English can be seen to be developed fast and the quality of English teaching and learning has been increasingly improved outside the formal educational system (Hoang Van Van, 2009). English in this context is characterized as more than just a school subject and permeating into many aspects of social life (Zou and Zhang, 2011). Particularly in pedagogical perspective, the learning of English in Asia in the twenty-first century has been widely noted far more than merely the learning a foreign language (Butler, 2014; Wang & HIL, 2011; Kirkpatrick, 2008; Graddol, 2006). Moreover, recent developments in English language teaching represent a response to the changing needs of learners and new market conditions, but they mark a ‘paradigm shift’ away from conventional EFL models. Thus, such pedagogical transition has led to the end of English as foreign language (Graddol, 2006).

THE GLOBAL TREND OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND THE PEDAGOGICAL PARADIGM SHIFT FROM EFL TEACHING TO ESL TEACHING

In terms of *bilingual* referred as to individuals who can function in more than one language, the trend that there are many bilingual children as there are monolingual children has been recognized worldwide (Paradis et al, 2011). The category of bilinguals is very broad—encompassing individuals who are sophisticated speakers, readers, and writers of two or more languages, as well as those who use a limited knowledge of a second language (L2) for academic and work purposes. Bilingualism is often the product of second language (L2) learning after the first language (L1) has been acquired—either

through non-tutored exposure or through instruction. Individuals can become bilingual at any age, depending on when the need to learn the L2 emerges or when instruction becomes available. For few last decades, the world witnessed a greatly increased research in linguistic, social and psychological aspects of and educational attention to the simultaneous" development of two languages during early childhood (García, Eugene E.; Martínez, Steve, 2016).

Within the school context, bilingual education refers to the use of a second or foreign language in school for teaching of curriculum subjects (Cohen, 2000; Baker and Jones 1998; Hyland, 2006). With rapid development in Canada, USA, Japan, and other countries, this type of education has been widely practiced worldwide since 1960 (Zhang, 2003). Bilingual education has its two distinct goals: the development of academic English and academic success, the development of the heritage language (Krashen, Tse, and McQuillan, 1998). In other words, bilingual education programs promote bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement and cross-cultural competence in students. This worldwide trend of bilingualism is also identified in terms of the development of World Englishes and English as “a lingua franca”; or “an international language” along with the development of globalization (Wen, 2012). More specifically, Leung (2005) indicates that bilingual education could serve five different educational and social goals. They are: (1) promotion of a majority language in a linguistically diverse society, (2) promotion of a minority language in a linguistically diverse society, (3) promotion of both majority and minority languages in a linguistically diverse society, (4) revitalization of a local minority language in a linguistically diverse society, and (5) promotion of foreign language in a foreign language learning context. Particularly, Leung emphasizes that the last function fits the bilingual education in non- English speaking countries like China or Vietnam. In the way just indicated, it can be noted that the development of learners’ academic English and academic success should be the dynamic core of promotion of foreign language in foreign language learning

contexts. It is advisable to make a shift in educational goals of teaching English in the non-native English contexts from English communicative proficiency to English academic proficiency. Such model of bilingual education has been noted being adapted in China. Lin (2008) and Kuo (2005) indicate that as a new model of teaching method, Chinese-English bilingual program has become more and more popular nationwide in China. Its aim is to enhance students' English language proficiency, as well as their English performance in the process of subject courses study, and make them competent for international communication in their academic fields.

Accordingly, the term which is closely related to bilingual or dual language or bilingual education is English as second language (ESL). In a simple description, English is assumed as a second language that learners can use beside their first language. In traditional view, English as a second language (ESL) refers to the process of producing bilinguals by teaching English as an L2 to learners in an English-speaking context. Distinguishingly, English as a foreign language (EFL) refers to the instruction delivered in a context where English is not used regularly outside the classroom, using the instructional techniques and the intensity of instruction required to achieve success. The umbrella term ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) is used to encompass both ESL and EFL (Encyclopedia of Education, 2002). Recently, the notion of English as second language has been evolved more broadly than that from the traditional view. This conceptual evolution is supported by the argument that there are interlinking variables contributing to success in learning language but not such only situational variables as external and immediate English language environment. These interlinking variables are proposed to be of pedagogy that is associated to learners, teachers and teaching methods, helping to create a kind of internal language learning environment. There have been two different ways to investigate such pedagogical context in researching its effects on English language teaching: one is to look at the amount of L2 contact or interaction, and the other is to look at

teaching conditions available for L2 learning. Eight changes that fit with the pedagogical paradigm shift in second language education toward what is most often described as communicative language teaching are identified. These changes are: learner autonomy, cooperative learning, curricular integration or content-based teaching or English for academic purposes, focus on meaning, diversity, thinking skills, alternative assessment and teachers as co-learners. The paradigm shift of which these changes are part is put into perspective as an element of larger shifts from positivism to post-positivism and from behaviorism to cognitivism (Ringbom, 1979; Pennycook & Snow, 2001; Longcope, 2010; Vyas & Patel, 2015; Wang & Hil, 2011).

HOW BILINGUAL EDUCATION HAS BEEN SHAPED AND HOW TEACHING ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE HAS BEEN PROCEEDING IN BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE IN VIETNAM

Motivational forces for the development of bilingual English-Vietnamese education in Vietnam

- (1) Like the other nine members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Vietnam has always used English as the sole official and working language. Kirkpatrick's research (2008) describes the way that English has automatically come out as the common language in Asia. Her study realizes that English as franc-lingual/ international language for a variety of working areas such as tourism, education, IT, trading, culture... in Asia. She argues that there has been no regulation for the use of English but it has been used in all the actual situations and Asian people took it for granted. This motivates the rapid growth and expansion of English in Vietnam from 1990 up to present (Hoang Van Van, 2009). In particular, the zeal for teaching English to younger and younger learners extends to both within and outside of the formal education system.

(2) In the line with the above trend, English for academic purpose boom has begun since the late decade 1990s for the increase of a number of Vietnamese people who want to study abroad and get international jobs. Proficiency in academic English becomes a must of the young generations in Vietnam. This substantial need has stimulated and fostered the flourishing establishment of international English centers such as British Council, ILA, APOLLO, and ACET which are owned by foreign holders. Followed with the presence of these institutions, English centers from large-size to small size possessed by Vietnamese holders have set up to comply to international standards in teaching content and methodology, for example VUS, VAS, etc..... In such English learning environment, more and more Vietnamese students get popularized with TOIEC, FCE, IELTS, TOFEL and levels of Cambridge international examinations for school children and adults.

In addition, international curricula for general education from such well-developed countries as The United States of America (USA), The United Kingdom (UK), Canada, Singapore, and Australia have been introduced to Vietnamese people through the establishment of international schools such as British Vietnamese International School, Canadian Vietnamese International School, Australian International School and Singaporean Vietnamese International School. More attentively, Butler (2014) indicates that many governments in East Asia have implemented English-language education at the primary school level when recognizing English as an increasingly powerful lingua franca. Corresponding with this English teaching tendency, a big number of private schools which are called “bilingual schools” for school children have increasingly set up in Vietnam, especially in big cities like Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi Capital and Danang City. Similar to Asian people, the fact that Vietnamese parents have a strong belief in the increased benefit of starting English-language learning when their children are very young to become bilinguals is widely spreading (Young & Tran

1999; Butler 2014). As a result, bilingual schools at varied levels from kindergarten to tertiary have kept flourishing in Vietnam up to now.

(3) Accordingly, as with English outside the formal education system, English inside the formal educational system in Vietnam has also been developing. On September, 2008 The 10 year National Plan for Teaching and Learning Foreign languages in the National Formal Education System in the Period 2008-2020 has been approved to promote the quality of English teaching and learning to meet the increasing trends of globalization and interdependence of the global communities. In line with a number of language policy documents that explicitly state the advantages of early language learning in over the world (Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2011), Vietnam Training and Education Ministry through their 10 year National Plan for Teaching and Learning Foreign languages has announcement on the grade 1 or 3 age at which learning English begins. English teaching and learning standards have been also internationalized. The 6 level testing system as developed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Language is officially accepted by the Plan for assessing the quality of English learning in Vietnam. Moreover, this National Plan has encouraged Vietnam educational institutions to actively develop and carry out bilingual programs. In public schools, beside English classes compulsorily scheduled in the schools, extra English classes in Science and Math have been taught with native-speaker teachers in accordance with international standards.

At tertiary level, in addition to as a compulsory subject English for higher education students to get some certain required credit hours of their learning program, in response to the Government's encouragement, pivotal tertiary institutions have introduced advanced programs in which English is required to be the medium of instruction. In some other universities, courses of bilingual education which students should learn in English achieve 10- 20% or more of

the total courses taken for undergraduates. This English teaching practice is assumed to be the best way for students' improvement of both professional knowledge and English language competence (Nguyen, 2010; Nguyen, 2013).

Developing models for bilingual education in Vietnam

The contextual dimensions at both global and national levels mentioned above may be noted as motivational forces that foster the development of models for bilingual education in Vietnam. However, it is seen that the models have been established implicitly in theoretical perspectives because of the absence in the literature of research on bilingual education for building up the foundation of the practice of bilingual English-Vietnamese education. In the scope of this article, in attempt to apply models of bilingual education documented in the international literature, I work out some pedagogical models that would underpin the practice of various forms of current bilingual education in Vietnam.

The first model is early English language learning with vital conditions that are offered to optimize learning English of young learners. This model can be recognized in English classes of the centers or institutions working with constraints of international standards in which well- trained teachers, preferably native-speaker teachers, and small-size classes are in place (Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2011). Regarding to the model for early English language learning, Rixon (1999) argues what matters more than the optimal age are the conditions under which young learner programs are given. Read (2003, p.7) elaborates Rixon's idea into pedagogical features of learning environment such as: natural; contextualized and part of a real event; interesting and enjoyable; relevant; social; belonging to the child; purposeful; challenging; supported appropriately; part of a coherent whole; multisensory; active and experiential; memorable; designed to provide for personal, divergent responses and multiple intelligences; offered in a relaxed and warm learning atmosphere. These authors' ideas are inclined with the

evolutionary notion of English as second language which is argued for creating a kind of pedagogically internal language learning environment to make a great contribution for successful learning English, but not just the external and immediate English language environment. In particular, Read (2003) reasons that with these optimal internal conditions, young English learners can get the value of bilingualism.

The second model is content-based English language instruction or content and language integrated learning (CLIL). In this model, content from other subjects from the school curriculum (mathematics, science, social studies) is taught in English. It can be noted that this pedagogical model is reflected in extra English classes in public schools, in advanced programs at tertiary levels in some pivotal universities and in private bilingual schools' curricular from kindergarten to secondary levels. Learners of the content-based English language programs have the opportunity to develop academic language and thinking skills in a meaningful context thanks to being focused on both language and content (Crandall, 2012). Thus, they are also provided with more time for learning English. Short (1993) identifies that with the increased time and the enriched content, the attainment of language proficiency of learners in content-based English language programs is usually at higher level than learners' in regular English programs.

The third model is immersion education. As the name suggests, English immersion programs immerse children in another language than their first language by using that language as the medium of learning, at least for part of the school day. In other words, learners of English immersion programs use English to learn at least some learning courses (Snow, 2001). Therefore, the English immersion programs are often referred to as additive English instruction. From their practical perspective, Faulkner-Bond et al. (2011) assert that additive immersion programs can begin at any age, even as late as secondary school, but most begin in the primary grades.

Additionally, partial immersion programs corresponding to the content-based language teaching try to provide children with the opportunity to learn mathematics, science, and social studies in both the local and foreign language over the course of the six years. Particularly, in effective immersion programs, students retain their native language, and literacy in the native language is never abandoned or discarded.

The amount of time to immerse in English partial immersion programs is bigger than that in the additive ones. Learners of the partial immersion programs may take half of their subjects in their own language and the other half in a foreign language. Another way of implementing this partial program is that only a few subjects or hours of instruction in the foreign language are at the beginning stage. The number of subjects and the time in the second language gradually increase in later grades. Whereas, in a total English immersion program, children study all of their subjects except for their own language through English.

According to the above description of three types of immersion model (additive, partial and total), it can be identified that international private schools such as British Vietnamese International Schools (BVIS); Vietnamese Australian Schools (VAS), and Singapore International Schools in HCMC tend to carry out the combination of additive and partial immersion programs. Their goal of these two immersion programs is for children to develop functional proficiency in another language without loss of the native language. Many researches indicate that immersion students, especially those who participate in “early” foreign language immersion (beginning at ages 5–7) can become very good at listening and reading in another language, and they do this without any harm to their own language or without detriment to their first language and subject matter learning (Harley, 1998; Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a sudden increase of bilingual education has been set off at varied levels of education from kindergartens to universities in Vietnam since the 2000s. The article has attempted to uncover the pedagogical models hidden in the current practice of bilingual Vietnamese-English education in Vietnam. Hence, it is noted that the non-formal education system involves more bilingual education (Vietnamese and English) than the formal education system. English language international institutions in Vietnam, in general, incline to implement the additive and partial immersion programs. The content-based language teaching is specifically applied across these models. Furthermore, in practice, Hoang Van Van (2009) observes that the number of English learners is greater and the age of English learners is younger.

In spite of being able to see the models hidden in the current practice of Vietnamese-English bilingual education in Vietnam, it is seemingly to assume that the models of Vietnamese-English bilingual education have developed spontaneously unlike the previous well-planned Vietnamese-French bilingual education (Nguyen Loc, see Quy Hien, 2011). In other words, a spontaneously adaptive tendency is driven by sustainable public needs in the process of the development of models for bilingual English-Vietnamese education in Vietnam. However unwell-planned they might be, such natural models of bilingual education have seemingly marked a ‘paradigm shift’ away from conventional EFL models to come the end of “English as foreign language in part (Graddol, 2006). As mentioned all above, it can be proposed that the apparently gradual decrease of teaching English as foreign language is occurring within the current context of bilingual education in Vietnam in the way that the development of learners’ academic English and the grade-level academic achievement is increasingly focused in function. Such educational practice indicates that bilingual Vietnamese- English education and teaching English as second language (ESL) in Vietnam has been theorizing in their particular way.

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IN-SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO UNIVERSITY ENGLISH TEACHERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

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Abstract

Supporting English teacher learning after recruitment can be considered as one of contributing factors to maintain a high standard of teaching and result in their work satisfaction. However, institutions seemingly focus more on recruiting teachers with excellent pre-service training than on investing in their in-service professional development. The first purpose of this research paper is to examine whether the needs for professional development of English lecturers are well met at University of Economics and Law. It also serves to investigate what kinds of supporting activities are expected and deemed as effective. Finally, the analysis of result aims to offer some suggestions for tertiary managers to improve their current policies with the purpose of increasing English teaching quality.

INTRODUCTION

At a number of tertiary institutions, the fact that the autonomy of lecturers is highly respected normally results in both positive and negative aspects, one of which includes the unconcern on teachers' professional development activities. While lecturers bear more burdens at work, from doing scientific activities to enhancing the quality of their lectures, they are, in many cases, provided with none or very little trainings or supports with the purpose of assisting them to maintain their current high teaching quality or to improve it. No

one can deny the fact that no matter how good pre-service training for teachers is, it cannot be expected to prepare teachers for all the challenges they will face throughout their careers. University leaders therefore should focus on providing teachers with opportunities for in-service professional development in order to retain a high-quality teacher workforce.

Development activities may be made available in the form of courses, workshops (on subject matter or methods and other education-related topics) or formal qualification programs, through collaboration between schools or teachers across schools (*e.g.* observational visits to other schools or participation in a network of teachers which are formed specifically for the professional development), individual or collaborative research within the schools in which teachers work, coaching/mentoring, collaborative planning and teaching, as well as the sharing of good practices. Such activities may range from more organized and structured to more informal and self directed learning such as informal dialogues or reading professional literature. However, whether Vietnamese institutions apply all of above-mentioned activities or some of them and whether they are applied successfully in Vietnamese context should be put under question.

In University of Economics and Law (UEL), a member of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (VNU HCM), the Department of foreign languages is currently providing English courses (non-major) for UEL's mainstream students to guarantee their output English level at B2 or equivalent. With a total number of only 14 English fulltime lecturers together with similar number of visiting faculty members who have to provide lectures for thousands of students per semester, it seems that teaching staff are always under very high pressure and frequently overloaded with teaching duty but are provided little support from administration in field of developing their knowledge, skills and teaching techniques. A questionnaire was distributed to all English fulltime lecturers at UEL containing 6 questions, aiming at investigating whether different professional

development activities are available at their institution and whether such activities meet their demands. The survey also gave open questions for respondents to mention the kinds of supporting activities which are considered as effective and suitable to them.

FINDINGS

Among fourteen (14) fulltime lecturers of UEL Department of Foreign languages and fifteen visiting lecturers, four have just returned from their PhD program oversea and hence are not target respondents. Eighteen (18) out of twenty five lecturers participated in the survey. All of them responded positively to the question of whether the school provided any professional development activities for them within one year before the research. They pointed out that UEL organized a two- day training session for them on how to apply ICT in teaching English and they found that such course was very helpful. However, it is the only course that school offered within a one year time. Consequently, the level of their satisfaction toward the school's general support was quite low. The majority of participants responded that school's supporting activities totally did not meet their expectation (15) while two people thought that UEL's help was considerably acceptable and only one person evaluated school's relevant policy as good. When answering the question of what activities they need to be trained, most teachers considered knowledge and skills of "motivating learners", "evaluating learners" and "effectively managing classroom" as some of the top necessary. The use of IT for instruction was also in demand but somehow satisfied them at the time of investigation. Concerning supportive forms given by the school, lecturers expressed the need of having financial supports and encouraging policies (pay rise, incentive offer for those who participate and the like) as well as reduction of their teaching and research duties. Finally, in relation to the obstacles hindering people from taking more professional development activities, factors cited by the majority of respondents include "time conflict with personal and working schedule" or "no suitable activities" and "unsuitable organizing places".

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

High-quality professional development with the purpose of bringing about change in classroom practices of teachers is one of the key components in educational improvement. However, to meet teachers' professional development requirements, school managers need to consider both how to support and encourage participation and how to ensure that opportunities match teachers' needs. This must be balanced with the cost in terms both of finance and teachers' time. Experience from UEL implies that language teachers are well motivated to engage in professional development because they want to expand their knowledge and skills and hence enhance their effectiveness with students. However, what the school subjectively provides normally does not satisfy what teachers need. Furthermore, participation into training practices requires extra work from teachers and hence adds to their workload even when release time is provided. Consequently, the process of creating change in teaching quality by implementing professional development program needs a profound understanding of lecturers' insight in relation to their expectation of employer support as well as close collaboration between program developers and lecturers in terms of the kind of effective activities and the time and place suitable for a full participation of lecturers. In general, school policy makers should spend more effort providing effective professional development programs for lecturers to enhance student learning outcomes.

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STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS PROJECT ACTIVITIES IN PILOT ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS

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Abstract

In an attempt to improve the quality of English teaching and learning in Vietnam, recently the Ministry of Education and Training has issued Pilot English textbooks to replace the old ones which have been officially used in the education system since the 2000s. In these new textbooks, by the end of every unit comes a project section in which students are required to work in groups to fulfill a project. These project activities aim to help students use the language and skills acquired from the lessons and enhance their learning motivation. However, it is a common practice among Vietnamese English teachers to omit these activities claiming that they are very time-consuming. In the current study, project activities in Pilot English textbook – Grade 10 were implemented with 140 tenth graders in two high schools in Bac Lieu Province of Vietnam. Students' attitudes toward the benefits and challenges of involving in project-based learning were explored using questionnaires. The study results provide useful implications for high school English teachers, textbook writers and school administrators in Vietnam.

Keywords: *Project-based learning, high school, students' attitudes*

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, students are required to develop both academic knowledge and skills related to real-world experience. In the light of English teaching, it is the teacher's role to help learners improve communicative competence as well as life skills when dealing with the increasing demands of the global community. Among various methods of communicative language teaching, project-based learning (PBL) seems to be potential for enhancing not only learners' communicative competence but also their life skills (Thomas, 2000) because project-based learning provides learners with opportunities to actively use their target language in real life (Hutchinson, 1991).

In Vietnam, with the view to improving high school students' language competence as well as life skills, the Pilot English Textbooks for Grade 10,11,12 were published in 2012 and used in some high schools upon the issue of Document No.2653 by Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training in 2014. One of the biggest differences between these pilot textbooks and the traditional ones is the inclusion of project activities following PBL by the end of every unit. However, project activities are usually ignored among Vietnamese high school teachers of English because they claim that these activities are time-consuming and challenging to students. In the context that studies related to PBL implementation to EFL high school students in Vietnam teaching context are limited, the present study is an attempt to explore students' attitudes towards project activities in Pilot English Textbook - Grade 10 and challenges they encounter when doing these activities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Project activities in Pilot English Textbook for Grade 10

Project activities in Pilot English Textbook 10 are designed following project-based learning approach. They aim to provide students with opportunities to apply the language and skills to perform a real-life situation. Students are asked to work as a team in order to do a survey or carry out research to broaden their knowledge

about the real world. The topics of these project activities are related to daily life such as family, health, music, volunteer work, ways to learn, environment, and so on.

The benefits and challenges in implementing PBL

The importance of implementing PBL in teaching and learning was emphasized in the review of Sumarni (2015). Different studies revealed that PBL brings considerable benefits to students. First, PBL has been proved to increase students' motivation and learning attitudes (Doppelt, 2003; Baş, 2011 Erdem, 2012). For example, Alacapınar (2008) stated that PBL had positive effects on students motivation to learn. Through various types of tasks, PBL provides students with opportunity to use language for a real purpose in a free learning atmosphere. Since students feel excited with different tasks as well as recognize their meaningful learning, they can be highly motivated. This finding was supported by Baş (2011) and Erdem (2012) who argued that PBL appears to be an effective instruction for gaining students' learning attitudes.

In addition, PBL helps students to improve academic achievement (Bas & Beyhan, 2010, Ergul & Kargin, 2014). According to Sumarni (2015), PBL provides productive environments for the development of learners' meta-cognition, which contributes to enhance students' performance in academic contexts. In line with this issue, the potential of the PBL approach in EFL classroom in Thai culture was emphasized by Kettanun (2015) in an experimental research at Bangkok University. The findings indicated that the project-based EFL classroom helped students have positive language performance as well as improve their cognition, work ethics and interpersonal skills.

Last but not least, thanks to PBL, students can improve their life skills including cooperative skills, communicative skills, creativity, critical thinking skill, problem solving ability and so far (ChanLin, 2008; Zarif & Ahmed ,2013). The study of Wurdinger & Qureshi (2015) which examined whether life skills could be developed among graduate students during a 16-week PBL course also confirms

that the PBL course has a significant impact on students' life skill development.

Although PBL offers highly desirable benefits, this approach is not widely used in teaching and learning. The reason is that there are a number of barriers to implement PBL successfully. In the review of Sumarni (2015), four major challenges including its time-consuming nature (Grand, 2002), students' lack of experience of working in groups, lack of teachers' support and lack of technology skills (Kurznel & Rath, 2007) need to be taken into consideration. In specific, time is a big problem because compared to other methods, PBL requires students much more time to complete the series of tasks in a project activity. In addition, students have difficulties in researching and collecting information as well as preparing for their presentation because they lack necessary technology skills. Besides, applying PBL may be intimidating for inexperienced teachers who do not know how to balance between their support and students' autonomy (Grand, 2002). Finally, students who have little experience in working in groups may have trouble in negotiation and compromise.

Despite all these challenges, PBL is worth implementing for its numerous benefits to EFL students. However, students should be given opportunities to show their attitudes toward the implementation of PBL in their classroom.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research questions

This study aims to find out the answers to the two research questions as follows:

1. What are students' attitudes towards project activities in Pilot English Textbook – Grade 10?
2. What challenges do students encounter when doing these project activities?

Participants

140 tenth-grade students of Bac Lieu High School and Bac Lieu High School for the Gifted (mean age: 15) participated in the study. At the beginning of the school year, all these students were required to pass an English test which is equivalent to A2 level of Common European Framework Reference (CEFR). When recruited to the courses, it was the first time these students worked with Pilot English Textbook as well as project activities that accompany it.

Research procedure

The most favored technique to measure attitudes and challenges in educational research is questionnaire (McMilan and Schumacher, 2001; Corbetta, 2003; Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2011). Thus, in the current study, a questionnaire was employed to collect the data.

The questionnaire used in the current study was adapted from Nassir's (2014). The five-point Likert scale was used to measure students' responses with five levels including strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. The questionnaire consists of 30 items describing high school students' attitudes including positive or negative feelings of project activities (9 items) and evaluation of benefits of these project activities (9 items) and the challenges students encounter when doing project activities (12 items). The questionnaire was translated into Vietnamese and piloted with 30 students of the similar background. The Cronbach's alpha of .73 shows that the questionnaire was reliable enough to be used for a larger group of participants. Then, the questionnaire was delivered to 140 participants of the study. The data was collected and then analyzed using the SPSS software.

FINDINGS

Students' attitudes towards project activities

Students' attitudes towards project activities were explored in three clusters. Cluster 1 consists of statements regarding students' feelings of project activities; Cluster 2 are statements investigating students'

evaluation of the benefits that project activities in the textbook bring them; and Cluster 3 includes statements about students' challenges when conducting these project activities.

With regards to students' feelings of project activities, Table 1 shows that most students appreciate these activities. More specifically, about two-thirds of participants like these project activities because they contain interesting topics and are close to real-life situations. Especially, 82.9% of respondents agreed that they had to use integrated language skills when doing their projects. It was followed by students' interest in using authentic materials and working in group with 72.9% and 70.0% of agreement respectively. However, the students are not highly aware of the importance of the project activities in their curriculum as well as their autonomy in these activities. In specific, nearly half of participants agreed that project activities are important in their curriculum, while almost the same number of responders (44.3%) had neutral opinion of this issue. In addition, the number of students who found themselves independent learners so that they could play their autonomy roles made up 55.7%; whereas 33.6% of students did not realize whether they would become autonomy learners thanks to project activities or not.

Table 1: High school students' feelings about project activities

Item (N = 140)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)
Project activities require me to use integrated language skills such as reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar and vocabulary.	82.9	5	12.1
Project activities provide me with opportunities to deal with authentic materials.	72.9	7.1	20
Project activities help me to transfer what I learnt in the classroom to outside the classroom.	70.8	8.6	20.6

Item (N = 140)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)
I like working on projects in a group.	70	7.1	22.9
I am interested in the topics of projects.	67.9	5.7	26.4
I like involving in a real-life investigation when doing project.	67.8	4.3	27.9
I am interested in performing a task in a real-life situation.	65	7.9	27.1
I become a more independent learner during project activities.	55.7	10.7	33.6
Project activities are important in this curriculum.	49.3	6.4	44.3

Data about students' evaluation of the benefits of project activities can be found in Table 2. In general, most students agreed that project activities can help them improve academic achievement, learning motivation as well as life skills.

Table 2: Students' evaluation of the benefits of project activities

Item (N = 140)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)
Project activities help me enhance my English skills.	90.7	2.2	7.1
Project activities help me enhance the sense of responsibility.	88.6	1.4	10
Project activities help me increase the skill of cooperating with others.	87.2	2.1	10.7
Project activities help me use my creativity.	82.9	2.1	15
Project activities make the classroom atmosphere a more enjoyable place for me to learn.	82.2	3.6	14.2
Project activities help me gain knowledge	75.7	5.7	18.6

Item (N = 140)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)
in addition to what I learned in the classroom.			
Project activities make studying English more interesting.	71.4	3.6	25
Projects encourage me to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of my own work.	67.8	3.6	28.6
I have stronger motivation in learning English when doing project activities.	48.1	5.7	46.2

More specifically, almost all participants (90.7%) agreed that project activities can enhance their English skills. In addition, about three-fourths of them were reported to widen their knowledge through project activities. Surprisingly, although most of participants find it more interesting to study English when doing project activities, only half of them (48.1%) believed that they had higher motivation in learning English when they do these activities. Beside academic achievement and learning motivation, students claim that their life skills were also improved when they involved in doing project activities. In specific, students reported that project activities helped them develop their responsibility, cooperative skill, creativity and self-evaluation (88.6%, 87.2%, 82.9% and 67.8% respectively). In short, most students have a positive evaluation of the benefits that doing project activities in the Pilot English Textbook bring them.

Challenges students encounter when doing project activities

Cluster 3 of the study questionnaire shows that challenges students encounter include lack of teacher's support, group collaboration skills, technology skills and time. Table 3 reveals the data about students' challenges in these project activities.

Table 3: Students' challenges when doing project activities

Item (<i>N</i> = 140)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)
I and my peers find it difficult to find suitable time for group work because of our different schedule.	80.7	8.6	10.7
I spend too much time finishing my project.	55	17.1	27.9
I do not have enough time to finish project activities because I have to study other subjects.	50.7	20.7	28.6
I argue with my peers during our project work.	46.5	15.6	37.9
I have difficulties in using technology during my project work.	44.3	35	20.7
I find hard to exchange ideas with my peers during the project work procedure.	40	30.7	29.3
I do not know how to make PowerPoint effectively in our presentation.	38.6	35	26.4
I have to ask for help with technology when doing projects.	32.2	36.4	31.4
My peers and I cannot reach to the conclusion after our arguments.	24.2	42.9	32.9
The teacher does not support my group when we have difficulties in doing project.	12.1	64.7	23.2
The teacher does not help me know how to prepare the projects.	8.6	70.7	20.7
The teacher does not help me know how to present my project.	5	75.7	19.3

Table 3 shows that the most common challenge students had to face with was time, followed by lack of technology skills and group collaboration skills. First of all, high school students have to study too many subjects to work together after school. More than 80% of

respondents found it hard to choose a suitable time for group work because of their different extra-class schedule. Beside that, lacking technology skills made 44.3% of participants unable to finish their project easily. Consequently, these students usually asked for help with technology during their projects. The third challenge that students had to face with in their project activities was their lack of collaborative skills. About 40% of participants admitted that it was hard to exchange the ideas with the peers. As a result, they argued with their peers during their work and sometimes they could not reach to the conclusion after their arguments. Regarding teachers' support, more than two-thirds of students agreed that their teachers were very helpful to support them during their project activities. Meanwhile, there was about 10% of participants who wish to be given more support from their teachers.

Discussion

Results of the current study are in line with Wanchid & Wattanasin's (2015) findings. The student participants have positive feelings of the project work used in their English course. It is interesting topics, real-life situations, authentic materials and group work activities that make students be excited with project activities in Pilot English Textbook. What is more, students are highly aware of benefits that project activities bring to them. The current study shows the similar results with the study of Zarif & Ahmed (2013) in life skills development; Maftoon, Birjandi & Ahmadi (2013) in motivation improvement and Ergul & Kargin (2014) in academic achievement . In other words, students' positive attitudes towards these project activities indicate that they are willing to gain new experience in their study.

However, there is a difference in challenges that students encounter during their project activities. The results of current study revealed that students had been supported a lot by their teachers during their projects, which was different from Kurzel & Rath's (2007) findings. Kurzel & Rath (2007) claimed that lack of teachers' support was one of the biggest problems for students in conducting projects. However, in the current study, lack of technology and collaborative

skills and time constraint were reported to be troubles to students in their project-doing process.

CONCLUSION

The current study reveals that most participants have positive feelings about project activities in their English textbook and are well-aware of the benefits brought by these activities. However, students had to deal with various problems including lack of time, technology skills and group collaboration skills.

From the current study, three suggestions can be made to improve the effects of project activities. First of all, students should be instructed how to take use of time to do projects together by working at home via some applications such as Messenger, Facebook or Zalo. It can help students not only save time but also solve the problem of having different schedule. Second, to solve the problem related to group collaboration, it is suggested that teachers should let students freely choose their peers at the first time they do project activities. When working with the peers they choose, students will be able to work in comfortable atmosphere, which makes their results better. Beside that, teachers should increase group activities so that students can get familiar to group working. Once students are familiar with working in groups, teachers can arrange groups as they wish. Finally, students should be supported to improve their technology skills. It is teachers' role to aid their students to know how to search for information in the internet as well as use PowerPoint for their presentation at the beginning of the course.

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ATTITUDES TOWARDS BRAINSTORMING AND PROBLEMS FACING ENGLISH - WRITING LEARNERS

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Abstract

As cited by Marteen (2013), brainstorming is absolutely indispensable if students want to improve their content understanding and thematic integration with real life. However, via observation during her students' writing process as well as marking their work, the writer could realize that many of her students tend to ignore or struggle with this skill, and as a consequence fail to produce a satisfying piece of writing. It would be obviously more reliable to do research on a large number of students. However, due to limited time as well as lack of assistance, this study is only aimed at exploring the attitudes of 100 students attending Essay-writing courses at Ho Chi Minh City Banking University toward brainstorming as well as some problems they have to deal with while doing this step, basing on the data collected from a questionnaire. The results of the survey reveal some interesting information about the students' learning process which the researcher can rely on to adjust as well as improve her approaches to teaching writing at her school.

INTRODUCTION

As a productive language skill, writing plays a significant role in enhancing language acquisition. Language learners can not only have a chance to practice vocabulary and grammar they have studied before but also to communicate their ideas effectively (Bello, 1997).

Teaching writing no longer means simply asking EFL learners to do grammar exercises; in fact, they are encouraged to think about what they are interested in and want to communicate with readers and how to produce a satisfactory writing. However, not enough attention is paid by every student to the importance of many activities in the writing process including brainstorming; in fact, it is a popular view among not only students but also teachers that the final writing product is a more significant tool to assess the performance of students in a writing class. The researcher can realize that quite a considerable number of students majoring in English at Banking University of Ho Chi Minh City are still unable to benefit this skill when studying writing. Therefore, she would like to do research to figure out the attitudes of students at the university toward brainstorming, their common difficulties, and their own solutions to the problems.

The researcher focuses on sophomores who are learning writing essays to meet the required credits before they can graduate from the university. Basing on the data collected and the findings, the researcher hopes that she can have reliable information about her learners so that she can make appropriate adjustments on her own teaching methods as well as making professional growth in the long term.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brainstorming is defined in a various ways by many authors. Alex F. Osborne, in “Applied Imagination” (1953) mentioned brainstorming as a technique used to encourage individuals to generate ideas as well as solutions to a particular problem. In his *You Creative Power* (1948), brainstorming involves using the brain to storm innovative solutions that hit the same problem and in commando fashion. In other words, brainstorming, in his opinion, is a technique by which a group of people make effort to find conclusion for a specific problem by generating a large number of ideas spontaneously by its members. Meanwhile, Chris Bernard, Director of Business Development at

Microsoft in a seminar used to argue that brainstorming means thinking outside of old patterns, which are our programmed thinking, and using lateral thinking. Ibnian (2011) also agreed that brainstorming is a key part of the creative process, thanks to which, students can think of a great deal of potential answers to a problem.

Osborn (1953) also suggested taking into account a number of rules, including no criticism of ideas, building on what others have suggested, accepting strange and wild ideas as well as welcoming the large quantities of ideas.

Educators have also suggested various situations in which brainstorming helps students write better. According to Go (1994), brainstorming can help when learners have too much or too little knowledge about the topic. On the one hand, a good brainstorming skill can pare down an abundant supply of evidence to something manageable. On the other hand, while a writer is drawing a blank, well-crafted brainstorming can help uncover facts he/she has forgotten or bring back concepts critical to the success of the paper.

Go (1994) also points out the significance of brainstorming to writing an essay when it helps create an organizational schema making the essay more coherent and cohesive. More than that, Marteen (2013) assumes that brainstorming can make contributions to improving students' content understanding as well as thematic integration with real life to bring realistic examples to an essay.

Jaclyn M. Wells (2009) suggests only two techniques for brainstorming, namely mind mapping and making a list. She finds out that a visual presentation helps writers to add more ideas and sort through them. While mind mapping helps discover how thoughts are connected to one another, lists are a great way of finding and recording ideas though not as visual as an idea map. However, other authors also suggested cubing, free writing, researching, etc.

Adding another view on the matter, Ralph Keeney (2012) was afraid that many people are brainstorming wrong and make it a waste of

time. In *Value focus-thinking: A path to creative decision-making*, he worries that people tend to ‘run over the place and think outside the box’. He suggests writers ‘think inside the box – the righted-sided box’ and it is essential to go through the process of analyzing and focusing on objectives before brainstorming.

METHODOLOGY

Subjects of study:

The samples of the study were 100 randomly chosen English-major sophomores of Department of Foreign Languages at Banking University who had finished learning how to write a paragraph. They were chosen for some reasons. Firstly, freshmen, in the writer’s view, were not ideal subjects because they were completely new to writing skills, which means that they would need time to be familiarized with the concepts. Besides, neither juniors nor seniors were chosen because they had had more time studying and practicing writing than sophomores and had consciously or subconsciously formed their own style of writing, which would be quite difficult to change. Sophomores were considered to be the ideal subjects because though they had built up some knowledge about brainstorming specifically and writing skills in general, they had not finished forming their own style of writing and would be able to make adjustments in case their writing process had some problems.

Secondly, the writer planned to study about the effects of brainstorming on students’ writing after this research. Because these students were attending a nine-week course on essay writing, they had more time and opportunities to practice writing, thanks to which their improvement could be tracked more easily by the writer.

As to the purpose of the study, the following research question was posed.

1. What are the attitudes of students towards brainstorming?
2. What problems they have to deal with while brainstorming?

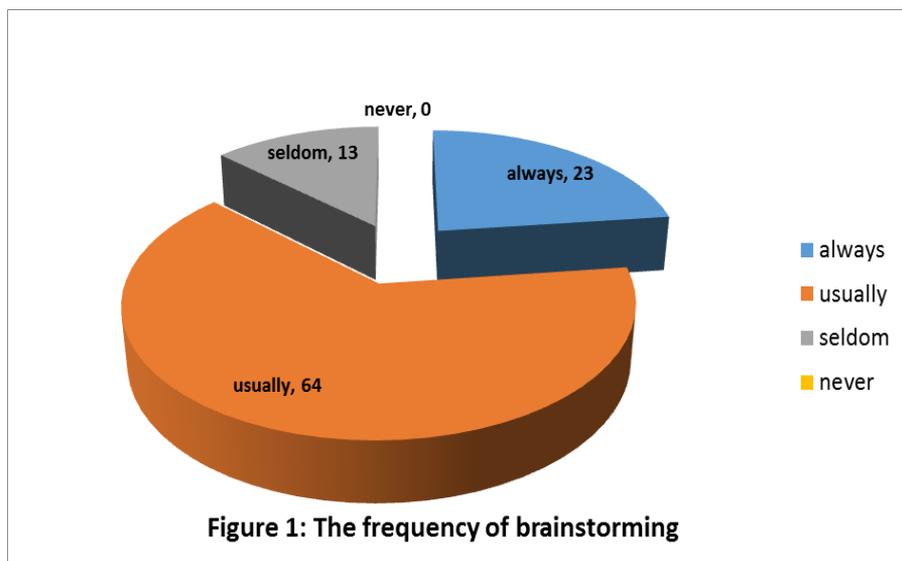
Based on the above research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated.

1. Most of the students have recognized the importance of brainstorming to their essay writing.
2. They have known different strategies to overcome the obstacles during brainstorming.

Research instrument: A questionnaire was delivered to students on the first of day of a nine – week course to collect information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

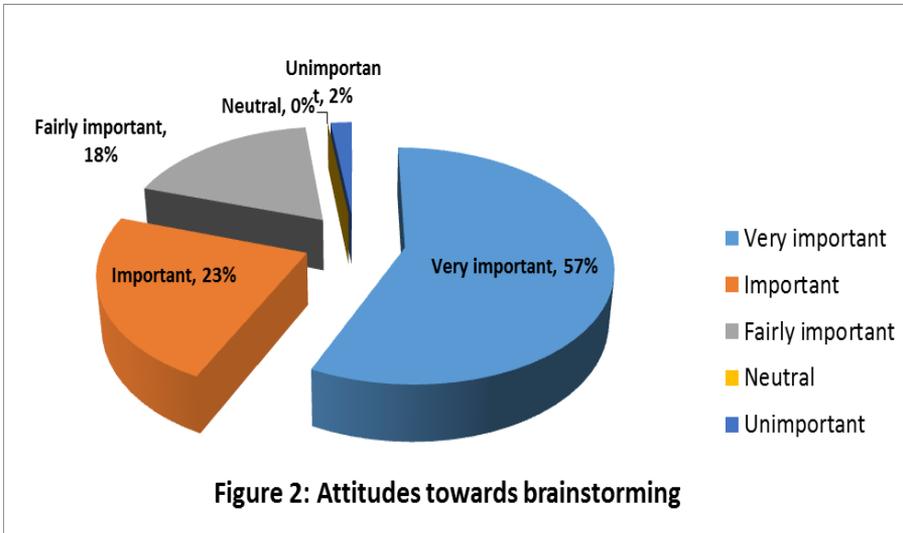
1. The frequency of brainstorming among students



When asked about how often they do brainstorming, 87 per cent of the students surveyed do brainstorming to some extent, with 23 per cent of them always brainstorming while another 64 per cent usually include this activity before they write an essay, which raised a question to the researcher why there was a difference in the frequency of brainstorming among students in the same batch. Moreover, even though no one absolutely excludes this step from

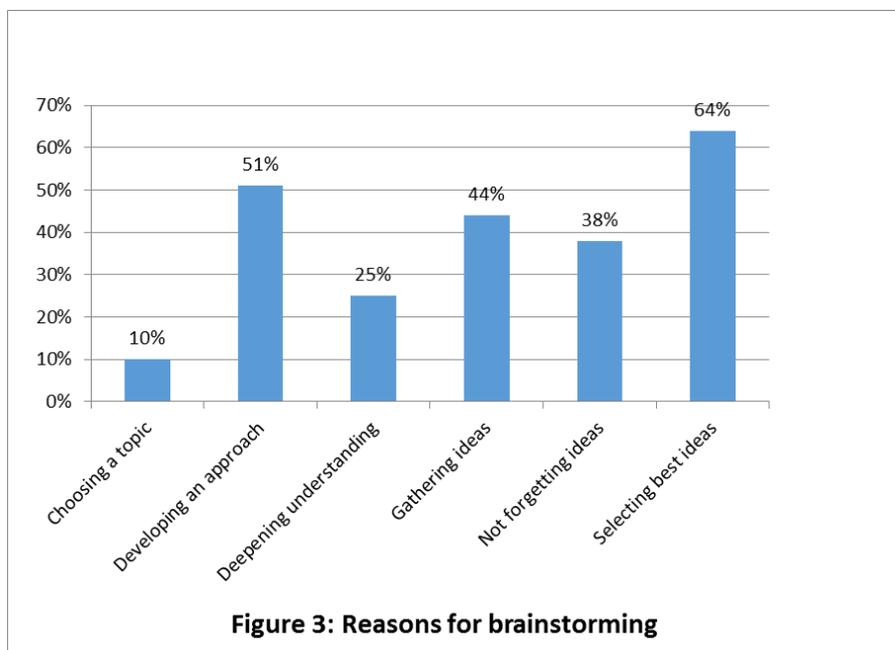
their writing process, 13 per cent of the learners rarely do it. The researcher also wanted to find out what their reasons for not brainstorming before writing are and whether their refusal affected their writing products.

2. Respondents' attitudes toward brainstorming



It can be clearly seen that most of the students had positive opinions on the role of brainstorming in their writing process. A closer look shows that four fifths of the sophomores surveyed assumed that brainstorming is important to their writing to some extent, with more than a half (57 per cent) admitting that this skill is very important and the rest (23 per cent) important. While 18 per cent of them thought that brainstorming is fairly important, 2 per cent claimed that brainstorming plays no role in their writing. Relating the information to the responses to the previous question, the writer took notice of the fact this 2 per cent are among the 13 per cent of the learners who refuse to brainstorm before writing. Another 2 per cent also refuse to brainstorm often because they think that this technique is just fairly important. The matter here is, if the rest thought that brainstorming plays a vital role in their writing, why 9 per cent of them do not brainstorm.

3. Reasons for brainstorming

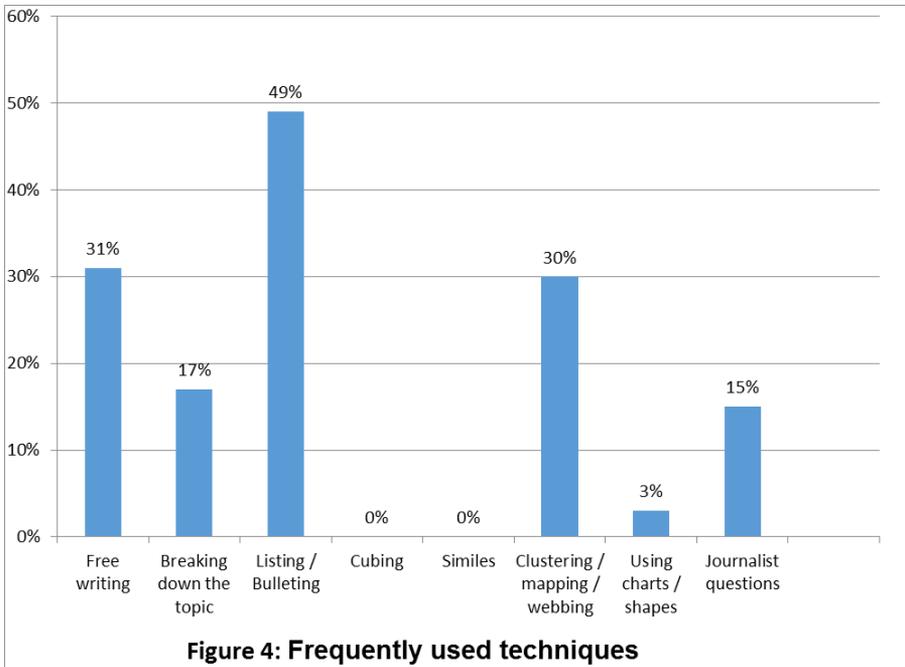


The table shows what the most popular reasons for students to do brainstorming are. A little over two thirds brainstorm because it helps them to select the best ideas, which is in accordance with what Harmer (2001) said. Brainstorming techniques in class in his view might assist students to cultivate their writing and create ideas that are necessary in second language acquisition. Besides, around a half of them thought that brainstorming is very helpful in developing an approach to the topic. Some similar percentages choose to brainstorm because they can easily gather ideas and remembering ideas better (with 44 per cent and 38 per cent respectively). One quarter of them brainstorm since it can help deepen their understanding about the topic. Rao (2007) also thought that brainstorming strategy can help students use their prior knowledge in their writing activity and recognize what skills and information they have and what they need to know. Just 10 per cent of them choose a topic by brainstorming.

Most of the students examined (82 per cent) agreed that they could brainstorm effectively even though only around 30 per cent of them

were very confident about the effectiveness of their skill. 16 per cent of the respondents were unsure whether they are brainstorming properly and 2 per cent admitted that their skill is absolutely ineffective.

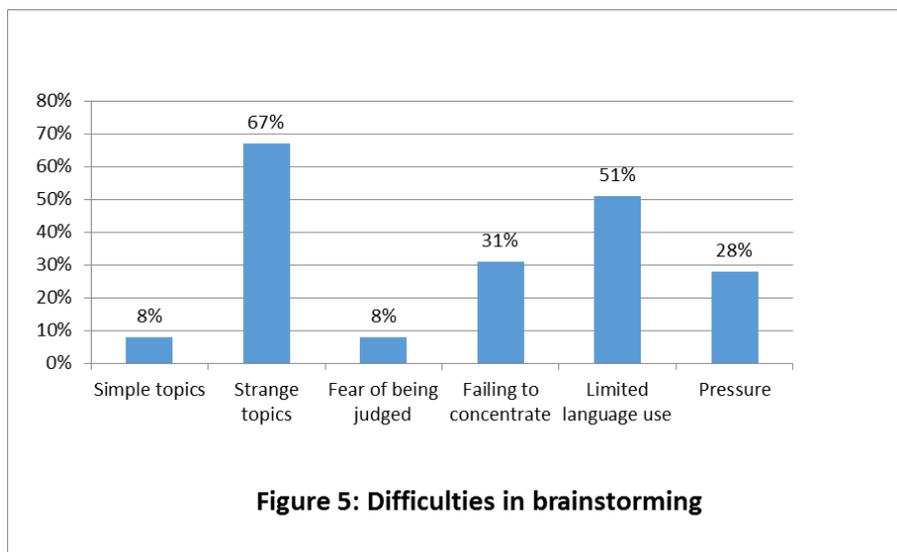
4. Frequently used techniques:



From the chart above it can be seen that the students tend to use some certain techniques much more often than the others. Nearly a half of them are comfortable with listing and bulleting and almost a third of the respondents often use some forms of clustering, mapping and webbing while a similar percentage choose free writing. Although Mogahed (2013) assumed that asking questions is one of the most common ways of raising topic as well as expanding a great deal of information about it very quickly, it is popular with just more than 10 per cent of the students, the same percentage as of those who often break down topics. It is worth noticing that an inconsiderable number of students use charts or shapes as a technique for brainstorming and no one use cubing or similes in this pre-writing

step, which raised some questions to the researchers: why these students are in favor of some certain techniques and ignore the others, whether a combination of different techniques or a single technique will work better, or whether they have any obstacles when using their favorite technique. To answer these questions will require further research but will be very helpful for both learners and teachers.

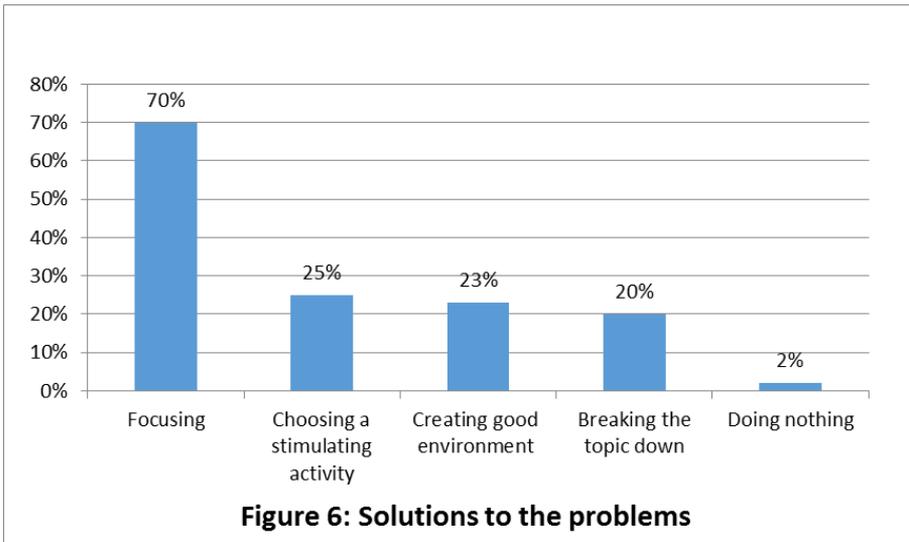
5. Difficulties in brainstorming:



It is revealed in the survey that 67 per cent of the examined students thought that brainstorming is difficult to some degree and the rest assumed that it is not very difficult. However, no one affirmed that brainstorming is easy. The researcher was interested in looking into some specific difficulties her students usually face in the pre-writing stage and discovered that more than two thirds of them have to struggle with topics. It is easy to understand that strange or difficult topics which students have no ideas about are a big problem, yet 8 per cent of the surveyed also fail to brainstorm because the topics are too simple. Moreover, limited language use worries around a half of them while distractions and pressure contribute another 31 per cent and 28 per cent respectively. Failure at brainstorming also results

from an emotional aspect when 8 per cent of them are afraid of being judged by others.

6. Solutions to the problems:



According to Scane, Guy and Wenstrom (1991), even students who do not usually like to write can also be encouraged to do brainstorming activities with a stress-free atmosphere. Therefore, in order to develop their writing skill, English learners should be put in a nonthreatening atmosphere. It also seems useful to prepare situations in which students think about topic before starting composition.

The students in the research deal with problems related to brainstorming in different ways, of which trying to be focused is chosen the most whereas others methods like choosing an activity that can bring artistic self pleasure to stimulate creativity, preparing the time and space for brainstorming or breaking down the topics share almost the same percentages of around 20 per cent. 2 per cent of them choose to do nothing. If there is more time and human resource, the researcher hopes to study more to find out the reasons for students choosing different approaches or refusing to do anything to improve the situations.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the students have recognized the importance of this pre-writing strategy and its subcategories on the improvement of their writing skill. The results of the study revealed that most of the students do appreciate the role of brainstorming before writing while a small percentage of them are still struggling with it. The most serious problems they are worried about are limited language use and topics which are beyond their knowledge.

In the light of the above-mentioned findings, the study has also considerable implications that teachers ought to help learners improve their awareness of the significance of brainstorming and equip them with various strategies, which will facilitate their essay writing. Familiarizing the topics and providing them enough lexical resources are also encouraged to help improve students' confidence to brainstorm effectively.

While the study only focused on brainstorming as a pre-writing skill, many students admitted to the researchers that they sometimes brainstorm while they are writing their essays due to lack of time, which has caused the researcher to question the effectiveness of this skill among her students when it is reordered in another stage and hope to find a satisfactory answer to this in the future studies. Other factors such as age, gender, etc. should also be considered to have more information on the popularity of brainstorming among these subjects.

Other areas which also interest her are the effects of other strategies and other subcategories of brainstorming on writing development, teaching pre-writing strategies to learners at different levels of proficiency and education.

However, there are still some limitations that need to be solved to improve the reliability of the findings. In future prospective studies, it is recommended that the number of participants be increased in order to enhance the reliability of the findings. Moreover,

participants differed in their age range and social level and were only similar in their level of language proficiency.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

ATTITUDES TOWARDS AND DIFFICULTIES IN BRAINSTORMING IDEAS FOR ESSAY WRITING IN BUH

This questionnaire is designed to investigate your attitudes and the difficulties in brainstorming before writing essays among BUH English-majored students. Your responses are greatly appreciated as they might suggest some solutions to improve the language learning process.

To answer these questions, please put a **TICK** in the box next to the option that is most closely the same as your situation.

1. How often do you brainstorm for ideas before writing an essay?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always | <input type="checkbox"/> Seldom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Usually | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |

2. What do you think about the role of brainstorming in your essay writing?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important | <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Important | <input type="checkbox"/> Unimportant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly important | |

2. What can brainstorming help you with? (*You can tick more than one box*)

- Choosing a topic
- Developing an approach to a topic
- Deepening your understanding of the topic's potential
- Gathering ideas
- Not forgetting ideas

- Selecting the best ideas for a good writing
 - Others_____
-

3. How do you brainstorm?

- Very effectively
- Effectively
- Neutral
- Not very effectively
- Ineffectively

4. What techniques do you usually use? (*You can tick more than one box*)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Similes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breaking down the topic into levels | <input type="checkbox"/> Clustering / mapping / webbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listing / Bulleting | <input type="checkbox"/> Using charts / shapes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cubing | <input type="checkbox"/> The journalist questions |

5. How difficult do you think brainstorming is?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very difficult | <input type="checkbox"/> Not very difficult |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult | <input type="checkbox"/> Easy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

6. In which situation is brainstorming becoming difficult for you? (*You can tick more than one box*)

- The topic is too simple.
- The topic is too strange.
- You are afraid of being judged by others.
- The problem enters your unconscious mind and nothing appears to be happening.

- You fail to concentrate.
- Your language use is limited.
- You are under pressure.
- Others _____

7. What do you usually do to brainstorm more effectively? (*You can tick more than one box*)

- Focus your mind and your brain on *what* you're going to write and about
- Choose an activity that stimulates your creativity by bringing your artistic *self* pleasure
- Create the time and space for brainstorming
- Break the topic down and be specific
- Do nothing
- Others _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

POSTER VS POWERPOINT IN ORAL PRESENTATION IN AMERICAN AND BRITISH STUDIES

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STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

American and British Studies has been a signature subject for English-majored students at University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University (ULIS-VNU). Its aim is to expose students with different aspects, namely history, culture, economy, education and politics, of the two biggest English-speaking countries in the world: the United States of America and the United Kingdom so that their awareness of such issues can be built up, which prepares them for the future working and further studying in the increasingly global environment in Vietnam or overseas. More specifically, the course aims at improving students' awareness and understanding of the two countries, boosting students study skills and language proficiency through their work.

The wide range of content of American and British Studies require students' satisfactory language proficiency, and a minimum of B2 level on CEFR is set as the prerequisite for those enrolling the course, which is equivalent for the proficiency of third-year students majoring in English at ULIS-VNU. (Hoang Hai Anh, Nguyen Le Huong, et al., 2011)

Part of the academic development required for students enrolling in this course is their ability to do research, in a small scale, their critical thinking, which are assessed through oral presentation using PowerPoint slides. This type of classroom assessment has proved its

advantages in boosting students' research skills, speaking and organization skills, and thus, has been widely applied in various subjects during their whole time at university, which results in two contradict consequences: students' familiarity with it and their boredom of such repeated activity. Taking the latter effect of PowerPoint oral presentation on students' learning motivation into account, lecturers have spent a great deal of effort making the assessment plan more diverse but at the same time fair to students, of which this report is one evidence. The study aims at discovering the effectiveness of an alternative oral presentation using poster compared with that using conventional PowerPoint slides, and provide pedagogical recommendations in order to better teaching and learning attitude and motives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Benefits of oral presentation and its use in the target course: American and British Studies

ULIS – VNU students learn languages and related knowledge domains for their further study in the near future as a short-term aim, and for their lifetime careers as a long-term purpose; therefore, there's a significance for them to master the knowledge, language skills as well as their thinking in the target languages. Considering ESL learners, the benefits of oral presentation skills have been piled up in a rich pool of research on the topic. To serve the purpose of learning itself, oral presentation has been proved to offer “positive learning experiences” (Alshare & Hindi, 2004), which means that students play a proactive role in boosting their learning and acquiring knowledge in the student-centered approach, instead of passively depending on teachers' transmission of knowledge. Brooks and Wilson (2014) synthesized the five essential benefits of oral presentation for students:

- “They (presentation skills) are student-centered.
- They require the use of all four language skills.

- They provide students with realistic language tasks.
- They have value outside the language classroom.
- They improve students' motivation.”

This view aligns with that of other researchers of the same academic field (Girad, Pna & Trapp, 2011; King, 2001; Apple & Kikuchi, 2007; Thornbury, 2005).

With full awareness of the effects of presentation on language students, Division of Country Studies has been employing it as part of American and British Studies course. Each class is divided into groups so that there is at least one in charge of each of the 5 theme (history, culture, economy, politics, education). Presentation groups are required to choose a topic related to one of the mentioned theme, which must raise a further discussion/ understanding of the content covered in class. There is a detailed marking rubric to assess students' performance, part of which is for students' self-reflection, and the other part is for teacher's assessment. The areas of assessment consist of presentation structure, presenters' thinking level while processing collected information on the topic, their performance and visual aids. (Phung Ha Thanh, et al., 2008).

Visual aids: PowerPoint slides vs. Poster

Appearing in the 18th century, poster has quite a long history in the art of illustration compared to that of the newcomer PowerPoint, which marked its launch in late 20th century. There has not been a through record of when the two methods of visual aids entered education in general and ESL specifically; however, obviously, PowerPoint has now dominated classrooms thanks to unparalleled benefits it has brought to teachers and students. PowerPoint slides have impressively visualized presentation content, making it easy to understand and catchy to listeners. It is to say the combination of multimedia in PowerPoint presentation expose listeners to interactive learning, and allow more than one types of intelligence to process and perceive information at the same time (Jones, 2003). Notably, it

does not necessarily mean that poster has no significant share in the whole picture of educational presentation. Researchers continuously showed that poster presentation proved itself a meaningful way of learning and exploring knowledge as it required a number of essential academic skills such as critical analysis, dissemination of findings, and creativity (Bracher, 1998; Moneyham, Ura, Ellwood & Bruno, 1996) ; let alone it brought students – poster makers relaxation to design, and had “overwhelming support” from students (Koshy, 2011). Koshy, 2011 also talked about the benefits of poster presentation as “improving class participation”, and “encouraging deep learning.” However, recently, there has been a decrease in poster preference among educators; more seriously, there has been even tendency to forget such educational tool.

STUDY DESIGN

PowerPoint and Poster Presentation in American British Studies course at ULIS

In the context of American British Studies course at ULIS, the aims of both form of presentation is to assess students’ critical thinking, content delivery. However, the noticeable disparity between lies in that while PowerPoint presentation put more emphasis on presenters’ one-way speaking to the audience, poster presentation allows more two-way interaction between the two parties through direct question and answer throughout the process. It is because the differences between their content delivery nature. In PowerPoint presentation, the stage belong to presenters for around 30 minutes, and the audience only raise the voice in the question and answer session (Q&A) for some 5 – 10 minutes. On the other hand, in poster presentation, the first 15 minutes is spared for introduction of the topic on focus; then, the content building is shared more to the audience as they can walk around, inspect the paper hung on the board or the wall, ask questions and receive immediate feedback from the presenters, through which they have more engagement and understanding in the topic. In the Division of Country Studies, poster

has been employed from time to time in some courses; however, a thorough studies of its impacts on students and on the whole course is still in need. That is one research gap, and in other word, and urge for me to conduct this research paper.

In this study, the fairness for presentations using PowerPoint slides and poster was ensured by an alternative marking scheme developed for poster along with the existing one for PowerPoint slides. The former scheme also takes into consideration all areas needed for one successful presentation, which are preparation, idea organization, illustration, presenter's performance, among which the last area consists of speaking performance and interaction with the audience.

Study Design

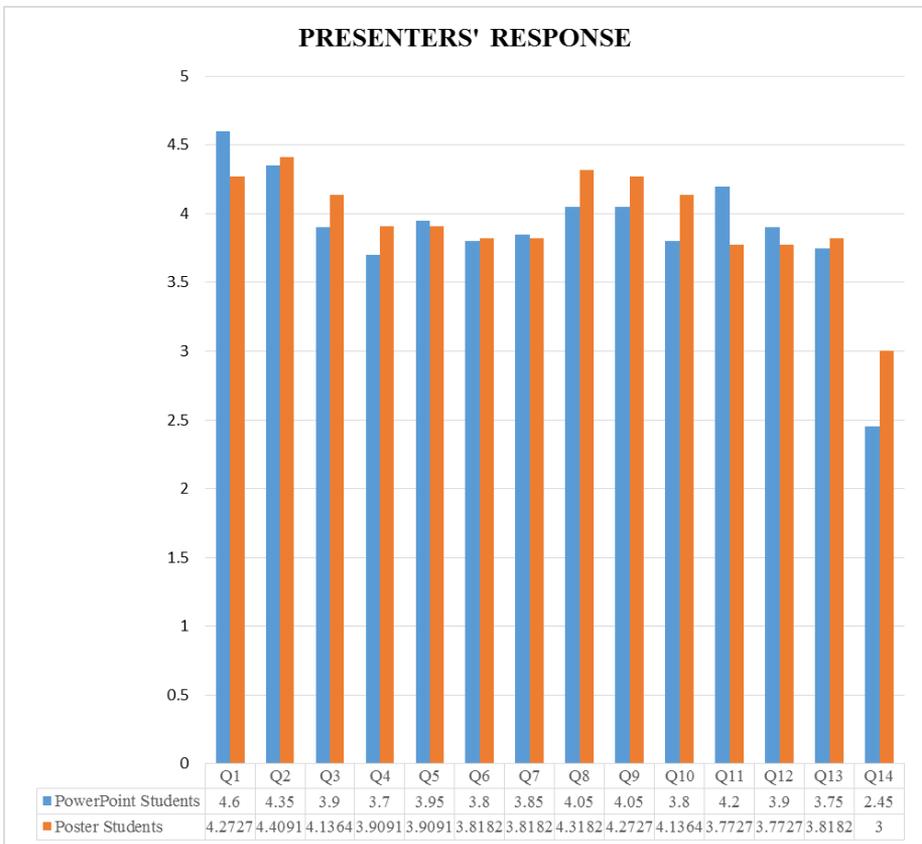
In order to investigate the effects of presentation using two means of aids, a questionnaire for both groups of presenters was employed at the end of the course. To collect thorough opinion for students without a limited time allowance, both open-ended and close-ended questions were used in the survey. The questionnaire for presenters included 14 close-ended questions, divided into 4 areas: (1) knowledge acquired, (2) interest in the subject, (3) research and learning skills and (4) preferences to either types of presentation. For those questions, students were asked to show their level of agreement on the Likert scale of 5 ranging from 1 – *strongly disagree* to 5 – *strongly agree*. Students' response by marking a number from 1 to 5 for each question will then be calculated to take the average value for each group of presenters. One extra close-ended question, the last one, ask for students' preference of the observed type of presentation when they are the audience. In addition, there are 3 open-ended questions eliciting students' opinion of what they like/ dislike and learnt about doing such presentations.

The number of respondents were 60 students of 2 classes of third-year students, divided roughly equally into groups of posters (28 people) and those of PowerPoint slides (32 people). Those students were familiar with PowerPoint slides in many other subjects at ULIS;

however, their experience with poster as a learning tool was almost nothing. Their response was analyzed to answer the following research questions:

1. *Are there any difference between the perceived influences of Poster and PowerPoint on students' knowledge acquired after presentation, interest in the subject, developing target learning skills?*
2. *What are students' preferences of presentation types? Why?*

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



Desired information is aimed to be taken from the questions as follows

- (1) knowledge acquired: questions 1 – 3
- (2) interest in the subject: question 4 – 7
- (3) research and learning skills: questions 8 – 12
- (4) persistence of the same presentation type: questions 13 – 14

(see Appendix for more details)

The table of Presenters' Response show a significant high score (roughly 4.0 out of 5.0 overall) for all questions except for question 14, which mean that students rather strongly agree with what were asked. Interestingly, those who performed poster presentation rated their agreement with the survey slightly higher than their PowerPoint counterpart in most questions. Below is further analysis of the data serving addressing the 2 research questions.

Are there any difference between the perceived influences of Poster and PowerPoint on students' knowledge acquired after presentation, interest in the subject, developing target learning skills?

Knowledge acquired was investigated through deeper research on the given topic, improved understanding of the topic and better awareness of the country in focus, the UK or the US). The second group of information is related to students' interest of the countries, the theme, and presentation topic. Next, research and learning skills category mentioned in this study is involved their awareness and actual state of material researching and analyzing, team-work. The answer to this question requires students' response of the first 12 questions.

As is said previously, the high scores for all 12 questions signify a positive reception of the effects of both presentation forms. Students highly appreciated their improved knowledge, skills and interest through presentation activity. Interestingly, only in questions 1, 11, and 12 poster group followed PowerPoint group. This group of students show better confidence on their improved knowledge, material research and analyzing skills and interest in the countries as

well as the course. Remarkably, those who did poster claimed their improvement in study skills, except for teamwork obviously higher than the other group. However, in most other questions, the disparity between two groups were rather small, but still significant enough to mark better confidence among those who did poster presentation. Mostly repeated answer for the opened-ended questions “what you gained from the presentation” was: interesting knowledge of the topic/ theme, researching and analyzing information found, which is in line with previous literature.

However, PowerPoint group seemed to think that they gained better teamwork, which is reflected through their cooperation before and during their work in class. Especially, they thought that they had more pressure in going into deeper research of the topic assigned although they failed to mark their confidence in deeper understanding of the topic as strongly as the other group did.

Generally speaking, experiencing poster presentation showed more improvement in knowledge, interest and part of study skills required in this course, as reported by the respondents, partly because of the new experience they gained as creativity and excitement were among the items they stated to like about this form in the open-ended part of the survey.

What are students’ preferences of presentation types? Why?

It is rather surprising to talk about students’ preferences of the presentation as presenters and as the audience. Question 13 in the survey asking if they wanted to remain the same types of oral presentation next time received roughly 3.8 out of 5 agreement of both group, which mean that most of them 75% positive of their assigned/ chosen task. However, this viewpoint did not appear to be consistent as in question 14, asking for a change in the type, the reported response was not lower than 2.45 out of 5, especially, more people in the poster group desired to return the more familiar type of presentation. Yet, it is more interesting when the students are asked about the type they wanted to follow when they were not presenters.

Poster group wanted to see more posters in the future with 85% voting for a “yes”, whilst 26% of PowerPoint group agreed with their counterpart.

Rate of students (as the audience) choosing poster

PowerPoint Students	Poster Students
26%	85%

In their response to the open-ended questions, most students mentioned *interesting, easy-to-follow illustrations* as a reason for their supporting poster made by other groups, or *creativity* as a reason for choosing poster as presenters. PowerPoint slides was said to have advantages of *being easy to design*. Students also revealed factors hindering their choices of either types of presentation, such as *being time consuming* in both or *being too familiar* in PowerPoint.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

It is clear that both types of presentations have their own merits, appreciated by students, related to improving students’ interest in the course and the learning content, and at the same time, helping reach the aims of the course (content learning and study skills). Moreover, students showed their interest in both types of presentation, a slightly better level for poster, though. The results of this study partly agrees with previous research of the same field, and thus, enriches it.

Such findings can lead to the recommendation for lecturers to choose appropriate types of assessment with their own flexibility basing on specific condition and nature of the class (class size or students’ interest). This recommendation can be applied not only in American British Studies but also in other content-based subjects. If it is applied in a large scale, a careful marking scheme should be made to make sure the fairness across all assessment forms.

In the small scale of this study, there are inevitable shortcomings that can be improved in later further research. In this study, only students' assumption of their knowledge and other skills was asked, which left a question of to what extent their assumption reflect the reality. In the future, I would like to investigate the correlation between different types of assessment on students test score of quiz, which is independent of oral presentation. However, the theme of the quiz must be the same as that of their presentation. Another shortcoming of the study lies in its small sample. Future research should involve more participants so that the reliability and generality of research result can be assured.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRESENTERS

Hello students,

I am conducting a research on comparing the effectiveness of using posters and PowerPoint slides in oral presentation on boosting your learning motivation, your knowledge of the subject and partly fulfill the objectives of the course. Your response to the questionnaire significantly and valuably accounts for the completion and success of the study; at the same time, it is guaranteed to keep confidential and for research purpose only.

Thank you so much for your treasured contribution!

1. Which types of tasks was your group assigned (please tick on the appropriate cell)

- Presentation with PowerPoint slides
- Presentation with poster

2. Write a number that is right for you on the scale from 1 to 5 (**1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree**)

POINTS	OPINIONS
	1. It pushed me to research deeply about the given topic.
	2. My understanding of the given topic was considerably improved after preparing and delivering the presentation.
	3. The project helped me have better awareness of the countries/ country in focus.
	4. The project helped me have more interest in the countries/ country in focus.
	5. The project helped me have more interest in the theme (politics/ education/ economy/ ...).

	6. I am now more confident about the theme (politics/ education/ economy/ ...) than before delivering the project.
	7. The project gave me better interest in the subject.
	8. I have better awareness of researching materials for a given issue.
	9. The project helped me to improve skills of analyzing materials.
	10. My researching skill was improved.
	11. My team-work skill was used effectively.
	12. I have more understanding about how to make team-work effective.
	13. I would persist doing this type of task if I were asked to choose between presentation with PowerPoint slides and presentation with posters.
	14. I would do the other type of task if I were asked to choose between presentation with PowerPoint slides and presentation with posters.

15. As part of the audience, which types of tasks do you prefer following (please tick on the appropriate cell)

- Presentation with PowerPoint slides
- Presentation with poster

Please specify with key words

3. What else do you like about it?	4. What else don't you like about it?	5. What else have you gained from doing it?

EARLY-CAREER TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON ICT APPLICATION IN TEACHING PICTURES STORYTELLING IN HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

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INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to investigate the ICT application in English classes for children in Ho Chi Minh city, otherwise there is the effectiveness that the site makebeliefscomix.com brings in helping the teacher with teaching pictures storytelling for young learners. It is **one sub part** of the research that discusses an investigation into early-career teachers; in other words, how beginning teachers' pedagogical practice is performed in the real English classroom in language schools in Vietnam as part of their professional identity development. There is a constant need for progress in pedagogical development in language education and the massive need for educational personnel as for 65 years, the pedagogical sector, founded according to Decree No.194, which was dated on August 10th 1946 in Vietnam, and the system of pedagogical institutions have continuously developed and educated a huge number of teachers, lecturers, and educational managers for Vietnam (Nguyen Loc, 2011:44). Therefore, the purpose of the research is to bridge the gap of the potential mismatch between what teachers learn from educational institutes during their training courses and what they practice in their classroom context. The research locally pertains to theoretical point of view and practical point of view in a rapidly

changing English language teaching environment. This is the process of how novice teachers shape their *professional identity* by linking language education theory to classroom practice.

More than ten years ago, the use of ICT in English teaching made practitioners feel uncomfortable; and some teachers are a conservative professional group (Lanier & Little, 1986; cited in (1)). Today, the situation is somewhat different and, some teachers are more enthusiastic than others (cited in (1)). However, not all beginning teachers are able to apply ICT in their teaching practice. In this paper, ICT application in teaching, which is one of the three aspects that are mentioned to investigate early-career teachers' professional identity development, is under investigation to see how the beginning teacher handles her classes.

RATIONALE

Cambridge Movers Test is the second of three Cambridge English Young Learners tests for children, which introduce children to everyday written and spoken English and are an excellent way for them to gain confidence and improve their English. It is made up of three papers developed to encourage and motivate young learners, including Listening paper, Reading and Writing paper, and Speaking paper (cited in (2)). These three papers equally share 15 shields as the results; and achieving maximum of 5 shields for each paper is priority to be definitely accepted in English language classes at school as stipulated in DOET regulations. Therefore, many parents send their children to language centres to learn for the certificate.

Materials for studying and test practice are fully displayed in bookshops and some on the Internet. However, there are only [until now] nine Cambridge official test materials for Movers including 3 tests per each booklet, which means that there are 27 practice tests for exam preparation. However, not all learners can afford to buy all these nine test books and so teachers have to make copy for them. From this situation, the paper is focused on applying ICT in teaching learners part 2 of Speaking subtest named Pictures Story in order that

the teacher-in-charge can create as many picture stories as she wants in her own way and both she and her students get motivated with various materials on computer with lively and animated characters rather than looking at the test booklets. In this study, the website experimented is www.makebeliefscomix.com, which is free and helps users to create at most four frames of pictures stories with a choice of characters in different moods in their own world (cited in (3)).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is defined as “an extended term for information technology (IT) which stresses the role of unified communications and the integration of telecommunications (telephone lines and wireless signals), computers as well as necessary enterprise software, middleware, storage, and audio-visual systems, which enable users to access, store, transmit, and manipulate information” (cited in (4)). These days, ICT has widely used in all most of fields including education; and worldwide research has shown that ICT can lead to improved student learning and better teaching methods (cited in (5)). The utilization of ICT in education has recently started to appeal the potential and significant progress in language learning. As Hartoyo (2008) stated in his book, a computer is a tool and medium that facilitates people in learning a language, although the effectiveness of learning depends totally on the users (cited in (6)). Through ICT, images can be used in teaching with ease and improving the retentive memory of students. Besides, teachers can easily explain complex instructions and ensure students’ comprehension; and are able to create interactive classes and make the lessons more enjoyable, which could improve students’ attendance and concentration (cited in (5)).

Storytelling is known as “the social and cultural activity of sharing stories, often with improvisation, theatrics, or embellishment. Stories or narratives have been shared in every culture as a means of entertainment, education, cultural preservation and instilling moral values” (cited in (7)). Storytelling is used in education, especially in

English language teaching for young learners because it forms a crucial part in developing the child's overall personality (cited in (8)). Furthermore, storytelling with pictures helps to spark the child's imagination, stimulate curiosity and helps her/his brain development; it helps them to learn the difference between 'real' and 'make-believe'; understand change and new or frightening events, the strong emotions that can go along with them; develop early literacy skills like the ability to listen to and understand words (cited in (9)). On an additional note, storytelling in the classroom can promote a feeling of well-being and relaxation; increase children's willingness to communicate thoughts and feelings; encourage active participation; increase verbal proficiency; encourage use of imagination and creativity; encourage cooperation between students; and enhance listening skills (cited in (10)).

With makebeliefscomix.com, the teacher can create her own materials and assists students in practicing storytelling skills with pictures strips. Furthermore, it also enhances to fire their imagination in brainstorming the ideas and linking them together because using sequences of pictures can be "particularly interesting and productive if the teacher encourages students to use specific tenses (such as past simple versus past continuous), vocabulary or functional language in their story, for example, describing a conversation at the train station" (cited in (11))

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study aims to find out the answer to the research question:

- To what extent is the site makebeliefscomix.com effective in teaching pictures storytelling to young learners at Movers level?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Description

This experimental study was conducted to investigate the ICT

application in teaching of an early-career teacher of English who is in charge of two English classes at a language centre in Ho Chi Minh city. There were randomly 10 students in each class and all these 20 young learners were heading to Cambridge Movers Test. Class 1 named group A was the control one whereas class 2 named group B was with treatment or manipulation – the experimental one. They were observed within 4 weeks and the instruments employed are class observation and the results from Cambridge ESOL for Speaking Subtest described from 1 to 5 shields, which they received from test centre around thirteen days after the test day.

Research site

The study was conducted with the permission and consent of both authority and the English teacher-in-charge at a language centre in Ho Chi Minh city, which is known the biggest and educationally busiest one in Vietnam.

Participants

There are 20 young learners aged from nine to ten randomly sitting in two Movers classes. They randomly sit in these two classes which were defined groups A and B to be under investigation. They spend 4.5 hours with three class meetings per week. They were trained to take the Cambridge YLE Movers Test including Reading and Writing paper, Listening paper, and Speaking paper. However, in this study the Speaking skills were investigated.

Methodology

The study is informed by case study methodology because the case study is “a research strategy that focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings” (Eisenhardt, 2007:534; cited in Howard, 2015, p.75). It also “gives the story behind the result by capturing what happened to bring it about, and can be a good opportunity to highlight a project’s success, or to bring attention to a particular challenge or difficulty in a project” (Neale et al, 2006, p.3)

Class Observation

In order to study more about how children practice their speaking skills through pictures sequences, class observations were carried out for it is essential to make the study more objective and reliable with class observations because they can measure classroom behaviours from direct observations that specify both the events or the behaviours that are to be observed and how they are to be recorded. The data collected from this procedure focuses on the frequency with which specific behaviours or types of behaviours occurred in the classroom and measures their duration (cited in (12)). Each class observation lasts one hour of speaking time; and the guidelines for a class observation are based on purpose and class procedure, found in Appendices 1 and 2.

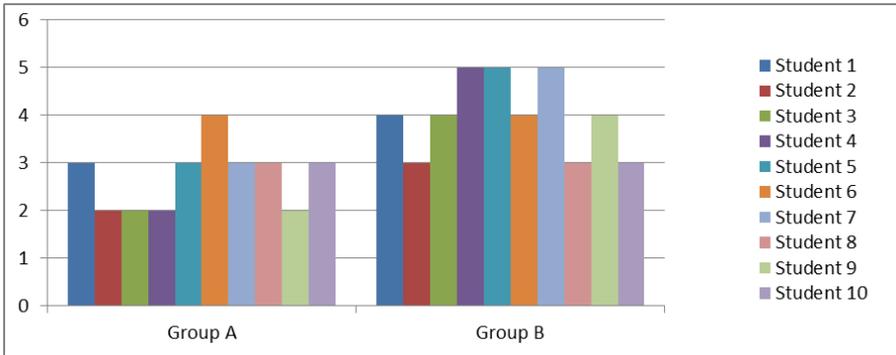
Cambridge Statement of Results

The results of Cambridge YLE Movers Test would be considered with Speaking subtest and compared between two groups, namely control for A and experimental for B. The range is from minimum zero to maximum five shields for each paper.

The following table shows an overview of the study design.

Randomized groups	Cambridge Statements of Results	Exposure to the treatment
Group A Control group	Speaking Results	Traditional paper materials (<i>printed Cambridge Practice test books</i>)
Group B Experimental group (Treated group)	Speaking Results	www.makebeliefscomix.com (<i>pictures stories or sequences or strips</i>)

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS



Results of Cambridge Movers Speaking Subtest

The bar chart shows the amount of shields on Movers Speaking Test of ten students of group A and the other ten of group B. It is apparent that there are upward trends on both groups' results. However, the significant difference is mainly on group B because of the number of students getting higher shields. In group A, 3 of 10 reach the peak of 5 shields whereas there is only one student getting 4 shields. Almost half the students in the control group gain two as minimum, but no one in group B receives less than 3 shields. Overall, it can be seen that the students in the experimental group B with pictures sequences created on makebeliefscomix.com maintain higher scores than the ones in the control group A with paper practice tests only.

On an addition note, class observations show the difference between two groups of students. In group A, students trained with pictures stories printed in Cambridge practice test books learnt seriously and smoothly because they went through the tests many times. In group B, students trained with pictures stories created with makebeliefscomix.com learnt excitedly and challengingly what was shown on the screen; and sometimes that the pictures sequences were animated made students even more excited to tell the stories.

CONCLUSION

It is true that ICT is a valuable tool to enhance teaching and learning (cited in (13)), especially for the teachers who are struggling in the world of English language teaching rapidly changing every moment towards 21st century teachers and learners. Besides, ICT provides learners opportunities to communicate more effectively, especially their storytelling skills. With extremely simple techniques to create pictures stories for students to practice in part 2 of Movers Speaking paper, the site www.makebeliefscomix.com not only brings to teachers creativeness and an educational source for teaching besides printed Cambridge practice test books, but helps learners maintaining motivated in their learning as young ones in group B. It is also evident that involving students in the creation of useful material as a part of a learning exercise is a way to make school more meaningful for students (cited in (14)) as they come to class they stay highly motivated with funny stories.

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- (5) <http://www.elmoglobal.com/en/html/ict/01.aspx>
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- (12) <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1835/Classroom-Observation.html>
- (13) <http://www.englishteacher.com.au/AboutUs/OfficialStatements/ICTsinEnglish.aspx>
- (14) <http://legacy.oise.utoronto.ca/research/field-centres/TVC/RossReports/vol7no1.htm>

Appendix 1 - Class Observation Sheet for group A - the control group

Class Observation

▪ Date: / Class: A

▪ Procedure of class meeting:

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▪ Comments on ICT use:

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▪ Comments on students' participation:

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A DISCUSSION ON APPLYING COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN VIETNAMESE CONTEXT

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Abstract

This paper is aimed to discuss the effects of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which is considered as one of the modern teaching methods, in university classes in Vietnam. There are two main issues that were discussed: the teaching context in which CLT is used, the advantages, and the disadvantages or the challenges faced by teachers and students. It can be concluded that teachers should organize the class activities appropriately to maximize the effects of CLT.

Keywords: *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), advantages, disadvantages, communicative task, communicative competence.*

A discussion on communicative language teaching

In the development of language education, numerous teaching methods have been brought to discussions and evaluations. Among different teaching methods, in terms of meeting learners' need, communicative language teaching has been considered by numerous language teachers in order to meet the need of improving oral communication. By definition, communicative language teaching (CLT) is generally an approach to language teaching which aims to help learners develop communicative competence. In other words, the goal of CLT is to make learners able to communicate in real-life situations. However, CLT today is questioned because of its effects on results of learning: whether it could help learners really able to communicate, and whether it ignores other factors of language.

Therefore, this paper discusses the extent in which CLT meets the needs of English learners in university context. First, the paper provides the definitions and elements of CLT. Then, it discusses the effects and challenges of CLT in English teaching and learning. Finally, recommendations are offered in an effort to actualize CLT promises in enhancing English teaching and learning in Vietnam. It is strongly believed that when the challenges are considered thoroughly and appropriate activities are applied in specific contexts, CLT can succeed in making learners able to communicate effectively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions of Communicative language teaching

Communicative language teaching (CLT) has been known as a modern teaching method which is applied in various teaching contexts, so numerous English teachers today admit that they use this method in their classes. However, when the question of CLT definition is raised, the answers can be varied. According to Richards (2006), CLT can be understood as a set of principles about language teaching and learning in classroom, including how learners learn language. However, Klapper (2006) claimed that this definition has deliberately missed to mention classroom techniques. In another perspective, Ur (2012) stated that CLT is a learner-centered teaching approach which is based on naturalistic acquisition. Through previous papers on CLT, in general, though CLT is perceived differently, it is commonly understood as a modern teaching method whose emphasis is on communicative competence.

Elements of Communicative language teaching

Holding the emphasis on communicative competence, a number of factors have been investigated to create successful CLT methods. There are a number of elements which are believed to be the features of successful CLT, including accuracy versus fluency, the role of teachers and students, and the appropriate classroom activities.

Accuracy versus Fluency

According to Ur (2012), since CLT classrooms are learner-centered, focusing on meaning is more important than accuracy. Therefore, one of the methods which is usually used in CLT classrooms is task-based instruction, consisting of communicative tasks such as problem solving, conveying information, and etc. Supporting the idea that fluency is more important than accuracy in CLT, Klapper (2006) also indicated that the dominant factor in CLT is meaningful input with very little correction. In addition, although most of teachers seem to deny to pay attention to fluency or accuracy only, it is persuadable that CLT has shifted from accuracy to fluency (Quinghong, 2009). Therefore, generally, it can be concluded that CLT focuses on fluency by emphasizing on meaningful input.

The role of teachers and learners in the classroom

Although CLT is perceived as a learner-focused approach, the role of teachers in the classroom is still very important. However, the role of teachers has been shifted from a model for a correct speech to a facilitator or a monitor (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards, 2006). Additionally, teachers also play the role as a task designer who creates classroom activities to allow learners to be in charge of their own learning (Quinghong, 2009). In this case, learners are expected to take a greater responsibility to learn on their own in cooperative activities. In other words, learners can be seen as improviser or negotiator in the classroom.

Activities in Communicative language teaching

There are numerous activities that were suggested in previous research to be appropriate for CLT classrooms. Different from traditional classrooms where the focus is on grammar items with more controlled activities such as memorizing dialogs and drills, activities in a CLT class allow learners to negotiate meaning and use communication strategies (Richards, 2006). These activities are called “communicative task”, which include numerous group work and pair work activities such as group discussion, simulation, role play, etc. (Quinghong, 2009).

DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teaching context

Since it is an active approach which contains many communicative tasks, CLT is appropriate for active teaching contexts, specifically for university classes. There are several reasons why CLT is suitable for university students. First, as it can be seen in most of the cases, students are at intermediate and advanced level, so they seem to be more interested in communication rather than other elements of language. Therefore, CLT is the best choice to give them more opportunities to practice speaking. Second, since the teacher in CLT classes play the role as task designers, it is more flexible and comfortable for teachers to create their own activities in university classes because it is less compulsory to follow certain rules from the school administrator.

Although there are several reasons why CLT is effective in university classes, teachers sometimes have difficulty when operating CLT in class. The class size is the most common difficulty. While CLT requests a reasonable space for students to perform group work activities, the number of students is usually big (over 40 students) makes it challenging to organize and control these activities. Therefore, group division is also faced by numerous teachers in CLT classes.

Advantages of CLT

Focusing on communication, CLT has numerous effects on many aspects of learners. There are different effects relating to many aspects of learners such as motivation and communication ability. However, the core effect of CLT is meeting learners' needs which are mainly to develop speaking skills.

When applying CLT to their classrooms, teachers have to design a variety of meaningful group work and pair work activities in order to enhance learners' communicative competence. As group work activities can considerably motivate learners to join with others to

speaking and to discuss ideas, it can be possibly assumed that CLT motivates learners to speak English in class. Furthermore, CLT also helps weaker learners to join and be a part of the class when doing group work or pair work. In other words, though it is not clearly shown, CLT really helps meet the need of learners, especially university students, to create learners' identities when joining communicative tasks in class.

The second effect of CLT is to meet the need of improving oral communication of learners. Since they emphasize communication, CLT activities give learners equal chances to speak, to communicate, express ideas, and negotiate meaning. The goal of learners in these activities is to be able to express the meaning through meaningful tasks, so even if learners can only produce a word, a phrase, or a short sentence, as far as it conveys a meaning, it is a success to learners. Therefore, CLT creates opportunities for teachers to meet learners' need to improve their ability to communicate in everyday situations, especially in casual daily conversations.

Disadvantages and challenges of CLT

Although CLT tends to help improve learners' oral communication skills, there are some disadvantages and challenges that limit the effects of CLT in English classes. These disadvantages and challenges are faced by both learners and teachers, which are related to the teaching context and the knowledge of learners.

First of all, as mentioned previously, communicative tasks such as group work and pair work activities are difficult to control in a large class of more than 30 students. Therefore, some problems may be produced during the activities: some students may get distracted by using L1, the noisy class, etc. These problems tend to prevent teachers from being good task designers, so it is very important for teachers to carefully consider the appropriate activities, the class organization, and the class management.

Second, because in CLT classrooms, grammar is seen as a support to

communication rather than a main element of linguistic knowledge, some learners may find it difficult to produce spoken language grammatically. Furthermore, the correction is only made when there is a severe mistake in conveying meanings, therefore, some grammar mistakes which are not corrected may result in ungrammatical speech. This may become a severe drawback of learners when they want to be accepted by the native speakers' community.

CONCLUSION

Communicative language teaching is an ideal methodology in English classes which aims to develop learners' communicative competence. With appropriate communicative tasks, learners can improve their speaking skills in natural conversations. However, learners sometimes face the problem of producing ungrammatical speech because grammar is not focused in CLT. Additionally, teachers tend to face challenges in task designing and class management in CLT. Therefore, if these challenges can be appropriately controlled, teachers can maximize the effects of CLT in order to help learners develop their English skills, especially communication skills.

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PROJECT BASED LEARNING IN TEACHING WRITING SKILL

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Abstract

Writing is the most difficult skill to master in learning a language, and learners have little motivation in this skill. A number of studies have indicated that Project Based Learning (PBL) is one of the most effective ways to engage students and develop language skills. Therefore, applying PBL in teaching writing is necessary in order to create students' motivation and enhance their writing ability. This study examines the efficiency of PBL in teaching writing skill at School of Foreign Languages – Thai Nguyen University, thereby proposing some pedagogical suggestions for teaching writing skill by PBL. To achieve the desired aims of the study, the researchers have conducted an action research in four steps: preparation, implementation, presentation and evaluation. The research results show that PBL makes great contribution to motivate students' self and active learning. On the contrary, there are some drawbacks of this method, for instance, time-consumption and students' unreliable assessment in learning process. However, these disadvantages can be prevented with flexible teaching program and techniques. The conclusion can be drawn is that PBL has a variety of benefits in teaching language skills, especially writing.

INTRODUCTION

Language is a very beneficial tool for human beings to communicate with each other. Brown (2000: 5) states that "language is a system of arbitrary conventionalized vocal, written or gestural symbols that

enables members of a given community to communicate intelligibly with one another". Choi (1999: 4) indicates that "In second and foreign language education, developing students' communicative competence in the target language is one of the most significant goals of language professionals. In order to acquire the communicative competence, students have to develop their four skills, in addition to their linguistic competence e.g. grammar and vocabulary". When learning a language, people usually learn to listen first, then to speak, then to read, and finally to write. These are called the four "language skills" in which writing is the most difficult one to acquire. Writing is a means that is used to express needs and feelings by using a variation of certain tools and sub skills. Therefore, writing is one of the four language skills that requires special attention as it is a productive language process.

In reality, there are a number of students who are disgusted with writing because of the difficulties in learning this skill. To deal with this challenge, teachers need to employ an appropriate methods that may create motivation for students in the process of acquiring writing skill. Project-based learning (PBL) seems to match this English teaching and learning need. Students taught in traditional English education environments are preoccupied by exercises, grammar rules, and that need to be learned, but are of limited use in unfamiliar situations such as solving real-life problems. In contrast to conventional English classroom environments, a PBL environment provides students with opportunities to develop their abilities to adapt and change methods to fit new situations. Further, students participating in PBL environments have greater opportunity to learn real literacy associated with seeking information from any resource such as Internet, international text book or journal and making a presentation in English. Students have opportunities to use several skills (e.g., problem-solving, creativity, teamwork, as well as language) at different work stages, so the work and language skills are developed. (Brunetti, et al., 2003; Solomon, 2003).

PBL approach enables students to develop and improve their language fluency and accuracy, and at the same time build personal qualities and skills such as self-confidence, problem-solving, decision-making, and collaboration. (Fried-Booth, 2002; Stoller, 2006; Beckett and Slater, 2005). A number of studies on PBL have been conducted by many researchers in many subjects. Atikarn Thongmak (2009) carried out a research on the use of PBL to develop English speaking and thinking skills. The findings was that the learners' English speaking and thinking skills improved dramatically. Kanitta Naknoi (2005) investigated the students' abilities in using English for Communication through the use of PBL. The results showed that the students' abilities in using English for Communication increased after using the project work. By studying a number of researches in PBL, it can be said that this approach provides much of the opportunity in learning independently, promoting language ability, and improving important skills such as problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and co-operative skills. Therefore, using PBL in English language teaching could possibly improve the abilities of the learners in writing.

As a lecturer at SFL – TNU, the author finds that most of the students do not have motivation to learn writing skill. In addition, PBL has been applied in the teaching curriculum of SFL, which is shown in the subjects such as Magazine Project, Excursion Project, Drama Project and TV Show Project. However, there have been few researches in studying the application of this approach in teaching skills, especially writing. Hence, there arises a need of a research on ***“The Application of Project Based Learning in Teaching Writing Skill”***. To reach the aim of the research, the researcher supposes the research question: ***“What are the advantages and disadvantages of PBL in teaching writing”***, then proposes some possible implications in teaching and learning writing at SFL – TNU.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition and characteristics of PBL

Many definitions of PBL have been proposed by various authors. Project work is viewed as "An approach to learning which complements mainstream methods and which can be used with almost all levels, ages, and abilities of students" (Haines, 1989: 6). The Department of Curriculum and Instructional Development (1998) said that PBL is a method that assists learners to study and practice their abilities and interests by using the scientific process to reach the result of that topic. Teachers act as facilitators from the beginning of the project; choosing topics, planning the process and presenting the results. Thomas (2000: 43) proposed a definition of PBL "... a teaching model that organizes learning around projects" and projects as "... complex tasks based on challenging questions or problems that involve students in design, problem-solving, decision-making, and/or investigative activities, that give students opportunities to work relatively autonomously over extended periods of time, and culminate in realistic products or presentations". From the definitions above, it can be concluded that PBL is a teaching and learning approach that allows learners to study independently under the observation of teachers by creating plans, designing the process, and evaluating the project. Learners are offered opportunities to study on the topics that interest them. They use the language skills and other skills naturally. At the end of the project, they can make their own presentation and apply their knowledge in real life.

Stoller (2006) identifies 10 characteristics of PBL: (1) having both a process and product; (2) giving students (partial) ownership of the project; (3) extended over a period of time (several days, weeks, or months); (4) integrating skills; (5) developing student understanding of a topic through the integration of language and content; (6) students both collaborating with others and working on their own; (7) holding students responsible for their own learning through the gathering, processing, and reporting of information gathered from

target-language resources; (8) assigning new roles and responsibilities to both students and teacher; (9) providing a tangible final product; and (10) reflecting on both the process and the product. According to Hedge (2002), projects usually integrate language skills by means of activities. These activities may include the following: planning; the gathering of information through reading, listening, interviewing, and observing; group discussion of the information; problem solving; oral and written reporting; and display.

More detailed characteristics of project work will be discussed as follows

- (1) Project work focuses on content learning: Project work focuses on content learning rather than on specific language targets. Hutchinson claims that “there is nothing simulated about a project [...] students are writing about their own lives [...] and because it is such personal experience [...] they will thus put a lot of effort into getting it right.” (1991: 11)
- (2) Project work is student centered: Fried-Booth asserts that “project is student-centered rather than teacher-directed.” (1986: 5) Hutchinson suggests that “content and presentation are determined principally by the learners”. (2006: 11)
- (3) Project work is cooperative rather than competitive: Richards and Renandya state “project work is cooperative rather than competitive.” (2002: 108) The students can work on their own, in small groups, or as a class to complete a project, sharing resources, ideas, and expertise along the way.
- (4) Project work leads to the authentic integration of skills: “Project work leads to the authentic integration of skills and processing of information from varied sources, mirroring real-life tasks.” (Richards and Renandya, 2002: 108)
- (5) Project work focuses on fluency: It provides students with opportunities to focus on fluency and accuracy at different stages of the project. Basically, “project work encourages a focus on

fluency [...] therefore some errors of accuracy are bound to occur. (Hutchinson, 1991: 8).

- (6) Project work make students become responsible: “If we put students in situation where they need to make decisions for themselves we allow them to become more responsible for their own progress.” (Rodgers in Scrivener, 1994: 15)
- (7) Project work culminates in an end product: Hutchinson states that “projects are often done in poster format, but students can also use their imagination to experiment with the form.” (1991: 8) Průcha, Walterová and Mareš (1995), and Fried-Booth (1986) are of the opinion that project work culminates in an end product which can be an oral presentation, a chart, booklet, poster session, bulletin board display, report, or stage performance. Harmer (1991) considers the end product as the most important thing of the project work, and all the language use that take place should be directed towards the final version. Richards and Renandya (2002) state that the end product can be shared with others which gives the project a real purpose. Moreover, they add the value of the project, however, lies not just in the final product but in the process of working towards the end-point.

The researcher considers that the main characteristics of PBL are that they make students more independent when they themselves search for the necessary knowledge and information to achieve their project. Moreover, project work has both a process and product orientation, and provides students with opportunities to focus on fluency and accuracy at different project work stages.

THE APPLICATION OF PBL IN TEACHING WRITING

Writing is defined as a complex process which involves a number of separate skills. Hedge (1988: 1) states that “... effective writing requires a number of things: a high degree of organization in the development of idea and information; a high degree of accuracy so that there is no ambiguity of meaning; the use of complex

grammatical devices for focus and emphasis; and a careful choice of vocabulary, grammatical pattern, and sentence structure...” Furthermore, writing is regarded as a productive and taught language skill which is “difficult to acquire” (Tribble, 1996: 3). Thus, writing is a productive and complex skill. It is an art of communication with certain groups of audience. It requires the ability to communicate in target language and to produce text in order to express oneself efficiently; therefore, it is obvious that writing requires conscious effort and practice.

Due to these difficulties, students have tendency to get in a great deal of trouble when practicing this skill. Consequently, it is necessary for teachers to find out effective methods in order to motivate learners in studying writing. One of the methods is PBL because it is extremely beneficial and appropriate for teaching this skill. Firstly, PBL can create motivation for students through activities; therefore, they will be more engaged in writing skill. Furthermore, the two main approaches of teaching writing is process and product. It is similar to the characteristic of PBL is process-product oriented. In addition, teachers play the role of facilitators in both PBL and teaching writing with the combination of process and product approach. Thus, PBL is a method which can make contribution to enhance students’ writing skill.

Fried-Booth (1986) maintains three stages of PBL:

- Classroom Planning: in collaboration with their teacher, learners discuss the content and the scope of the project.
- Carrying out the project: learners move out of the classroom setting to complete the tasks they planned like conducting interviews and collecting data.
- Reviewing and monitoring the work: it includes discussion and feedback session to evaluate the project.

Svobodova (2009) proposes four similar stages of PBL: preparation, realization, presentation and evaluation. It is the fact that teaching

writing mainly consists of five stages: brainstorming, planning, researching, writing and editing, so in order to apply PLB the most effectively in writing classes, the author would like to offer four stages when teaching this skill by PBL as follows:

- Preparation: brainstorming, planning and researching
- Realization: writing and editing
- Presentation: presenting the process and the product
- Evaluation: evaluating the process and the product

METHODOLOGY

Research setting and participants

Research setting

The study was carried out in the second semester of the academic year 2016-2017 at SFL – TNU. At SFL- TNU, English is the most important major subject. The students here are taught four skills immediately from the first year; among which writing is a skill paid a lot of attention. Each week in the second semester, second year English major students have two periods for writing. This limitation of time prevents teachers from covering all necessary sub- writing skills carefully. At the time of conducting this research, students were learning how to write film review. Due to the limited time and the curriculum, the study focused only on exploring the application of PBL in teaching writing film review

Participants

Subjects of the study were 100 second year English major students of SFL- TNU in the second semester of the academic year of 2016-2017. The participants were taken randomly from 200 English major K38 students. The age of the students varies from 19 to 23. They were all female. They come from different regions in Vietnam. Some of them are from urban areas; some are from rural or remote areas.

The students all have studied English as a compulsory subject at high school for at least 6 years. They are willing and enthusiastic to take part in this study.

Procedure

The procedure of teaching writing includes brainstorming, planning, researching, writing, and editing. While the researchers implemented the project, there were four stages: preparation, implementation, presentation and evaluation. When combining these two approaches, the authors propose the following phases:

- Preparation phase: brainstorming, planning, researching,
- Implementation phase: writing and editing.
- Presentation phase: presentation process and product writing
- Evaluation phase: the evaluation of the implementation process and the evaluation of the presentation and evaluation of the written product.

THE APPLICATION OF PROJECT-BASED TO TEACHING WRITING FILM REVIEW

As explained in the previous section, the researchers conducted four phases: preparation phase, implementation phase, presentation phase and evaluation phase. There must be a certain adjustment in English Written Proficiency Upper Intermediate 2.

Preparation phase

The purpose of this phase is to help students identify the topic of their project as well as the whole plan in this subject. When students have an idea of their writing, they will decide the topic and make specific plans. It is important for students to work together to make decisions right from the beginning. Galancher (2004) suggests that teachers help students plan by providing guidance on:

- Content included in the project

- Form of the product
- Division responsibility for each member
- Time spent for each part
- Types of resources / materials needed to conduct the project

While conducting the teaching of film review in the form of a project, we have implemented the following contents. First of all, the students were divided into 4-member groups, who are self-identified by the group to be suitable for team work throughout the course of the project. It is also possible to take into account the student's learning style in order to divide students into appropriate groups. For example, a group of students consists of students who have different learning styles to complement each other during group work. Auditory, tactile and visual are the three basic learning styles so a group includes the collaboration of members of these learning styles. In order to recognize their learning style, the teachers may ask them to conduct surveys on online learning styles such as: <http://www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/learning-styles-quiz.html>

Students in the same group discussed in the teacher's directions:

- The content of the article: the group would decide what the article would be on what topics, such as romance, adventure, animation, fiction ...
- The product form: product presentation, poster or power point or prezi ...
- The division responsibility for each member, and allocating time for each task assigned and managed by team leader.
- Types of resources / materials required for project implementation: the teacher's provision (sample, type, required social and linguistic knowledge) and student's orientation in exploring resources which the teacher suggested and others.

- Students conducted the research on the materials provided and the group materials found. Specifically, studying the form and content of a film commentary with teacher samples assigned to students and looking for film commentary on mass media such as the Internet help students gain knowledge of the genre. Students are guided to find out about the movie the group has chosen consistently: content, main actors, context, messages convey and so on.

Implementation phase

The implementation phase consists of writing and editing.

* Writing: Groups divided the film review into different sections: introduction, body with small different parts, and conclusion. Each team member wrote their own part.

* Editing: Teachers assisted students in editing work by highlighting errors in grammatical organization, grammar (punctuation, punctuation, word usage ...), style ...

Students make corrections based on the teacher's recommendations, each review needs to go through 3 or 4 revisions.

During the editing process, the reviews would receive the suggestions from the teacher. As working in a group, students played different roles such as facilitator, recorder, reporter, and runner.

The specific roles of these roles are as follows:

- Facilitator: controlling the discussion and dividing task assignment
- Recorder: summarizing the main ideas in the group discussion, writing down the ideas needed to change and correcting the message.
- Reporter: reporting results and discussing with the teacher when necessary
- Runner: collecting materials and corrections in exchange for teachers

Presentation phase

This phase was carried out once the student had completed the project. Sharing results can be done in different ways such as classroom presentation using wallpapers, power point or prezi.

Many researchers such as Moss and Van Duzer (1998), Diane Curtis (2001), and Gallacher (2004) assert that the most common way of sharing results is by presenting projects to the audience. This phase is essential for a writing project because the provision of information to the reader or the audience makes the text purposeful.

Evaluation phase

During the implementation, there were two types of evaluation: cross evaluation among team members (50%) and teacher evaluation (50%).

The team was asked to create a profile including: team contract, plan, audio recordings of meetings, minutes of meetings, evaluation of the members, evaluation of members, and group assessment)

A record of understanding between the members, such as the commitment to participate in the project and full implementation of the guidelines

Sample Team Contract

Team Name: _____

Date: _____

GOALS: What are our team goals for this project?

What do we want to accomplish? What skills do we want to develop or refine?

Students were asked to evaluate (1) their own activities (2) the activities of the group (3) the activities of the group members. This assessment accounts for 30% of the student score received for the whole project.

Peer evaluation among members followed teacher assessment criteria assigned to the team. We have used a number of evaluation benchmarks on

<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/teach/instructionalstrategies/groupprojects/tools/index.html> because design criteria here are consistent with item from the teacher evaluation rating.

Sample Qualitative Peer/Self Evaluation

The table below identifies a major strength of each of your group members in relation to the group’s goals and processes. Provide one concrete example to substantiate your answer. Include yourself!

Group member’s name and role in group	Strength	Example

Teachers conducted the assessment of the written film review and the presentation after the project had completed. Product reviews on aspects including style, language (grammar, punctuation ...).

Instructor Oral Presentation Evaluation Form	
Please rate the presenter by circling the appropriate number. 1= very poor and 10 = excellent	
Topic _____	
Student Name: _____	
<u>Presentation Content</u>	
The introduction provided a general description of the topic, including the approach and expectations of the talk	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
The presentation provided thoughtful comparisons and analyses	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
There was a clear summary and conclusions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

FINDING AND RESULTS

After applying the teaching method through the project for writing, the researchers found some advantages and disadvantages. Some of the difficulties that students face are the full implementation of the project that take time and effort to perform in limited classroom hours. Students in the evaluation phase usually have two very different tendencies: to evaluate all members of the group higher than the actual and to evaluate the criteria quite low. The result of the assessment is not reliable even though there are criteria. Nevertheless, the advantages of teaching writing skills through the project cannot be denied. Students are really interested in the learning process, and they have the opportunity to actively solve their problems under the teacher guidance. The most positive aspect of teaching through the project is that students turn knowledge which they learned into their own knowledge. Therefore, learning becomes a self-improvement activities of students themselves.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, teaching through the project has positive effects on teaching and learning activities. It is the fact that there are loads of PBL subject such as Excursion Project, Drama Project and so on in the School of Foreign Languages - Thai Nguyen University. The application of PBL in these subject is quite thorough and comprehensive; however, the approach of project-based learning is beneficial for not only PBL subjects but also other subjects, especially English Written Proficiency. The application of this approach to teach other subjects must be flexible enough to match the length, content and condition of the facilities. With a high level of writing skills in English Written Proficiency Upper Intermediate 2, the application of this direction to the whole program is not feasible.

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FACTORS INHIBITING VIETNAMESE NON-MAJORED ENGLISH STUDENTS' WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE

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Abstract

It is very popular in almost every EFL university classroom in the Mekong Delta that the teacher is the one who talks the most, and students, especially those at the lower level of English proficiency, remain silent and passive during the lessons. The situation makes it challenging job for teachers of these non-majored English classes to help their students improve their communicative competence. The current study is an attempt to explore which factors have inhibited students' willingness to communicate. Data were collected from questionnaires administered to 360 non-majored English students in a university in the Mekong Delta. From the findings, suggestions are made on how to make students more willing to speak not only in EFL classrooms but also in other contexts.

Keywords: *Willingness to communicate (WTC)*

INTRODUCTION

Today, second language (L2) teaching has shifted from boosting the mastery of structure to enhancing the communicative competence,

especially oral ability in order to satisfy the demands of language users in the age of communication. In the Mekong Delta, non-English major university students are required to take English classes in their university program. Usually, these students encounter difficulties in learning this subject even though they have some knowledge of English and establish their learning goals. They need to learn English since it is useful for their future career and communicative purposes in life. It is often the case that most students are passive in English learning and remain silent during the lessons. Moreover, ‘learners have different ways to communicate in the target language. Some students take opportunities to communicate in the target language, whereas others avoid communicating in the second language’(Ghonsooly et al., 2012, p.198). As a result, their learning is ineffective and many of them cannot actually communicate in English.

In recent years, WTC has attracted a lot of attention in the fields of SLA and CLT and an increasing number of studies has been done with the aim of identifying factors affecting L2 learners’ WTC. Research shows that students’ willingness to communicate is affected by linguistic and non-linguistic factors. In addition, since willingness to communicate can take place in any communicative L2 environments, research on this area has been conducted in various contexts. However, few investigations as such have been done with non-English major university students in Vietnam, especially in the Mekong Delta. Thus, the current study attempts to explore inhibiting factors for Vietnamese students’ willingness to communicate to fulfill that gap.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Willingness to communicate

Willingness to communicate (WTC) refers to the readiness to speak freely and without fear. An individual’s willingness to communicate is believed to depend on the context, the interlocutors and his or her

personality variables (Mahdi, 2014). Those factors may have significant influences on an individual's willingness to speak or have a conversation with others. From the results of his study, Kang (2005) defined that 'willingness to communicate (WTC) is an individual's volitional inclination toward actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables'(cited in Cameron, 2013, p.178).

WTC in the second language (L2) context does relate not only to their second language acquisition (SLA) but also to communicative language teaching approaches. Willingness to communicate is highly likely to help learners achieve the ultimate goal of second or foreign language learning as they can actually use the target language to communicate orally in their real life. It is believed that the purpose of exploring students' WTC in L2 context is to foster their communicative competence in the target language (Dorney, 2005, cited in Hamzehnejah & Shariati, 2014, p.371).

Factors affecting students' willingness to communicate

Five following factors have been claimed to affect students' willingness to communicate in L2 and FL classroom. First, students' perceived communicative competence is considered one of the most important inhibitors. According to McCroskey (1982), perceived communicative competence is defined as the self-evaluation of an individual's ability to communicate in a proper manner in a particular situation. Apparently, learners' perception of their competence in accomplishing a communication task is likely to be more crucial than their actual ability to be willing to communicate (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000). In the same vein, Riasati (2012) proposed that perceived speaking ability along with other factors such as task type, topic of discussion, class atmosphere, interlocutor, teacher, personality plays its role in forming Iranian students' WTC.

The second popular inhibitor to students' WTC is anxiety. Anxiety is depicted from three aspects of 'trait, state, and situation-specific'

(MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, cited in Alemi, Daftarifard, & Pashmforoosh, 2011, p.154). These variables were figured out to evoke learner's feelings of nervousness and apprehension or difficulties when they use an L2 to communicate with others.

The third inhibiting factor is individual personality. In the field of communication research, personality is found out to be a vital part of WTC conceptualization in both native and foreign languages. Researchers have described personality trait as an antecedent of individuals' willingness to communicate in which the interlocutor's personality was categorized as introverted or extroverted traits (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990).

Forth, students' motivation and attitudes towards language learning are claimed to play a role in students' WTC. Gardner (1985) supports that students' attitudes towards the learning situation together with integrativeness help to formulate their integrative motivation as well as levels of motivation. MacIntyre et al. (1998) point out that learners' positive or negative attitudes towards the second language will probably result in their divergent intensity and efforts in the learning and L2 communication. Last but not least, orientations are one of the factors affecting students' WTC. In previous studies, it is indicated that there were both positive and negative correlations between integrative orientation and students' language learning. It is recommended that teachers who want more students' interaction in the classroom are expected to examine students' attitudes as well as learning orientations so that they can help students have positive perceptions of their own language learning. Furthermore, in the field of research, few studies aim to directly work on the effects of orientations on students' L2 communication.

THE STUDY

Research questions

The current study aims to answer the two following research questions:

- (3) To what extent are non-majored English students willing to communicate in speaking lessons?
- (4) What factors prevent non-majored English students from being willing to communicate in the classrooms?

Participants

The participants of the study are non-English major students from three-level general English classes called General English 1, General English 2, General English 3 in a university in the Mekong Delta. The students in these classes are taught with the coursebook called LIFE. A total of 360 students (208 males, 152 females) ranging from 18 to 25 (mean age: 20.71) from three class levels (120 each) were invited to complete the questionnaires.

Research instrument

A questionnaire was used for collecting the data to answer the two research questions. This questionnaire was adapted from WTC-related previous studies to be suitable for the context of the current study. The questionnaire includes two sections. The first section was designed to assess the extent of students' willingness to communicate in non-majored English speaking classrooms, and the second section aimed to explore factors affecting students' WTC in the classrooms. The questionnaire follows a 5-Likert-scale design which consists of 60 statements grouped into 6 clusters:

Cluster 1 was adapted from the studies of Xie (2011) and Alemi et al., (2011) consisting of 15 items. Students will choose the extent of their WTC from 1 (almost never willing) to 5 (almost always willing) for each item.

Cluster 2 was designed to assess students' perceived competence (items 16, 17).

Cluster 3 was adapted from Alemi et al., (2011) including 10 items (18 – 27) to examine students' anxiety.

Cluster 4 was adapted from Cetinkaya (2005) which includes 8 items (28 – 35) and used to explore students' personality.

Cluster 5 was adapted from Kim (2004) including 14 items (36 – 49) to explore students' motivation and attitudes towards language learning.

Cluster 6 was adapted from Kim (2004) including 11 items (50 – 60) to investigate students' orientations for language learning.

The questionnaire was piloted with 40 non-majored English students and checked for its reliability with a reliability test. The Cronbach alpha of .91 shows that the questionnaire was reliable to collect the official data for the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The extent of students' willingness to communicate in non-majored English speaking classrooms.

The extent to which non-majored English students are willing to communicate in English in the current study was investigated with fifteen communication situations which frequently take place in English speaking classrooms at universities in the Mekong Delta. The data of the questionnaires administered to 360 non-majored English students were thematically processed to report the results and a frequency test was run to assess the extent of students' WTC. The results in Table 1 are organized in descending order according to the percentage of respondents who said they are "willing to communicate" (i.e. often willing or almost always willing) in each situation. "Unwilling to communicate" refers to sometimes willing or almost never willing.

For the situations in which students are willing to communicate in English, the largest percentage of the total participants (63.8%) agree that they are willing to answer questions in English when called upon by their teacher compared to other situations (see Table 1). Meanwhile, students also show their high extent of WTC in

introducing themselves in English without looking at notes and in reading out the conversations in the coursebook, with 52.2% and 51.4% of agreement respectively. These figures may indicate that students show their similar frequency of communication in these two situations. With regard to the situations where students are unwilling to communicate, it is reported that students are unwilling to use English to present their own opinions in class (12.7%), communicate with the teacher before and after class (16.3%), or ask the teacher questions in class (17.5%). For all circumstances, students agree that they are least willing to present their own opinions in class.

Table 1. The extent of students' willingness to communicate in the following situations.

(N = 360)	Willing %	Unwilling %	Willing half of the time %
Answer a question in English when you are called upon by your teacher.	63.8	13.0	23.1
Introduce yourself in English without looking at notes.	52.2	20.5	27.2
Read out the conversations in English in the coursebook.	51.4	19.7	28.9
Give a speech with notes in English in class.	46.1	22.5	31.4
Make a conversation about a topic in English with your classmates in class.	46.1	23.8	30.0
Participate in pair discussions in English in class.	46.1	26.1	27.8
Participate in small group discussions in English in class.	40.3	30.0	29.7

(N = 360)	Willing %	Unwilling %	Willing half of the time %
Participate in the whole class discussions with the teacher in English in class.	39.2	28.3	32.5
Volunteer to answer your teacher's questions in English in class.	36.7	31.7	31.7
Help your classmates answer teacher's questions in English in class.	31.9	41.4	26.7
Ask your classmates questions in English in class.	28.7	30.0	41.4
Role-play in English with your classmates in class.	20.3	54.8	25.0
Ask your teacher questions in English in class.	17.5	47.8	34.7
Communicate with your teacher in English before and after class.	16.3	60.3	23.3
Present your own opinions in English in class.	12.7	60.0	27.2

The findings contribute to explaining students' WTC that was once described in Kang (2005) that an individual's volitional inclination toward actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables'. Apparently, a great number of students reported that they are ready to answer the questions in English when they are asked to do so. This readiness is resulted from an external factor that is the teacher's request. Differently, the minor number of students do not take the opportunity to communicate with the teacher before and after class despite their possibility. In terms of interlocutor, when using English to communicate with classmates, students have a preference for pair

discussions rather than small group discussions. Considering teacher-student communication, not many students would like to ask the teacher questions in English or help friends answer the teacher's questions. Just in case they are called upon, they are willing to respond to the teacher. Therefore, it can be concluded that as the communication context and the interlocutor vary, the extent of students' WTC changes accordingly.

Factors affecting students' willingness to communicate in non-major English speaking classrooms.

The next part of the questionnaire presented a list of forty-five items of different clusters of factor called perceived competence, personality, motivation and attitudes towards language learning and orientations for language learning. A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship among the main variables. The mean and standard deviation for each variable were calculated and the correlation matrix is shown in Table 2.

Overall, there are significant correlations between students' WTC and English proficiency, perceived competence, personality, motivation and attitudes towards language learning, and orientations for language learning. No correlation was found between WTC and anxiety. More specifically, the correlation matrix shows that individual personality most strongly relates to L2 WTC ($p=.60$). Following personality, the WTC of non-majored students' WTC is affected to a larger extent by motivation and attitudes towards language learning ($p=.53$) than by orientations for language learning ($p=.42$), which are shown as the most important factors. In addition, it can be seen that perceived communication competence associated with English proficiency have correlations with students' WTC ($p=.38$), whereas anxiety showed no correlation with their WTC ($p=.00$).

Table 2. Correlation matrix (observed variables)

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Willingness to communicate	3.04	.79	1.0						
2. English Proficiency	2.59	.89	.30**	1.0					
3. Perceived competence	1.87	.61	.38**	.40**	1.0				
4. Anxiety	3.15	.76	.00	-.09	-.16**	1.0			
5. Personality	2.81	.79	.60**	.21**	.30**	-.12*	1.0		
6. Motivation and attitudes towards language learning	3.38	.70	.53**	.24**	.25**	.03	.49**	1.0	
7. Orientations for language learning	3.65	.79	.42**	.22**	.19**	.11*	.35**	.56	1.0

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

The findings of this study are in line with those of the previous ones in terms of exploring the factors affecting students' WTC and frequency of communication in various contexts. Like other studies, the current study found out that non-majored English students' WTC was influenced by four factors namely perceived competence, personality, motivation and attitudes towards language learning, and orientations for language learning. In particular, the findings are similar with the those of (MacIntyre et al., 1998) that personality traits have a significant influence on the readiness to communicate in the target language and students' WTC is caused by their personality that extraverted students involve in class communication more than the introverts in Kaya (1995).

The results indicate that language anxiety is not a affective factor. This factor does not attribute to increasing or decreasing the students' frequency of communication in the English speaking lessons. Unlike the results found in the study of MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan (2002) in which EFL learners' WTC was significantly influenced by perceived communication competence and anxiety, those of the current study reveal that anxiety does not interplay with perceived communication competence in preventing students from being willing to communicate in English, but only the latter which affects the students' WTC.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In the current study, non-majored English students' WTC is affected by the surveyed factors except for anxiety. The factors affecting students' WTC in the classrooms include perceived competence, personality, motivation and attitudes towards language learning, and orientations for language learning. Of the factors, personality is regarded as the most affective factor to the willingness to communicate in English of those students in the Mekong Delta.

From the factors inhibiting non-majored students' WTC in English figured out in this study, it is suggested that the communication situations should be taken place more frequently in the English speaking lessons so that students will have more opportunities to use the target language to practice speaking or communicate with their teacher and peers. In addition, speaking activities as well as communication situations should be varied in the lessons in order for students to become familiar with communicating in various contexts. This is likely to help students become more active and then more engaged in communicating in English inside and outside the classroom. Furthermore, English lecturers can raise students' awareness of the importance of English learning in the university context as well as their interest in authentic English communication. Last but not least, it is necessary for lecturers to help students discover their orientations for language learning by themselves in order that they will be more motivated in their own English learning

process. Once suggestions as such are put into practice, it is strongly believed that non-majored English students' WTC will change positively.

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PROJECT WORK FOR TEACHING ENGLISH FOR ESP LEARNERS.

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Abstract

Project work is a progressive teaching method which meets requirements of modern educational systems. This article presents findings of a case study on how project work benefits students in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) class in developing students' language skills and group work skills. In the article, theoretical foundations for project work are reviewed and the implementations of a project work are applied. The study was conducted within 4 weeks in a provincial university in the North of Vietnam. The participants were 26 third-year students majoring in chemistry. Observation and interviews were applied as the instruments to collect the data. The results revealed that the use of project work is effective in teaching English for ESP classes. From theory to practice, the article suggests a pedagogic possibility for practitioners to apply project work in language learning.

Keywords: *Benefits of Project work, ESP classes, language skills*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, project work has been considered as those teaching methods which are repeatedly discussed in publications on modern teaching methodology. In a world that is changing very quickly, teachers are looking for a method which would meet all important requirements of the education process.

Project work in the language classroom is recognized as the opportunity for learners to develop their language skills. It encourages learners to use the foreign language and motivates them. Moreover, it develops the learners' social skills, the ability to cooperate together - because they often work in groups on their project, and their sense for responsibility for their work.

Haines (1989) argues that in the context of language learning, projects are multi-skill activities focusing on topics or themes rather than on specific language targets. The author continues that the learners concentrate on reaching the targets with opportunities to recycle known language and skills in a relatively natural context. Fried-Booth (1986) points out that that most organized language learning takes place in the classroom and there is often a gap between the language the students are taught and the language they in fact require. The researcher concludes that project work can help to bridge the gap.

Emphasizing the importance of project work in language learning, Stoller (2002, p.109) discusses that "project-based learning should be viewed as a versatile vehicle for fully integrated language and content learning, making it a viable option for language educators working in a variety of instructional settings including general English, English for academic purposes (EAP), English for specific purposes (ESP), and English for occupational/vocational/professional purposes, in addition to pre-service and in-service teacher training."

This paper describes the implementation of project work in a provincial university in the north of Vietnam with third year undergraduate students in a class of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The idea behind the implementation is to investigate how project work benefits the students in developing the language skills and group work skills. In the next section of the paper there is a brief overview of theoretical part of project work and its benefits in second and foreign language settings. Following the literature review is a case study of implementation of project work following the ten-step

process advocated by Alan and Stoller (2005). The analysis, results, and the conclusions are presented in the last parts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Project Work

There are many definitions of project work proposed by various authors. Beckett (2002) defines project work as a long-term (several weeks) activity that involves a variety of individual or cooperative tasks such as developing a research plan and questions, and implementing the plan through empirical or document research that includes collecting, analysing, and reporting data orally and/or in writing. Legutke and Thomas (1991) identify project work as a theme and task-centred mode of teaching and learning which results from a joint process of negotiation between all participants. The authors continue by stating that project work “allows for a wide scope of self-determined action for both the individual and the small group of learners within a general framework of a plan which defines goals and procedures” (Legutke and Thomas, 1991, p.160). Fried-Booth (2002) explains that project work is student-centred and driven by the need to create an end-product, which brings opportunities for students to develop their confidence and independence and to work together in a real world environment by collaborating on a task which they have defined for themselves and which has not been externally imposed.

Features of Project Work

Many proponents of project work such as Fried-Booth (2002), Haines (1989), Sheppard and Stoller (1995), Stoller (2002), and Alan and Stoller (2005) who took different approaches agree on six features of project work as summarised by Stoller (2002). First, project work prioritizes the content rather than the language. Thus, it can be considered as a mirror of the real world, which includes topics of interest to students. Second, students will do the main tasks in a project, and teachers will give guidance and support where

necessary. Third, during the process, students can work individually or cooperatively in small groups, or as a whole class to share resources, ideas, and expertise to complete the project. Fourth, students integrate diverse skills through conducting tasks. Fifth, project work is usually designed with end products as the outcome, for example, an oral presentation, a poster session, a bulletin-board display, a report, or a stage performance. Project work not only develops students' language accuracy through the process stage, but also language fluency through the product stage. Finally, project work is potentially motivating, stimulating, empowering, and challenging. It usually results in building student confidence, self-esteem, and autonomy as well as improving students' language skills, content learning, and cognitive abilities.

Benefits of project work in language learning

It has been suggested that incorporating project work in second and foreign language settings brings students a lot of benefits. Researchers have defined the features and benefits of project-based learning which range from development of language skills up to enhancing students' personal growth.

First, a project integrates the four language skills, speaking, listening, reading, and writing and requires the use a variety of activities. While working on a project students have opportunities to "recycle known language and skills in a relatively natural context" (Haines, 1989, p.1). Similarly, Levine (2004) argues that mostly recognized benefit of implementing project in the foreign language classroom is improved language skills. Because students engage in purposeful communication to complete authentic activities, they have the opportunity to use language in a relatively natural context (Haines, 1989) and participate in meaningful activities which require practical language use. Authentic activities refer to activities designed to develop students' thinking and problem solving skills which are important in out-of-schools contexts, and to foster learning to learn (Brown et al, 1993). While activities are anything students are

expected to do, beyond getting input through reading or listening, in order to learn, practice, apply, evaluate, or in any other way respond to curricular content (Brophy and Alleman, 1991), practical activities are tasks that integrate across the curriculum. In addition, project-based learning provides opportunities for the natural integration of language skills (Stoller, 2006).

Second, students develop metacognitive skills because a project is an activity that “involves a variety of individual or cooperative tasks such as developing a research plan and questions, and implementing the plan through empirical or document research that includes collecting, analyzing, and reporting data orally and/or in writing” (Beckett, 2002, p.54).

Third, as students work together to achieve their end product they develop confidence and independence (Fried-Booth, 2002). Project work incorporates collaborative team work, problem solving, negotiating and other interpersonal skills, which have been identified by learners as important for living successful lives (Stein, 1995).

The Teacher's Roles in Project Work

The teacher plays a vital role throughout the project work. Harmer (1991) distinguishes six general roles of a teacher: controller, assessor, organizer, prompter, participant and teacher as a resource. The teacher has to change his roles due to many factors that arise in the class.

Teacher as an assessor should use especially "gentle correction" (Harmer 1991, p.201) during projects. He corrects mistakes that occur in students' performance but does not insist on an immediate repetition of a correct version in order not to destroy the atmosphere of the creative work. Even more important than gentle correction is providing the students with feedback, i.e. how well they performed the task.

During the project work students organize a lot of their own learning. However, it is still the teacher who should provide good organization

of the project and be sure that students know what to do. Otherwise a lot of time and energy is wasted. It may happen, especially during long-term projects that students will get stuck at a certain point not knowing what to do next. In such case, the teacher acts as a prompter who makes suggestions how to proceed.

Project work allows the teacher to be a participant as well. He can participate in various sub-tasks, e.g. role-plays or other communicative tasks, but he is also a natural participant of the whole project. The final role which comes into question during project work is "the teacher as a walking resource centre" (Harmer 1991, p.204). When an intensive group work takes place, he can walk around and provide linguistic or other kind of help.

Types of Project Work

Project work is diversely configured by different language researchers. According to the nature and sequencing of project-related activities, there are three types of projects: structured projects, unstructured projects, and semi-structured projects (Stoller, 1997). Structured projects are determined, specified, and organized by the teacher in terms of topic, materials, methodology and presentation. Unstructured projects are defined largely by students themselves. Semi-structured projects are defined and organized in part by the teacher and in part by the student.

Legutke and Thomas (1991) proposed five types based on data collection techniques and sources of information: research projects, text projects, correspondence projects, survey projects, and encounter projects. Research projects necessitate the gathering of information through library research. Text projects involve encounters with "texts" (e.g., literature, reports, news media, video and audio material, or computer-based information) rather than people. Correspondence projects require communication with individuals (or businesses, governmental agencies, schools, or chambers of commerce) to solicit information by means of letters, faxes, phone calls, or electronic mail. Survey projects entail creating

a survey instrument and then collecting and analyzing data from "informants." Encounter projects result in face-to-face contact with guest speakers or individuals outside the classroom.

In terms of how final products are presented, there are also three types of projects production projects, performance projects, and organizational projects (Haines, 1989). Production projects involve the creation of bulletin board displays, videos, radio programs, poster sessions, written reports, photo essays, letters, handbooks, brochures, banquet menus, travel itineraries, and so forth. Performance projects can take shape as staged debates, oral presentations, theatrical performances, food fairs, or fashion shows. Organizational projects entail the planning and formation of a club, conversation table, or conversation partner program.

Project Work in Previous Studies

For the last twenty years, project work and its integration into foreign language learning have been the interest of language researchers in different studies. Diaz Ramires (2014) conducted a research study on developing learner autonomy through project work in an English for Specific Purposes class. The study was carried out at a Columbian regional and public university with a class of environmental engineering undergraduates. The group consisted of 16 students at level A1. The students decided to create a magazine according to the preferences about environmental issues. The study was conducted over an academic semester taking into account ten stages in project work proposed by Alan and Stoller (2005). The instruments for data collection were field notes, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, students' artifacts, and video recordings. The results of this study showed that the students' language skills could be developed by means of project work. The students displayed improvement in terms of learner autonomy for ESP. The students also demonstrated their commitment to fulfill the goal.

In an attempt to develop intercultural communication skills for first year students in a university in Turkey, Tabaku and Ecirli (2014)

implemented a project titled “A virtual tour through Albania and Turkey. 30 students participated in the study. They were Albanian and Turkish students majoring for law, communicative sciences and religions. The findings showed that the project helped students improve the intercultural communication and language skills and the participants also strengthened their friendship.

In Vietnam, Pham (2014) carried out an action research to developing English speaking skills for tenth-grade students at An Lao High School by using project. The instruments employed for data collection and analysis of the study included two tests and two questionnaires for the students, an interview with two teachers and the teacher’s journals. Research findings showed that the students had positive attitudes towards the use of projects in their English lessons. It was also revealed that project work was beneficial to help students improve their performance in speaking lessons.

Stages of a Project Work

According to Legutke and Thomas (1991) project work can be seen as the most applicable in various subjects. They say that preparation and the follow-ups are reflected in these six stages of a project’s development: opening, topic presentation, research and data collection, preparing data presentation, presentation, and evaluation.

Alan and Stoller (2005) states that one way to maximize the potential benefits of project work is to follow the ten-step process. The ten steps are summarized below:

- Step 1: Students and instructor agree on a theme for the project
- Step 2: Students and instructor determine the final outcome of the project
- Step 3: Students and instructor structure the project
- Step 4: Instructor prepares students for the demands of information gathering

- Step 5: Students gather information
- Step 6: Instructor prepares students to compile and analyze data
- Step 7: Students compile and analyze information
- Step 8: Instructor prepares students for the language demands of the final activity
- Step 9: Students present the final product
- Step 10: Students evaluate the project

PROJECT WORK: A CASE STUDY

Context of the study

The study was conducted in a provincial university in the north of Vietnam which is a newly-established provincial university in the North of Vietnam, with only 10 years of operation. Previously a college offering three-year programs, it was upgraded to full university status in 2007. ESP (English for Specific Purposes) course is compulsory for non-English majored third years students. The course is at the last English course after the students have completed General English courses (General English 1, 2 and 3).

English for students of Chemistry is an ESP course for third year students majored in chemistry. The course is timetabled for 45 periods within 15 weeks. The main textbook used for the course is 'English for students of chemistry' (Publication of Hanoi National University of Education) containing eight units. The content of the textbook covers basic topics of general chemistry such as matter, periodic table, chemical bonding, chemical reactions, metals and non-metals, carbon and silicon, ionic and covalent compounds.

The testing and assessment of the course entailed allocation of three types of marks. The first mark was based on the percentage of student attendance which account for 10 percent of the total final score. The second mark is the mark of the midterm test which is

equal to one period in the syllabus. This mid-term mark offers flexible options for the students and the teacher. The marking and assessment can be based on a written test, face-to-face interviews or an oral presentation. The third was the mark of the end-of-term standard written test.

A semi-structured project, titled “Atoms Talk”, was designed with the aim to improve students’ language skills and their group working skills. The project was implemented within 4 weeks which started in the 8th week and finishes in the 12th week of the syllabus. Under the theme “Atoms Talk” there were different topics in accordance with the contents in the syllabus of the ESP course covering basic aspects of chemistry.

Participants

The participants in the study were a whole class of twenty six non-English major third year students learning the ESP course – English for students of chemistry. They were divided in four groups. Three groups consisted of 7 students each. The remaining group had 5 students.

Research question

The question that guides our study is ‘How does Project Work benefits ESP students in developing students’ language skills and group work skills?’

Methodology

A case study approach was taken in this study. It is a qualitative approach where observation and interviews were the instruments used to collect the data. The students were asked the following questions: (1) What have you learnt from doing this project? (2) What have you benefited from this project in terms of learning English for students of chemistry?

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT WORK

The project was designed after the 10-step model proposed by Allan and Stoller (2005).

After discussion, the students and instructor came to an agreement on a project theme “Atoms Talk” different topics for the groups to choose: matter, structure of matter, periodic table, chemical bonding, and chemical reactions. 4 groups determined PowerPoint presentations as the final outcome of their projects. One group decided to do bulletin board display.

After that the students and instructor work out project details that guide students from the opening activity to the completion of the project. The students consider their roles, and collaborative work groups. They worked together and assigned the roles and responsibilities. They reached a consensus on the timing for gathering, sharing, and compiling information, and then presenting their final project.

The final PowerPoint presentations of the four groups lasted within a period (45 minutes). Each group’s performance was given in the students’ classroom in front of the instructor and other groups. The evaluation finalized the project. The evaluation was expressed positively. The students looked back at the activities they followed. They also made comments on their efforts as well as got constructive feedbacks from the other group members and classmates in doing the project.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After the final stage of the project, interviews conducted with the students showed that most of the aims set were achieved. During the process of the project twenty six students showed active participation. It is worth mentioning that while working for preparing their presentation the students worked closely together, thus establishing good relations with each other. Everyone was willing to

contribute and motivated to do well. The teacher, the author of this paper, played the role of the guide and facilitator encouraging students to work together, to communicate in English and present their work step by step in the class. In this way it was made possible that every student could have the possibility to share what he had done with the class, to speak and get the necessary feedback from his classmates.

In the interviews conducted after the finale presentation, majority of the students pointed out that it was an unforgettable experience. One student said “It is my first time ever I’ve spoken English in front of many people. I made mistakes. But I like it. I’d like to do it more.” Another student stated that “I got to know my classmates in my group better because I worked closely with them to complete the assigned responsibilities. It seems to me I have been with them for a long time.” He added that he “felt himself a part of the group”. A female student confessed that: “I am a shy student. I had to practice speaking in front of my mirror at home a lot. I think I am more confident now and my pronunciation get better now.”

It is obvious that besides developing the language skills the students had created or strengthened their friendship, as they spent a lot of time together either in the university library or in the reading rooms to prepare the material for the final presentation.

In the answer to the question “What you have learnt from doing this project?” The participants said they had learned how to plan and follow the stages of a project work and how to cooperate with other partners while working on the project. This is considered valuable not only for the language class but for other subjects as well. Learning new skills of collecting and analyzing data will help them to save time and do other projects better. In a detailed response, one participant reported that she had learn two important things: First, she learned how to create power point slides in effective ways. Second, she gained pedagogical skills which would be useful for her future teaching career.

There were different responses to the question “What have you benefited from the project in terms of learning English for students of chemistry?” Most of them said that they had learned how to search material in English and how to write meaningful paragraphs. While searching material they had done a lot of reading and listening. They had been very motivated because it was not simply reading a text in the foreign language for the sake of learning some new words or grammar, but reading with a goal to find and learn necessary material needed for a final presentation. Some students reported that this project helped them secure the vocabulary accumulated during the process of the project. One said “All the words and the content of their presentation are still in my mind. I never forget it.” The findings seem to support the points stated in the literature review that project work provides language learners opportunities to develop their language skills and the group work skills.

As far as motivation is concerned, our observation is in line with the view expressed in many studies that project work results in enjoyment and sense of self-esteem (Levine, 2004). Most students showed pleasure during the project. In the final presentation they exhibited their confidence and kept smiling. This project helped the students not only to develop language skills, but also to address issues of self-esteem. Thus, one student said that he had never been on stage before and had never spoken to a big audience. He felt proud that he had done it. Some students emphasized the fact that they had been able to speak in English in front of other students about issues of interest for all. Two of the students who had worked well in preparing the presentations withdrew from the final presentation, because they could not speak before an audience, they were too shy to do it.

It is also worth discussing some noticeable difficulties encountered. First, students were not familiar with group work. At the beginning, although clear roles for group members were assigned, some students dominated the work, while others did little work. Also, some students did not use the target language for communication, but their mother

tongue. Finally, some students had difficulty accepting the new role of the teacher as a facilitator and coordinator, and not as a source of knowledge and provider of solutions. At the start of project work some students felt uncomfortable with being given choices (e.g. topic selection, team formation), and were thus apprehensive about project work. However, most of them soon realized that the teacher was there to support and assist them, albeit in a different way.

CONCLUSION

It is necessary to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The number of participants was small, and findings presented were from just one case study. Therefore, the generalization of the research findings should be taken care.

From the literature review to the case study, it is shown that project work is an applicable and effective approach in language teaching as it leads to enhancing language skills, and group work skills. It can be very useful in teaching ESP courses for students at the tertiary level as is the case of a 26 non-English major third year students at the university in the north of Vietnam.

Students' participation in the project work helped them to develop not only their language skills but also group work skills. It prepares them for life, as they learn how to set a goal, to plan and how to reach it, gather information, analyze data and present the final product.

The implementation of project work presented in this study leads to a clear pedagogical implication that knowledge of modern teaching methods, and willingness to experiment with non-traditional teaching practices are powerful tools for the achievement of teaching aims, such as increased motivation, interest, and performance in the hands of teachers in the context of English as a foreign language instruction.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

Integrating cultures in English language teaching is urgent and necessary in order for ESL/EFL learners to grasp and enhance their intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in the globalized community where English has been used as a means of communication among people of multicultural backgrounds in the 21st century. ESL/EFL educators and teachers in different contexts, however, seem to neglect such an important issue in their English language teaching practice. Similarly, in Vietnam, ICC is not given significant attention in English language education by EFL teachers or learners. Therefore, this paper examines the roles of ICC in English language education with the aim of raising EFL teachers' and learners' awareness to the importance of intercultural communication, thus helping EFL learners to become competent in multicultural contexts.

Keywords: *ICC; intercultural competence; English language education; globalization; Vietnam.*

INTRODUCTION

In the globalized context, the English language has been used as an international language for communication among people from different multilingual and multicultural backgrounds. Therefore, it is vital that learners master not only linguistics competence but also intercultural competence. English language learners, therefore, need to pay significant attention to grasp and enhance the intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Accordingly, Tran and Seepho (2015) assert that the ICC is one of the most vital skills for people in the 21st century to survive in the multicultural communication context. In order to develop this skill and achieve the goal of becoming effective intercultural speakers and communicators, learners are required to deeply engage in the intercultural community. In fact, ICC is the core component of English language instruction in preparing learners for intercultural communication (Byram, 1997). In the Vietnamese context, ICC plays a very important role in the process of teaching and learning English, especially when Vietnamese citizens have more opportunities to be involved in international interactions (Trinh, 2014).

Although the importance of ICC has been confirmed by various researchers and numerous studies conducted (e.g., Tran & Seepho, 2014, 2015; Trinh, 2014), in the Vietnamese context, the role of culture and intercultural communication in English language has not always been well acknowledged and the concept of ICC is still unfamiliar to most researchers and educators (Tran & Seepho, 2016).

Since ICC is a crucial skill in the 21st century for learners to achieve effective and appropriate communication in the globalized community, this paper will discuss ICC importance, its elements and evaluation methods. Finally, the implications of incorporating ICC in English language teaching will be examined with the aim of helping teachers develop their students' ICC competence.

WHAT IS INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE?

Before discussing the definitions of ICC, it is necessary to distinguish between Intercultural Competence (IC) and ICC. According to Byram (1997), the IC of foreign language learners refers to their ability to interact in their own language with people from another country and culture. To achieve this, they must draw upon their knowledge of intercultural communication, attitudes regarding interest in otherness and skills in interpreting, relating, and discovering. In addition, IC consists of five categories of savoir, namely *savoir être*, *savoirs*, *savoir comprendre*, *savoir apprendre/faire*, and *savoir s'engager* and these categories stand for four aspects of IC: attitudes, knowledge, skills, and awareness (Nguyen, 2014). By comparison, ICC is the ability to interact with other people but the interaction takes place between people from different cultures and countries in a foreign language, the knowledge of the participants of another culture is linked to their language competence through their ability to use language appropriately and their awareness of the specific meaning, values and connotations of the language (Aguilar, 2010). Moreover, ICC includes linguistics competence, sociolinguistics competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence (Byram, 1997).

Recently, the concepts underpinning ICC has been expanding in the field of foreign language teaching and learning (Aguilar, 2010), and this term is used interchangeably with 'intercultural willingness to communicate', 'cross-cultural competence', 'intercultural effectiveness', and 'intercultural sensitivity' (Metz, 2009). Similarly, Sinicrope, Norris and Wantanbe (2012) suggest a list of ICC terminology, including cross-cultural adaption, intercultural sensitivity, multicultural competence, transcultural competence, global competence, cross-cultural effectiveness, international competence, global literacy, cultural competence, and cross-cultural adjustment. However, many scholars prefer to use the term ICC due to its neutrality and because it is not bounded by any specific cultural

attributes (Kim & Ruben, 1992, as cited in Ahnagari & Zamanian, 2014).

In fact, Baxter introduced the idea of ICC as early as 1983 and it is Byram who, since the mid-1990s, has extensively developed the concept of ICC and its application. Since then, ICC has been of great interest to many researchers and scholars. In Tran and Seepho (2016) definition, ICC is the ability that enables one to effectively and appropriately interact in a language other than one's native language with others from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

In the Vietnamese context, ICC plays an important role in the process of teaching and learning English, particularly, when Vietnam became involved in international interactions with the establishment of its open-door policy in 1986, and when it became an official member of WTO in 2007 and of the ASEAN Economic community in late 2015 (Trinh, 2014). Consequently, new teaching and learning goals need to be re-established to focus on promoting both linguistic and intercultural competence (Nguyen, 2014; Trinh, 2014).

THE ELEMENTS OF ICC

According to Galante (2015, p.33), "Byram's model of ICC is one of the most influential and widely cited models that guide language teachers interculturality in the classroom". In 1997, Byram's ICC comprised three components knowledge, attitudes and skills, which expanded to include the following five elements:

- *Attitudes*: curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own.
- *Knowledge*: of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.
- *Skills of interpreting and relating*: ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to

documents from one's own.

- *Skills of discovery and interaction*: ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.
- *Critical cultural awareness/ political education*: an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit perspectives, practices, and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

It is therefore clear that the development of ICC should be a critical combination of the above elements, since positive attitudes can help a person explore his/her own culture and surrounding cultures. Consequently, one's knowledge, skills of interpreting, discovering, analyzing, and critical awareness will allow him or her to cope with multicultural differences to effectively and appropriately interact with others in a globalized community. On the whole, it is desirable that the development of ICC involves and combines five components that were outlined above.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ICC IN EFL SETTING AND ITS' ROLES IN VIETNAM EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Tran and Duong (2015) assert that ICC is one of the must-to-have skills to ensure a harmonious community. Particularly, in the EFL setting, ICC can enhance teachers' and learners' knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills so that their intercultural awareness is significantly increased to avoid communication breakdown, cultural shock and conflict.

Although teachers have some constraints, namely time limitation, ineffective methods, and intercultural knowledge limitations (Tran & Seepho, 2015) with a better understanding of ICC and its useful applications. They will find compatible ways to integrate it in their practical teachings. Consequently, once teachers' attitudes and behaviors are positively increased, and they become more

knowledgeable and competent regarding ICC, they will be more willingly to incorporate cultural practices in their teachings (Atay, Kurt, Camlibel, Ersin, & Kaslioglu, 2009).

In regard to learners, acquiring ICC, in addition to knowledge of linguistic, they will be acquiring knowledge in a range of intercultural aspects regarding history, literature, arts, products, practices, perspectives and so forth (Yu & Chang, 2009). Moreover, as ICC promoted greater intercultural awareness and skills so that they are enable to critically compare beliefs, attitudes and behaviors that occur in their own culture and in other culture (Holguin, 2013). As a result, they can convey information effectively and appropriately in the various cultural backgrounds (Gatanle, 2015). In short, ICC plays a crucial role in fostering both teachers' and learners' knowledge, attitudes, knowledge, skills and awareness so that they can encounter with cultural difference and conflict (Alptekin, 2002) and gain the effective and appropriate intercultural communication.

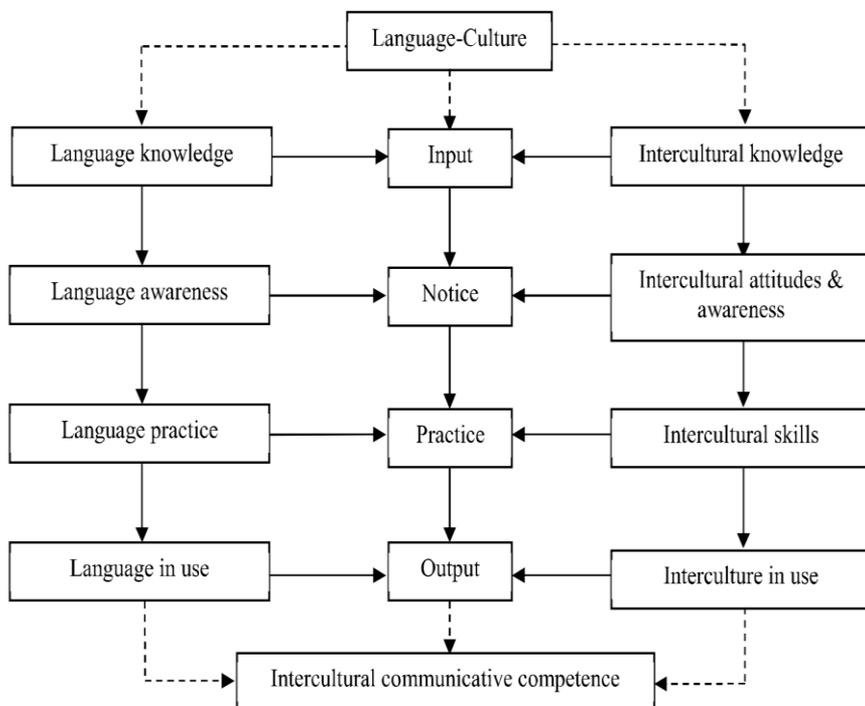
Recently, the Vietnamese government and ministry of education and training have made attempts to develop English education widely by establishing the project entitled "Teaching and learning of foreign languages in the national education system, 2008-2020" (Decision No. 1400/QĐ-TTg, 2008), which aims to enhance and enable learners to use English as an effective means of communication in the workplace. Especially, once Vietnam became an official member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2007 and the ASEAN economic community (AEC) in 2015, English language education became of foremost importance. From that perspective, English language education has to emphasise the teaching of learners to communicate effectively and appropriately with non-native English language speakers rather than with English native-speakers (Ton & Pham, 2010). Moreover, in various cultures where English is used, ELT should be introduced in order for learners to pursue ICC (Le & Ly, 2014). In other words, various cultures should be integrated in English language teaching and learning to promote the learners' ICC,

thus helping them to be effective communicators in the multicultural and global community.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ENHANCEMENT OF ICC

As discussed above, ICC is vital in English language and learning, thus ELT teachers and educators should focus and apply a wide range of methods to enhance the learners' ICC. There are key issues to be addressed for the successful incorporation of culture and to develop learners' ICC. Some of these key issues are: the application of the intercultural language teaching (ICLT) model in the ICC training process (Tran & Seepho, 2015), the use of various activities to integrate culture in EFL (Tran & Seepho, 2015), materials and content, ICC assessments, and most importantly the effective training of English language teachers (Tran & Duong, 2015).

❖ The application of ICLT model for ICC training process



ICLT model for ICC training process (Tran & Seepho, 2015, p.83)

Based on the above model, there are four stages, namely, input, notice, practice, and output. In English language teaching and learning, the input should include both language and culture knowledge. In the notice stage, as with language awareness, learners' awareness and attitudes towards intercultural should be improved further. In term of practice, the learner should practice both language skills and intercultural skills equally. Finally, in the output stage, the learners have opportunities to apply both linguistics skills and intercultural skills in their authentic context. Based on this practical model, learners are supposed to develop their ICC skills.

❖ The use of various activities to integrate culture in EFL

Tran and Seepho (2015) recommended a number of activities to integrate culture in EFL teaching so that the learners can booster their levels of ICC. The activities are cultural aside, culture capsules, culture cluster, slice-of-life technique, authentic environment creation, culture self-awareness technique, quiz or multiple choice, role-play, inviting foreigners, and discussion.

❖ Materials and content

The materials and their content play an important role for learners to learn and absorb the cultural components. The materials used should cover the content of learners' culture, the target culture, and international culture (Alptekin, 2002; Cetinavci, 2012). According to Tran and Duong (2015, p.20), nevertheless, "the commercial English textbooks used in ASEAN countries...are found to cover mainly linguistic competence" and there is little cultural content in such textbooks. English language has been used as an official language in ASEAN countries since 2007 and the English language education in most ASEAN countries has been changed from teaching EFL into ELF. Therefore, attention must be paid to teaching and studying cultures of ASEAN (Kirkpatrick, 2011) to assist learners to function effectively in the in multilingual and intercultural contexts (Crocco &

Bunwirat, 2014). Moreover, both visible and invisible cultural content should be targeted and integrated in textbooks (Tran & Duong, 2015).

❖ ICC assessments

In view of the need to develop ICC so that English language students are successful in intercultural communication (Ahnagari & Zamanian, 2014), it seems logical that specific assessments will be required to measure learners' ICC competence. To this aim, a variety of tools are in use, such as portfolio, formative assessment, and surveys. From Aguilar (2010) perspective, a portfolio is the most appropriate method to assess ICC, since it provides learners with practicum and continuum to build and self-evaluate their own ICC throughout the learning period. By contrast, Lussier et al. (2007) argue that the assessment of ICC should be more formative than summative because of its aims at developing ICC and keeping the learning process active. Furthermore, questionnaire survey provides a simple and easy tool for examining learners' ICC competence (Lussier et al., 2007). Therefore, and in view of time constraints, a questionnaire survey will be applied for the evaluation the students' ICC.

However, the careful and appropriate design of the questionnaire items has to be considered in order to truthfully obtain the necessary information. In fact, ICC acquisition is seen as a lifelong learning activity and never a completed process (Aguilar, 2010). The evaluation circularly continues after a period of time to obtain an accurate assessment and thus considerations and adjustments can be made to enhance the skill levels of intercultural learners, speakers, and mediators.

❖ English language teachers training

The role of teachers in fostering ICC development for learners is also of great importance, since they act as scaffolds to guide learners through the process of acquiring competencies in attitudes,

knowledge, and skills in relation to intercultural competence when utilizing a foreign language (Moeller & Nugent, n.d). Tran and Seepho (2015) point out that teacher's lack of knowledge and methods prevents them from integrating culture in their teaching practice and poses a major limitation in of learners' acquisition of ICC. Therefore, training programs, workshops, and seminars on intercultural language education aimed at teachers is crucial to make them more aware of the importance of ICC and more competent in utilizing appropriate methods to teach intercultural language classes (Tran & Duong, 2015).

CONCLUSION

The review of the literature to date conclusively points to a need to have ICC integrated in English language (Galante, 2015), incorporating intercultural knowledge is vital to assist learners efficiently gain proficiency in ICC for effective and appropriate intercultural communication. The role of teachers in this process is also vital and more extensive training in incorporating ICC in their teaching practices needs to be encouraged. This paper, aims to add to the body of knowledge regarding the importance of integrating intercultural elements and ICC in English language teaching and learning in Vietnam.

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EXPLORING THE MOTIVATIONS OF NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS IN ENGLISH LEARNING AT HO CHI MINH OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

In many tertiary institutions in Vietnam, English language becomes a compulsory subject for non-English major students. Although the favorable social context enhances the teaching and learning of the subject, it is not feasible or effective process if the English learning motivations of students are not exposed. Hence, in this paper, the authors especially focus on exploring the motivations of non-English Major students in English learning at Ho Chi Minh City Open University (HOU). The study is carried out through getting responses of 100 non-English major freshmen. The study aims to understand learners' motivations in an accurate way, not only to propose an appropriate training program but also improve English teaching methods at HOU. The findings show that English learning motivations of students seem to be moderately different in various stages as the initial motivations of selecting English as a major foreign language in higher education, the accumulated motivations after the long run of participating in one semester training course at HOU, and the practical motivations in future English learning as well.

Keywords: *pre-motivations; accumulated motivations; practical motivations*

INTRODUCTION

To get along well with the trend of globalization, parts of the world have launched a great number of innovative policies including the innovation in English training which is put in the first priority in education system due to its importance in some terms of international communication, learning and working. However, to access English language skills and knowledge in an effective way as well as to meet the requirements of society, a series of diverse studies on English teaching and learning methods have been carried out and learning motivation, one of the important factors which contributes a vital role in the process of learning and teaching is deeply taken into consideration because of its special characteristics as Tuncel, Sadikoglu, and Memmedova, (2016) defined motivation as a physical, psychological or social need which motivates the individuals to reach or achieve their goals and fulfill their needs and, finally, feel satisfied as a result of achieving their aims it is a phenomenon regarded as one of the most important requirements for success and satisfaction. (p. 244)

This perspective is positively admitted by a number of educators and professionals. It is also widely accepted and popularly applied in educational systems all over the world. In this paper, the researchers focused on finding the students' real motivations before, during and after taking the course of General English in Ho Chi Minh City Open University (HOU). The paper has attempted to seek the answers for these questions:

- 1. What are the initial motivations that the learners decide to select English as a foreign language to study at the University?*
- 2. What are the accumulated motivations that the learners obtain within one semester of training course?*
- 3. What are the potential and practical motivations that help learners to pursue the future English learning?*

The paper will come to the conclusion with discussion on implications of the findings within the context of learning General English of 100 freshmen at HOU in the academic year 2016-1017.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The permanent success in learning process through the eyes of numerous educators within decades is motivation. The motivation is differently defined and explained in various environments. As Mohammad-Davoudi and Parpouchi (2016) strongly believed that motivation was like a torch lighting the learning activities. This concept, from the expression of Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, and Ryan (1991), was considered as the intrinsic motivation including confidence, capacity and attribution of students. Similarly, Ryan and Deci (2000) also revealed their revising of the classic definitions of motivation in two aspects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. The intrinsic motivation was understood as the natural tendency in human behaviors and reaction in the process of learning and accessing knowledge. The extrinsic motivation was evaluated as the relative autonomy and thus can either reflect external control or true self-regulation. On the other hand, a series of studies greatly contributed in enriching the learning motivation in a distinguished fashion. Evidence shows that cultural background is one of the factors that have great influences on learning and teaching activities, especially in cooperative learning between teachers and learners (Nguyen, 2008). In the particular situation of English language learning in Vietnam, a large number of researchers also exposed their perspectives in diverse aspects. For example, Phan (2009) strongly supported the changes in politics, economy, social cultural conditions and attitudes of Vietnamese learners, which have definitely affected foreign language appreciation and motivation. Furthermore, Zahidi and Binti (2012) shared findings of research that personal and environmental factors deeply influenced learners in the self-regulated strategies to complete the language tasks and cope with the challenges or troubles in English second language learning and using. Besides, Phan and Locke (2015) emphasized the factors of

Vietnam cultures and contexts directly influencing the methods that the teachers selected, weighed and interpreted the efficacy information. This implied that the cultural and contextual factors indirectly affected students through the performances of teachers in teaching process. Additionally, a plenty of reasons as English dominant role and status helped to motivate students interested in English learning in wide range of areas. Actually, numerous educators, who have taught and researched in the South East Asian region within a decade, had significant contributions to their research when engaging their work with the emergence of English as a global language and the result showed that the learning interest and concerns reported are various in the particular focus, and in the regional scope and educational level (O'Neill & Chapman, 2015). Plus, English learning motivation are deriving from a variety of common reasons as family conditions and preference, society setting and demands, as well as human beings' mutual communication and affects. These are obviously illustrated through the study of Pham (2016) referring to L2 motivation of students who are impacted by family factors and sociocultural elements which reveals that English was not regarded as the main study at high school, the chief maintaining were built up on degrees of L2 motivation attributable to parental encouragement and financial investments, peers affects and perceived values of language learning for personal and interpersonal commitments. In university environment, a series of English learning motivations are discussed as general motivation sources, classroom motivation sources and motivation problems. In the research of Tuncel et al., (2016), the numbers of students studying at different departments and participating in a foreign language course had been investigated, and the respondents claimed that learners lack motivation but have an achievement level over the minimum pass level. This explained the result of having contradiction between negative motivation and positive achievement (Tuncel et al., 2016). In the environment of language training for non –English major students at HOU, plentiful motivations were raised to freshmen with the purpose of understanding the essential, practical, and realistic

motivations of learners in order to have necessary adjustment and improvement in General English learning in particular, and to satisfy the vision and mission of HOU in general.

Objectives

This research was aimed, in one aspect, to find out the motivations of non-English major students in the process of accessing knowledge in university environment, especially to focus on various learning motivations in particular periods like the initial motivations in selecting English as a major foreign language in higher educational environment, the accumulated motivations after the process of learning within a semester at HOU, and the real and necessary motivations for future English learning. Also, the research was set to understand all attitudes, perceptions and expectations of learners in English learning process in order to evaluate the qualified training criteria in the foreign language training system at HOU and from that, some indispensable proposals for positive adjustments, improvements and innovations in General English training courses are taken into account.

Theoretical Framework

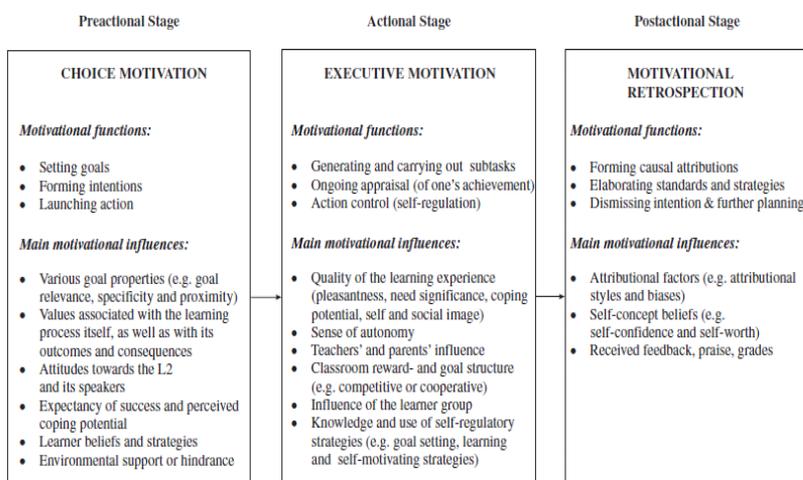
A person who has an achievement in their work or studying will be assessed as they have already had good choice, or they have put all their effort to their work, or they have always kept their determinations to overcome all the hardness during their working procedure. In other words, they have motivations to fulfill their work. However, Covington (1998) claimed that motivational descriptions are possible to conduct in terms of the outcomes or the effects, but we cannot define it thoroughly.

Dornyei (2001) had a review to explain why human beings behave, think and do in the light of psychological view. During twentieth century, motivations are conceptualized as the determination of the human *instincts* and *drives* (Freud's), or the explanation was based on the conditioning theories (developed from behaviourism) which

focused on the form of habits via the process of practice and drilling, positive reinforcement or punishment. In 1960s, with the contrary view to the behaviourists, Maslow et al., (1970) proposed that it was the desire to attain the personal growth and to develop the capacities and talents that motivate people. Another approach, cognitive approach, explains how mental processes are transformed into actions. People's actions are the results of their conscious attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, and interpretation of events. As to make the comment for the motives that make a person decide their action, Dornyei (2001, p. 9) described the motivation as “an umbrella-term involving a wide range of different factors”, and assumes that the psychologists have always tried to “reduce” the variables that would explain one action. They tried to “central motives that are simply more important than the others”. As the result, a lot of approaches with their convincing arguments have appeared such as expectancy value theories, achievement motivation theory, self-efficacy theory, attribution theory, self-worth theory, goal setting theory, goal orientation theory, social motivation theory, and so on. Dornyei (2001) addressed the problem with these approaches: “ignore each other” and “do not even try to achieve a synthesis”.

In 1990s, with the tendency of closing the gap between the motivational theories in educational psychology and in educational language, new L2 motivation constructs were presented with the synthesis of the old and new elements. Dornyei (1994) introduced the framework of L2 motivation in which the focus is on the motivation in the classroom. In this framework, the motivation is conceptualized in three levels: The Language Level which relates to aspects of the L2; the Learner Level which relates to the learners' characteristics that they reflect in their learning process; and the Learning Situation Level which relates to the various aspects of L2 learning and teaching in the classroom. Another framework from Williams and Burden (1997) which was based on the educational psychology focused on the internal factors and external factors in forming the motivations in L2 learning. Dornyei (2001) also introduced a process

model of language learning motivation which was based on *process – oriented approach*. He believed that the learners’ motivation changes over time. During the three phases of learning period (a certain time of learning a course, a subject...) their learning motivation is not stable. For example, the learners’ choice motivation (motivation that make them choose the subject to learn) in the first phase will disappear or will be added with other motives in the second phase in which they are exposed to the teaching and learning the language. Then in the third phase, the learners will evaluate how their learning went, and decide to pursue the learning in the near future or in the future or stop learning.



Dörnyei

METHODOLOGY

This research is the descriptive quantitative one. Research variables were the initial motivations of learners in making decision of studying English language in priority, the executive motivations within the process of teaching and learning the language in one semester, the potential motivations for future updating English skills, and the attitudes, perspectives and expectations of learners in HOU Foreign Language training system as well. These essential motivations and typical standards are evaluated and estimated through the questionnaire and responses. The learner expectation,

based on learners' contributive spirit, is checked to make valuable future changes with the aim of enriching learning program and giving more benefits to learners in this foreign language training system. Samples of this research were collected from 100 respondents, the freshmen in non-English major of HOU in the academic year 2016. The questionnaire (delivered randomly at the end of the course, December 15th) was used to gather information. The collected data were applied in the research and the data analysis was based on descriptive analyses (using SPSS 23).

Questionnaire description

Phase 1: Preactional Stage

This is called the Choice motivation in which students have already considered their goals to learn the subject. Then they grew up the intentions to join the course provided and give their last decision to enroll. There are motives that influence during their process of giving decision. Some are from the internal interest such as the awareness of language's assist in their study and daily life from the present time to their future career and life-long learning (question 2, 3). Another is for the active understanding and participation in activities inside and outside the nation (question 6, 7), the desire to explore other cultures in the world or the preference of American or British cultures (question 5, 8), and the confidence on their achievement (question 9). The questions that focus on the external factors that affect their decisions are the compulsory subject, and subject learned at lower education (question 1, 12), the encouragement from parents (question 4), the desire to prove that they are enjoying good education and that they are in a high class of the society (question 10, 11).

Phase 2: Actional Stage

In this stage, the students are exposed to the teaching and learning process. The factors are asked if they affect the students' interest: the atmosphere, the challenge, novel and interesting activities, the role of the activities in the students' improvement in learning the language (questions 2,3,4,5,6). Other questions focus on the role of the teacher in the process: their instruction in students' learning strategies

(question 9,10,11,12), their effective feedback (questions 7,8), their respect for the students' self – reflection (question 13). Other motives are mentioned: the desire to win the scholarship, the awareness of learning the subject at school, or the confidence in passing the final exam (question 1, 14, 20). The class size, class hour, class rules, and the teaching of the foreigner teachers (question 16,17,18,19) also the reasons that contribute the students' participation.

Phase 3: Postactional

This is the stage that learners are asked to confirm learners' belief, feedback, self -confidence, self –worth, and favoritism. Evidently, most learners are questioned to give responses whether they have strong determination in maintaining some motivations formed before starting course at HOU such as learning objectives for future job and life, family encouragements, school mandatory subject, and achievable knowledge etc. or not (question 1). Continuously, learners have to answer the question that they would like to maintain the motivations attained through one training semester including both external and internal motivations as the class atmosphere, the challenging materials, interesting activities, the learners' preference in winning the scholarship, passing the final exam and so on (question 2). Next, another question are asked to get learners' feedback and attitude in going on studying General English (GE) at HOU (questions 3) because the aim of the research is finding out the learners' motivations and then having plan and strategies to maintain and develop GE training system at HOU. However, to exactly explore and get the affirmation of the potential and effective motivations of learners for GE future learning and teaching, question 4 is asked due to numerous learners' motivations included in the study. Besides, question 5 - asking about learners' suggestions is asked to listen to learners' wish and expectations or learners' extra motivations. This helps not only to have better innovations in GE training system in the future but also to ensure the objective characteristic of research (because the motivations in phases 1 &2 are mostly based on the basic and popular motivation background).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Phase 1: Preactional Phase

Table 1: Preactional Phase (Motivation Choice)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Statistic</i>
Compulsory subject	100	1	6	4.09	.169	1.694
<i>The need for present life</i>	100	2	6	5.59	.070	.698
The need for future life	100	2	6	5.67	.068	.682
<i>Parents' encouragement</i>	100	1	6	4.03	.173	1.732
Other cultures discovery	100	2	6	5.05	.101	1.009
<i>Active participation in activities inside & outside the nation</i>	100	2	6	5.16	.109	1.089
Active understanding of the activities inside & outside the nation	100	1	6	5.00	.115	1.146
<i>English and American cultures preference</i>	100	1	6	3.69	.134	1.339
Confidence of accomplishment	100	1	6	4.30	.128	1.283
<i>Evidence of enjoying good education</i>	100	1	6	3.91	.161	1.615

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Statistic</i>
Evidence of being in high social class	100	1	6	3.80	.162	1.621
<i>Subject learned at lower education</i>	100	1	6	3.75	.168	1.678
Valid N (listwise)	100					

At the moment of giving the choice to follow this subject at university, students have a high conscience on the important need of this language competence in their recent and future life (5.59; 5.67). They identify that this language assists them in searching and collecting the information during their students' life. They can benefit a lot in enjoying the entertainment source in the internet. Other three motives that they agree are the other cultures discovery, active participation in activities inside and outside the nation, and active understanding the activities inside and outside the nation (5.05; 5.16; 5.00). Most of the students clearly consider the role of English in helping them have a vision, an admission to the integration of the international activities. In a word, they admit the role of the language, the vital tool that they have to equip themselves before setting out their independent lives. As a result, other motives such as the confidence of accomplishment, Compulsory subject, Parents' encouragement (4.30; 4.09; 4.03) are not the most important factors that make them choose the subject though they are rather seriously considered. English and American cultures preference, proof of enjoying good education, proof of social class, subject learned at lower education receive the neutral consideration between the disagreement and agreement. The mean scores show the change of the students' belief on English; other words, they decide to learn the subject not because they want to prove themselves or to pass the exam, but because they recognize the realistic benefits that English brings to them at present time and in the future.

Phase 2: Actional Phase

Table 2: Actional Phase

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Statistic</i>
Getting the scholarship	100	1	6	4.52	.128	1.275
<i>Good learning environment</i>	100	1	6	4.53	.113	1.132
Classroom activity assists English improvement	100	2	6	5.01	.096	.959
<i>Interesting classroom activities</i>	100	2	6	4.75	.097	.968
Novelty in Classroom activities	100	1	6	4.54	.115	1.150
<i>Challenges in classroom activities</i>	100	1	6	4.58	.117	1.174
Teacher's feedback on each learning short term goals	100	1	6	4.02	.150	1.497
<i>Teacher's feedback on strength and weakness</i>	100	2	6	4.93	.108	1.075
Feeling at ease with learning strategies	100	1	6	4.98	.094	.943
<i>Teacher's help in forming deadline for learning short term goals</i>	100	1	6	4.76	.108	1.084
Guided with pairwork and groupwork	100	2	6	4.77	.098	.983
<i>Guided self-learning</i>	100	1	6	4.55	.120	1.201
Respected in self	100	1	6	4.88	.109	1.094

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Statistic</i>
refection						
<i>Confidence in passing the exam</i>	100	1	6	3.86	.148	1.477
Good textbook	100	1	6	4.21	.112	1.122
<i>Reasonable class size</i>	100	1	6	4.39	.124	1.238
Convenient class hours	100	1	6	4.23	.135	1.355
<i>Avoid violating the subject rules</i>	100	1	6	3.51	.163	1.630
Enjoy the foreign teachers' teaching	100	1	6	4.42	.139	1.387
<i>Self-comprehension of learning it at school</i>	100	1	6	5.18	.125	1.250
Valid N (listwise)	100					

In this phase, the students are exposed to the teaching and learning process of the subject during 60 periods (50 minutes/period). The recognitions moving from the assistance of classroom activities in English improvement (5.01) to their self-comprehension of learning it at school (5.18) prove that the quality of teaching and learning leave a great impact on their confirmation of learning this subject at school, not from other language centers. To make this conclusion concrete, a lot of factors are admitted in their answers such as teacher's feedback on strength and weakness (4.93), feeling at ease with learning strategies (4.98). Respected in self refection (4.88), interesting classroom activities (4.75), teacher's help in forming deadline for learning short term goals (4.76), guided with pairwork and groupwork (4.77) are also essential stimuli that keep them learn the subject. Other factors such as learning to get the scholarship,

good learning environment, novelty in classroom activities, challenges in classroom activities, or guided self-learning, get the mean score from 4.52 to 4.58. Lower considerations are on teacher's feedback on each learning short term goals, good textbook, reasonable class size, convenient class hours, and enjoy the foreign teachers' teaching (from 4.02 to 4.21). As a result, their learning conscience is not on the avoidance of violating the subject rules (3.51), or confidence in passing the exam (3.86) any more.

Phase 3: Postactional

Postactional which is named by Dornyei (2001), defined the learning motivations in this stage as the “motivational retrospection” including some typical motivational functions as “forming casual attribution, elaborating standards and strategies, dismissing intention and further planning” (p. 21). Thanks to this theory, the problem question in this research was built to explore the potential and practical motivations that help learners to pursue the future English learning. This means that learners have their own decisions in types of motivations which are really helpful and essential to enrich their planning of future learning, and vice versa, some unimportant or inappropriate standards, strategies or unexpected factors will be dismissed. Take examples of some following questions in the survey, the results show that most learners expressed their view points to keep going on the initial motivations in Phase 1 (96%). They also revealed their intention to keep some formed motivations in Phase 2 within one semester (96%). Besides, based on the learning condition as well as the process of English practicing at HOU, more than 67% learners implicated that they enjoy participating in English learning at HOU. This number is pretty moderate. Nevertheless, in the strategies of making effort to develop GE program at HOU and attract more learners, it becomes a problematic issue that needs to be taken into serious consideration. Hence, more opening questions (questions 4 & 5) in table 3 –phase 3 are designed and discussed. Question 4 was raised to the learners to get the main motivations supporting learners in English development. The responses are

chiefly focused on the demands of future job and future life (more than 80%). Other motivations were also exposed like obtaining other cultures discovery (62%), getting active participation in activities inside and outside the nation (60%), being a compulsory subject (55%), having English and American cultures preference (50%) getting active understanding the activities inside and outside the nation (47%) confidence of accomplishment (40%) being respected in self reflection (45%). A few motivations were mentioned in less important condition such as getting the scholarship and teacher's feedback on strength and weakness of learners (20%) and having parents' encouragement. In question 5, some suggestions or expectations of learners were obviously illustrated such as increasing learning periods with a foreign teacher to help learners get more confidence (90%), studying less grammar in class (80%), spending more time for communication (78%), creating more classroom activities (70%), providing more helpful exercises (50%), organizing more picnics using English to talk (30%), discussing more practical topic relating jobs and daily life, designing more extra activities or travelling trips (30%). On the other hand, some other expectations occupy a small percentage (about 20% and less than 20%) such as: teachers should have more interesting teaching methods, speak more English in class, avoiding a dull atmosphere, should not just pay much attention to exam, apply more useful games to encourage learners participating English studying etc. In general, the third phase was built to get the confirmation of learners in their motivations and expectations in future English learning. The findings show that learner's motivation based on phase 1 and phase 2 are perfectly practical and helpful when the percentage of four questions from 1 to 4 in phase 3 occupied more than with more than 67%. Besides, it is also interesting when question 5 in phase 3 was raised to students with the aim to explore extra motivations of learners. These additional motivations are considered as useful references for researchers in future studies and the responsible people in HOU English training system as teachers and administrators.

Table 3: Postactional

No	Questions	Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't care (%)
1.	Do you continue to maintain the initial motivations in Phase 1?	96%	1%	3%
2.	Do you continue to maintain some motivations formed in Phase 2 within one semester?	96%	1%	3%
3.	After a long run of practicing and taking in English knowledge at HOU, do you go on to study in this HOU environment if you have more opportunities to select other learning environment?	67%	28%	5% (no answers)
4.	In your opinions, what are the key motivations that positively support you to have great improvement in English skills? (2 or 3 options)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need for future life (95%) - The need for future job (93 %) - Enjoy the foreign teachers' teaching (94 %) - The need for present life (80%) - Other cultural discovery (62%) - Active participation in activities inside & outside the nation (60%) - Compulsory subject (55%) - English and American cultures preference (50%) - Active understanding the activities inside & outside the nation (47%) - Confidence of accomplishment (40%) - Respected in self-reflection (45%) - Guided self-learning (30%) 		

No	Questions	Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't care (%)
		- Getting the scholarship (27%)	- Teacher's feedback on strength and weakness (20%)	- Parents' encouragement (10%)
5.	Do you have any suggestions that contribute to motivate the non- English major students of HOU?	- Increase learning periods with foreign teacher to help students more confident (90%)	- Study less grammar (80%)	- Communicate more (78%)
				- Create more activities (70%)
				- Give more exercises (50%)
				- Organize more picnics using English to talk (40%)
				- Have more interesting teaching methods (35%)
				- More practical topic relating to jobs and daily life (30%)
				- Design more extra activities or travelling trips (30%)
				- Teacher speak more English in class (20%)
				- Create active atmosphere
				- Not just pay attention to exam (20%)
				- Apply more games in class (less than 20%)
				- Be not compulsory to learn English at HOU (less than 20%)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Apparently, the students have a clear vision about the important role of English in their daily and future life. This language not only helps them join the technological world in which their careers will be developed, but also enriches their own perspectives about the world

by discovering the other cultures or civilization. Therefore, the encouragement from the parents or the educators should be placed on the necessity and the prospects of English in their lives and careers. It is that awareness which makes them choose the subject and helps to keep the learning motivations through their learning process. In addition, the motives that are developed during the learning process are also vital factors. Although the students have strong determination through their decision, the effectiveness and the satisfaction of the learning process help nurture their motivation. Each student will find a reason to come to class every day, and the learning activities in class give lots of reasons. Students also find it useful for their language improvement in getting the feedback, as well as the assistance for their learning strategies from their teachers. Therefore, the curriculum as well as the teachers should design the activities in class carefully and creatively. Moreover, what the students ask for are the exact feedback to their language competence and the advice to remedy, or their appropriate learning strategies for individual. This takes time and attention from the teachers, but they are essential factors that help students self-study effectively. In a word, the teachers or faculty should build a set of criteria for evaluating the students' language competence to feedback them every semester and the teachers are also the advisors who help students build their English language strategies.

Moreover, some practical activities that students suggested should be taken into consideration to make the classroom activities more interesting and motivate the students to use the language.

CONCLUSION

The learning motivation is one of the most core values in all educational systems in the world. It has always attracted attention from various specialists through centuries. In the English training world, motivation is more and more vital due to its plenty of internal and external, intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics in the perspectives of diverse educators, especially all kinds of motivations though

periods. This study, which is mainly based on the theory of Dörnyei (2001), indicate that motivations were built in three phases: *Preactional*, *Actional*, and *Postactional*. As a result, the research findings involving with English learning motivations of students were performed in different ways in various stages such as the initial motivations of learners when making decision to select English as a major foreign language in higher education, the achieved motivations within one semester of taking part in HOU English training course, and the potential and practical motivations in English learning in next stages. These findings are really helpful for all learners, lecturers, administrators, and HOU business and development.

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THE INDESPENSALITY OF DEVELOPING THE ONLINE TRAINING SYSTEM IN ENGLISH MAJOR AT HO CHI MINH OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Ho Chi Minh Open University (HOU)) is one of the most reputable universities in English major training. It is especially dominated in “distance training system” which is organized in form of face to face tutoring, and aimed to provide people more opportunities to update knowledge, promote their professional skills, raising their social awareness etc. In the trend of socialization, HOU is gradually setting up another form of learning as “online training” – means that using of ICT, online media, videos, web technology and the like to conduct the training process. Actually, the online training system has been widely popular in developed countries for long history and it is being grown up in Asia for decades. However, this model is still limited in English major at HOU due to some problematic issues as “access, content, technology”. Facing up with the current situation, an argument related to developing an online training system in English major at HOU is always being debated. Hence, in this reviewing literature writing, three rational motivations such as satisfying the mission and vision of HOU, meeting the social requirements and providing people the long life learning are exposed to strongly support the online training development in English major at HOU.

Keywords: *mission and vision, social requirement, long life learning*

EFL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THE VIETNAMESE HIGHER EDUCATION: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

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Lĩnh vực nghiên cứu: Phát triển chương trình, phương pháp giảng dạy

Abstract

Though curriculum development is a key factor contributing to the quality of teaching and learning in higher education, few studies have been made of what processes of curriculum development are employed in the Vietnamese context. This research examined the practices of curriculum development to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at the University of the Mekong Delta (UMD).

The research used a qualitative case study design in which interviews and document analysis were applied. Thematic analysis was employed to identify emerging themes from data. The findings were used to analyse the approaches to EFL curriculum development in the Vietnamese context, and to propose recommendations for an innovative approach, ensuring that autonomy can be used to the advantage of student learning.

LARGE SCALE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY – ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS

Uyen Pham (Cambridge)

This session will look at lessons learnt from English teacher development projects, based on a review conducted for Cambridge English. The presenter will suggest and discuss guidelines for successful projects, and discuss how Cambridge can support them. Intended audience: training providers; school leaders; Ministries of Education; teacher trainers.

There have been many projects aiming to provide development for English language teachers working in compulsory education, both in the private and public sector, which have met with mixed levels of success. This session aims to review some of the reasons for these mixed outcomes, and suggest some guidelines to improve the success of future projects.

Cambridge English conducted a review of a range of these projects, and this presentation will present some of the findings. While projects showed many elements of good practice, a number of challenges were also identified, including: a lack of robust monitoring and evaluation; low English proficiency of teachers participating in methodology training; issues around using large numbers of external trainers; expectation that training input alone will have a lasting impact. The presentation will focus on lessons learnt from this review of projects.

Based on these lessons, the presenter will suggest a number of guidelines for designing future projects that it is hoped will help training providers and institutions build effective teacher development projects. There will be opportunity to discuss these guidelines.

The presenter will go on to discuss how Cambridge English is able to support teacher development initiatives. The presenter will refer to courses, qualifications and CPD support from Cambridge English that have been designed to address the development needs of English teachers in compulsory education, and case studies on the impact of these.

MỘT VÀI KỸ XẢO

KHI GIẢNG DẠY TÍNH TỪ LÀM TRẠNG NGỮ TRONG TIẾNG TRUNG QUỐC

TS. La Thị Thuý Hiền

Đại Học Mở TPHCM

Trong câu đơn tiếng Hán, tính từ có thể đóng vai trò thành phần chính của câu. Trong đó tính từ làm trạng ngữ và bổ ngữ đều khiến cho người học khó phân biệt, sử dụng, cũng như trong phiên dịch.

Do vậy, bài viết này muốn nêu ra cách phân biệt tính từ làm trạng ngữ và bổ ngữ trong câu, đồng thời nêu ra một số phương pháp giảng dạy giúp người học có sự nhận biết, ứng dụng trong phiên dịch một cách chính xác.

Tính từ xuất hiện trong câu trong tiếng Trung và tiếng Việt với tần suất cao, và với vai trò thành phần câu tương đối phong phú, trong đó một trong những tính quan trọng của tính từ là đảm nhận vai trò trạng ngữ tu sức cho vị ngữ trung tâm. Tính từ vừa biểu thị thuộc tính của sự vật hiện tượng, vừa biểu thị trạng thái của sự vật hoặc động tác, không ít nhà ngôn ngữ học đã tiến hành tìm hiểu và nghiên cứu tính từ hiện đại đồng thời đã đạt được không ít thành quả quý báu. Thông qua những bài nghiên cứu về tính từ của các học giả trước, cộng thêm cá nhân thực tiễn kinh nghiệm giảng dạy Hán ngữ đối ngoại, chúng tôi cho rằng việc nghiên cứu tính từ làm trạng ngữ trong tiếng Hán có đối chiếu với tiếng Việt vẫn chưa đầy đủ và chuyên sâu. Trong thực tiễn, khi giảng dạy hiện tượng ngữ pháp tính từ làm trạng ngữ trong tiếng Trung, vẫn có nhiều sinh viên không thể phân biệt và thường mắc những lỗi sai ở các vấn đề như sau: thứ nhất là tính từ làm trạng ngữ có đi kèm hoặc không đi kèm trợ từ “地”; thứ hai là không phân biệt được tính từ làm trạng ngữ và tính từ làm bổ

ngữ. Do đó, trong bài viết này chúng tôi trình bày một số kỹ xảo khi tiến hành giảng dạy hiện tượng ngữ pháp này nhằm giúp người học nắm bắt rõ ràng, sử dụng chính xác và phiên dịch đúng ý đối với hiện tượng ngữ pháp này.

Trong quá trình giảng dạy, chúng ta nên chú trọng áp dụng những thủ thuật giảng dạy về mặt ngữ pháp mà không chú trọng đi sâu vào thủ thuật giảng dạy về lý luận ngữ pháp. Đối tượng giảng dạy của chúng ta chủ yếu là sinh viên Việt Nam, cho nên mục đích của chúng ta là làm thế nào để sinh viên có thể hiểu, nắm bắt hiện tượng ngữ pháp này một cách dễ dàng mà không phải chú trọng vào việc giảng dạy kiến thức ngữ pháp, làm cách nào để những quy luật trong ngữ pháp mang tính giải thích cao, làm thế nào để sinh viên dễ dàng sử dụng vào văn nói cũng như văn viết.

Trong quyển sách: 汉语课堂教学技巧⁴tạm dịch là “*Những kỹ xảo trong giờ giảng Tiếng Hán*” do Cui Yonghua và Yang Qizhou cùng biên soạn đã nêu ra bốn phương diện quan trọng đối với những kỹ xảo giảng dạy trong giờ học môn ngữ pháp, đó là: kỹ xảo trình bày điểm ngữ pháp, kỹ xảo giải thích điểm ngữ pháp, kỹ xảo luyện tập điểm ngữ pháp, kỹ xảo quy nạp điểm ngữ pháp. Chúng tôi chủ yếu xoáy vào hai kỹ xảo trình bày và giải thích đối với điểm ngữ pháp là “tính từ làm trạng ngữ trong tiếng Hán”, để sinh viên có thể hiểu một cách toàn diện và luyện tập đúng, giúp các em có sự nắm bắt và ứng dụng dễ dàng trong khi thực hiện công tác biên phiên dịch. Trong quá trình nêu các kỹ xảo về điểm ngữ pháp này, đặc biệt là kỹ xảo giải thích chúng tôi đồng thời kết hợp với việc giải thích về hình thức, ý nghĩa và chức năng trong câu của điểm ngữ pháp “tính từ làm trạng ngữ trong câu tiếng Hán”

1. Kỹ thuật trình bày các đặc điểm của tính từ làm trạng ngữ

Trong tiếng Hán, tính từ làm thành phần trạng ngữ trong câu luôn luôn xuất hiện trước vị ngữ động từ, cần yêu cầu sinh viên ghi nhớ đặc điểm của trạng ngữ trong tiếng Hán này và xem nó như là

⁴ 崔永华、杨寄洲《汉语课堂教学技巧》，北京语言文化大学出版社，2002，第63页

câu thân chú: “Trạng trước bổ sau” (trạng ngữ đứng trước vị ngữ động từ và bổ ngữ thì đứng sau vị ngữ động từ). Đối với điểm ngữ pháp này chúng ta có thể sử dụng công thức để trình bày, mục đích là giúp sinh viên dễ hiểu, dễ ghi nhớ. Giáo viên có thể trình bày công thức bằng bảng đen hoặc bằng bài giảng điện tử ppt, phía dưới công thức nêu thêm vài ví dụ chứng minh để sinh viên có ấn tượng đối với hiện tượng ngữ pháp này. Cụ thể như sau:

Trạng ngữ (地) + động từ
Do tính từ đảm nhận

Ví dụ

- | | | |
|-----------|----|------------|
| (1) 难 | 解 | (nan giải) |
| (2) 高高兴兴地 | 跳了 | 起来 |
| (3) 慢慢地 | 走 | |

Sau khi sinh viên đã có sự tiếp xúc cơ bản về hiện tượng ngữ pháp này thì chúng ta có thể nêu ra công thức của cả câu như sau:

Công thức bằng tiếng Trung:

主语 + 状语 (地) + 动词 + 宾语/补语
由形容词充当状语

Công thức bằng tiếng Việt:

Chủ ngữ + **Trạng ngữ (地)** + Động từ + Tân ngữ / Bổ ngữ
Do tính từ đảm nhận

Ví dụ:

- | | | | |
|---------|--------|----|-------------------|
| (4) 她 | 高兴地 | 告诉 | 我。 ⁵ |
| (5) 王老师 | 有点儿激动地 | 看着 | 我们说。 ⁶ |

⁵ 杨寄洲 《汉语教程-第二册 (上) 》，北京语言大学出版社，2006，第45页

(6) 她 **高高兴兴地** 对我说, 下个月就要结婚了。⁷

Khi trình bày điểm ngữ pháp này bằng công thức, chúng ta có thể quy định các thành phần câu bằng ký hiệu hoặc bằng chữ viết, nếu quy định là chữ viết thì trực tiếp viết tên của các thành phần bằng chữ viết (có thể viết tiếng Việt hoặc tiếng Trung), nếu quy định bằng ký hiệu có thể sử dụng và quy định cố định những thành phần câu như sau: S là chủ ngữ, N là danh từ, A là tính từ, P là vị ngữ. V là động từ... Sau khi trình bày công thức và một số ví dụ, chúng ta có thể tiến hành giải thích điểm ngữ pháp thông qua ví dụ. Mời sinh viên nhận xét ví dụ (4), (5), (6) xem khi tính từ làm trạng ngữ có sự khác biệt nào, khi sinh viên nêu ra được sự khác biệt chúng ta có thể lần lượt nêu ra những đặc điểm của tính từ làm trạng ngữ:

Đặc điểm thứ nhất: khi tính từ làm trạng ngữ có thể mang theo trợ từ kết cấu “地”.

Đặc điểm thứ hai: khi tính từ làm trạng ngữ có thể có sự kết hợp với các phó từ chỉ mức độ (很、非常、有点儿) tạo thành một ngữ tính từ (hay còn gọi là cụm tính từ)

Đặc điểm thứ ba: khi tính từ làm trạng ngữ có thể lặp lại theo hình thức $A \rightarrow AA$, $AB \rightarrow AABB$, $AB \rightarrow ABAB$ hoặc là ABB , khi tính từ lặp lại bản thân tính từ có ý nghĩa mức độ tăng lên.

Khi giải thích về vấn đề mang hay không mang trợ từ kết cấu “地”, chúng ta có thể tiến hành trình bày ở các điểm sau: thứ nhất là tính từ đơn âm tiết làm trạng ngữ không cần mang trợ từ kết cấu “地”, thứ hai là tính từ song âm tiết đi cùng hoặc không đi cùng với trợ từ kết cấu “地”, thứ ba là hoàn toàn đi cùng trợ từ kết cấu “地” thì điều kiện tính từ là gì.

Đối với tính từ đơn âm tiết khi làm trạng ngữ thường sẽ kết hợp

⁶ 杨寄洲 《汉语教程-

第二册 (上) 》, 北京语言大学出版社, 2006, 第159页

⁷ 杨寄洲 《汉语教程-第二册 (上) 》, 北京语言大学出版社, 2006, 第95页

với động từ tạo thành một sự kết hợp cố định và gần như tồn tại thành một đơn vị từ. Theo Chu Đức Hy (1996): “Dạng tính từ đơn âm tiết tu sức động từ là hoàn toàn có tồn tại, nhưng nó chứa một lượng lớn từ phức hợp và dạng thành ngữ”⁸. Tác giả Lưu Nguyệt Hoa (1982) cũng nêu ra rằng: “số lượng tính từ đơn âm tiết có thể làm trạng ngữ không nhiều, đa số thường thấy như: ‘高、快、慢、远、近、横、竖、直、斜、歪、紧、轻、重、长、饱、苦、静、臭、粗、细、早、晚、真、假、乱、大、小’ và bị hạn chế kết hợp với động từ”⁹. Trong tiếng Hán hiện đại, loại từ này được coi là hiện tượng cú pháp, nhưng bản thân nó có sự kết hợp chặt chẽ, cố định và giống như một từ ngữ cố định. Công thức như sau:

Công thức bằng tiếng Trung

状语 + 动词
由单音节形容词充任

Công thức tiếng Việt

Trạng ngữ + Động từ
Do tính từ đơn âm tiết đảm nhận

Ví dụ: 远望、细想、贱卖、稳坐、长流、苦笑、巧干、沉迷, do tính từ đơn âm làm trạng ngữ có dạng cố định nên sự kết hợp giữa nó và động từ không cần có trợ từ kết cấu “地”.

Tác giả Hạ Dương (1996) đã khảo sát được 917 tính từ song âm tiết, trong đó không thể trực tiếp làm trạng ngữ có 796 từ, có kết hợp với “地” làm trạng ngữ có 325 từ, chiếm 40.8% trong số tính từ đã được khảo sát. Ví dụ:

(7) 他们把……充分地传达了出来。(Nguồn ngữ liệu CCL)

Có một số tính từ không thể tự bản thân trực tiếp làm trạng ngữ mà

⁸ 朱德熙 《单音节形容词用法研究》，《中国语文》1966年第二期

⁹ 刘月华 《状语与补语的比较》，《语言数学与研究》1982年第一期

cần phải có điều kiện là sau khi lặp lại và kết hợp với trợ từ kết cấu “地” thì mới có thể làm trạng ngữ, trong đó tính từ song âm tiết lặp lại thường có các dạng như: AABB、ABAB、ABB、BBA. Ví dụ:

(8) 太阳已经起来, **黄灿灿地**照着那一座老屋的泥墙……………
(Nguồn ngữ liệu CCL)

Tính từ song âm tiết sau khi nhận sự bỏ nghĩa của phó từ chỉ mức độ, thông thường cần phải có trợ từ kết cấu “地”, ví dụ:

(9) ……一些藏族人土也**很坦白地**说, …… (Nguồn ngữ liệu CCL)

Phó từ chỉ mức độ “非常” khi bỏ nghĩa cho tính từ đơn âm tiết làm trạng ngữ cũng cần có sự kết hợp của trợ từ kết cấu “地”. Ví dụ:

(10) 这一个过程, 能够**非常好地**训练学生的创造性思维、克服困难的毅力、解决问题的能力 (Nguồn ngữ liệu CCL)

Trong tiếng Hán hiện đại có một bộ phận tính từ không thể trực tiếp làm trạng ngữ, cần phải thêm trợ từ kết cấu mới có thể làm trạng ngữ.

Sau khi nêu ra một số trường hợp và điều kiện tính từ cần kết hợp với trợ từ kết cấu “地” thì mới có thể làm trạng ngữ trong câu, chúng ta tiếp tục tiến sâu hơn nữa về trật tự trong câu khi có nhiều tính từ cùng lúc làm trạng ngữ đứng trước vị ngữ động từ, đồng thời nêu lên trật tự của chúng. Trong tiếng Hán có nhiều học giả cho rằng trạng ngữ đa tầng (gồm nhiều thành phần làm trạng ngữ) bao gồm ba loại: một là trạng ngữ đa tầng có mối quan hệ đẳng lập (giữa các trạng ngữ trong câu có mối quan hệ về ngữ nghĩa ngang bằng nhau), hai là trạng ngữ đa tầng có mối quan hệ tăng tiến (giữa các trạng ngữ trong câu có mối quan hệ về ngữ nghĩa tăng lên), ba là trạng ngữ đa tầng có mối quan hệ đan xen nhau (giữa các trạng ngữ trong câu có mối quan hệ về ngữ nghĩa đan xen, bổ sung lẫn nhau). Sự sắp xếp về các mối quan hệ đó như sau:

Mối quan hệ đẳng lập < mối quan hệ về tăng tiến < mối quan hệ về đan xen

Đối với loại câu có nhiều tính từ cùng lúc đảm nhận vai trò là trạng ngữ cùng tu sức cho vị ngữ động từ thì cũng vẫn phải xét về mặt ngữ nghĩa giữa chúng tu sức cho vị ngữ động từ theo trật tự như đã nêu trên. Trong trường hợp nhiều tính từ cùng bổ nghĩa cho động từ mà ngữ nghĩa của chúng đều có mối quan hệ đẳng lập thì trật tự của chúng không phân biệt trước sau, đồng thời cần phải có sự kết hợp với trợ từ kết cấu “地”, “地” có thể đứng sau các tính từ hoặc sau mỗi tính từ đều được. Xem công thức sau:

Công thức 1:

状 语 + 动词
由ADJ _① + ADJ _② + 地

Công thức 2:

状 语 + 动词
由ADJ _① 地 + ADJ _② + 地

Có thể thấy rõ rằng trợ từ kết cấu “地” đứng sau các tính từ (công thức 1) và đứng sau mỗi tính từ (công thức 2), để giúp người học thấy rõ và ghi nhớ rõ hơn trong trường hợp này chúng ta có thể dùng bút màu để ghi trợ từ kết cấu.

Đối với mối quan hệ tăng tiến giữa các tính từ cùng làm trạng ngữ thì cần xét trật tự giữa các tính từ bổ nghĩa cho vị ngữ động từ, về mặt ngữ nghĩa thì cần xét mỗi loại trạng ngữ hoặc là mỗi tính từ có mối quan hệ tu sức hoặc hạn chế đối với vị ngữ động từ như thế nào, về mặt chức năng ngữ pháp thì trạng ngữ mang tính miêu tả hoặc hạn chế, trong phần này chúng tôi đề cập đến vấn đề nhiều tính từ cùng lúc đóng vai trò là trạng ngữ trong câu cho nên chức năng chính của tính từ trong vai trò là trạng ngữ chủ yếu là trạng ngữ mang tính miêu tả, chúng ta có thể giải thích cho sinh viên nhiều tính

từ tu sức cho vị ngữ động từ thì cần phải xét đến mối quan hệ giữa trạng ngữ (tính từ) và vị từ, nếu giữa các tính từ có mối quan hệ đẳng lập thì các tính từ đó đều có ý nghĩa tương đồng và cùng chức năng miêu tả (hoặc số ít là tính hạn chế), khi đó chúng ta không cần theo trật tự để sắp xếp các tính từ đó theo một trật tự nhất định nào. Ví dụ:

(11) 他们**兴奋而激动地**凝视着山川和流水……(Nguồn Ngữ liệu CCL)

Từ “兴奋” và từ “激动” trong ví dụ (11) đều là tính từ mang tính miêu tả tu sức cho vị từ “凝视” thứ tự của hai tính từ trên có thể hoán đổi cho nhau, chúng ta cũng có thể nói là “他们**激动而兴奋地**凝视着山川和流水”

(12) 他对她深深地摇头，**亲切地、诚恳地**说：“……”(Nguồn ngữ liệu CCL)

Trợ từ “地” có thể xuất hiện sau mỗi tính từ hoặc đứng sau tất cả các tính từ làm trạng ngữ, bởi vì về mặt ý nghĩa chúng đều có mối quan hệ đẳng lập cho nên không cần chú trọng là đặt sau mỗi tính từ. Khi giảng dạy chúng ta có thể sử dụng màu mực khác nhau để tô đậm phần trợ từ giúp người học có ấn tượng sâu sắc đối với trợ từ kết cấu “地”.

Trong thành phần trạng ngữ với nhiều tính từ đảm nhiệm có mối quan hệ tăng tiến thì cần thiết phải giải thích cho người học từ gốc độ ngữ nghĩa. Một là giải thích từ gốc độ ngữ nghĩa của mỗi quan hệ và mức độ bổ nghĩa giữa tính từ với vị ngữ động từ: nghĩa là mối quan hệ ngữ nghĩa giữa tính từ và vị từ càng mật thiết thì khoảng cách giữa chúng càng gần, ngược lại mối quan hệ về ngữ nghĩa không mật thiết thì khoảng cách giữa chúng càng xa rời. Hai là giải thích từ gốc độ định hướng ngữ nghĩa, trạng ngữ đa tầng hoặc trạng ngữ do nhiều tính từ đảm nhiệm khi xét về mối quan hệ ngữ nghĩa giữa chúng và vị từ đều cần phải xuất phát từ gốc độ định hướng ngữ nghĩa (Semantic orientation). Tính từ làm trạng ngữ, xét từ gốc độ định hướng ngữ nghĩa có thể chia làm 2 loại nhỏ, loại thứ nhất là trạng

ngữ miêu tả chủ thể (mang ý nghĩa miêu tả chủ ngữ), loại thứ hai là trạng ngữ miêu tả hành động, động tác (mang ý nghĩa miêu tả vị ngữ động từ), tính từ làm trạng ngữ miêu tả động tác có khoảng cách gần với động từ hơn là trạng ngữ miêu tả chủ thể và ngược lại tính từ miêu tả chủ thể thì khoảng cách gần chủ thể hơn là tính từ miêu tả động tác. Trong trường hợp này, chúng ta có thể sử dụng cách trình bày bằng công thức để trình bày và giải thích cho người học nhận biết và hiểu rõ trường hợp nhiều tính từ cùng làm trạng ngữ. Trong đó cách trình bày bằng bảng biểu như sau sẽ giúp thấy rõ và linh động hơn. Trạng ngữ do tính từ đảm nhiệm miêu tả chủ thể được viết bằng màu xanh và trạng ngữ do tính từ đảm nhiệm miêu tả động tác được viết bằng màu đỏ.

主语	谓语			
	状语（一） 描写动作者的形 容词	状语（二） 描写动作的形 容词	谓语中心 （动词或形 容词）	其他成分 （宾语或者补 语）

Ví dụ: (13) 那只雄鹅**凶猛地、高高地**伸着颈项。(Nguồn ngữ liệu CCL)

Chúng ta cũng cần nêu cho người học biết trong một câu có lúc sẽ có nhiều trạng ngữ cùng xuất hiện như trạng ngữ chỉ thời gian, nơi chốn, đối tượng, phương thức và miêu tả .v.v., cho nên chúng ta cần phải chú ý về trật tự của chúng trong câu để có thể dịch ra tiếng Việt một cách chính xác. Trong trường hợp này, trật tự giữa các trạng ngữ đều xét theo định hướng ngữ nghĩa mà trạng ngữ đó bổ nghĩa cho đối tượng nào để tiến hành phân biệt vị trí của chúng, vì trong tiếng Hán thì trạng ngữ đều ở trước vị từ. Thông thường thì trạng ngữ chỉ thời gian và nơi chốn (bao gồm kết cấu giới từ “在”) đều có vị trí đứng sau chủ ngữ trước trạng ngữ tính từ. Theo phân tích từ gốc độ định hướng ngữ nghĩa, thì trạng ngữ chỉ thời gian và địa điểm là bổ sung ý nghĩa cho toàn câu, vị trí của nó có thể đứng trước hoặc sau chủ ngữ, còn trạng ngữ chỉ đối tượng (thông thường sẽ là những cụm kết cấu giới từ, như: “把, 给, 跟, 被, 向……”) thì mang ý nghĩa tu sức bổ

sung đối tượng cho vị từ nên vị trí của chúng phải đứng trước vị từ, gần kề với vị từ. Ví dụ:

(14) 老师也**高兴地** 和**大家**说话。(Giáo trình Hán ngữ, tập 2 quyển thượng 《汉语教程》第二册(上))

Trong ví dụ trên từ “高兴地” là trạng ngữ miêu tả tu sức bổ nghĩa cho chủ thể “老师”, “和大家” là kết cấu giới từ làm trạng ngữ bổ sung đối tượng cho động tác là vị ngữ động từ “说”, cho nên trật tự của chúng sẽ là “高兴地” đứng gần chủ ngữ hơn và “和大家” đứng gần vị ngữ động từ hơn.

(15) 她在信上 **高兴地说**: “.....”(Giáo trình Hán ngữ, tập 2 quyển thượng 《汉语教程》第二册(上))

Trong ví dụ (15) trạng ngữ chỉ nơi chốn “在信上” là bổ sung ý nghĩa cho cả câu, trạng ngữ miêu tả động tác “高兴地” đứng gần động từ bổ sung nghĩa cho động từ. Chúng ta có thể quy nạp trật tự câu như sau:

主语 Chủ ngữ	谓语 Vị ngữ			
	状语 trạng ngữ		谓语动词 Vị ngữ động từ	宾语或补语 Tân ngữ hoặc bổ ngữ
	表示时间、处所 TN thời gian, nơi chốn	表示描写 TN miêu tả		
她	在信上	高兴地	说	
	表示描写 TN miêu tả	表示对象 TN chỉ đối tượng		
老师	高兴地	和大家	说	话

Bảng biểu trên thể hiện trạng ngữ miêu tả do tính từ đảm nhiệm cùng xuất hiện với trạng ngữ chỉ thời gian hoặc nơi chốn, thì trạng ngữ miêu tả đứng liền kề với vị từ. Nếu trạng ngữ miêu tả và trạng ngữ chỉ đối tượng cùng xuất hiện thì trạng ngữ chỉ đối tượng sẽ đứng liền kề với vị từ.

2. Kỹ xảo phân biệt với thành phần bổ ngữ

Đối với ngữ nghĩa trong điểm ngữ pháp này khi giải thích cho người học chúng ta có thể chú ý đến việc người học nắm bắt được định hướng ngữ nghĩa cụ thể như thế nào chứ không đi sâu vào phần lý luận định hướng ngữ nghĩa. Cho nên chúng tôi đề nghị cần sử dụng phương pháp đặt câu hỏi cho phần giảng dạy này. Lúc bắt đầu, giáo viên có thể đặt những câu hỏi mang đại từ nghi vấn xoay vào trọng tâm là trạng ngữ, ví dụ như đối với ví dụ (14) và (15) bên trên chúng ta có thể đặt câu hỏi như sau:

- 老师怎样和大家说话?

- 她在信上心情怎样地说?

Đồng thời cũng có thể sử dụng phương thức đối thoại theo hoàn cảnh để đặt câu hỏi sau đó nêu ra đặc điểm ngữ nghĩa. Ví dụ giáo viên có thể đặt ra các câu hỏi ngẫu nhiên và yêu cầu người học trả lời rồi sau đó lại hỏi các bạn khác đánh giá câu trả lời của bạn, và trong các phần đánh giá đó sẽ có những câu đánh giá đúng về điểm ngữ pháp này, lúc đó chúng ta có thể từ cách đánh giá đó trình bày về phần ngữ nghĩa cho điểm ngữ pháp này.

Ngoài ra, người học thường không phân biệt rõ đâu là trạng ngữ miêu tả và bổ ngữ tình thái, bởi vì cả hai đều do tính từ đảm nhiệm, cho nên chúng ta cần sử dụng phương pháp so sánh để giúp người học phân biệt được điểm ngữ pháp này, và đồng thời cũng so sánh với tiếng mẹ đẻ để giúp người học nhận biết được trật tự trạng ngữ trong câu giúp cho việc phiên dịch sẽ dễ dàng hơn và đầy đủ hơn. Nhằm giúp người học nắm bắt rõ hơn về tính từ làm trạng ngữ và bổ ngữ chúng ta cần nhắc lại công thức của cả hai điểm ngữ pháp này,

trong hệ thống Giáo trình Hán ngữ thường bố trí cho người học sẽ học điểm ngữ pháp bổ ngữ tình thái trước sau đó mới đến điểm ngữ pháp tính từ làm trạng ngữ, do đó chúng ta có thể sử dụng công thức để trình bày một lúc cả hai điểm ngữ pháp giúp người học nhận biết một cách dễ dàng.

Công thức bổ ngữ tình thái

动词 + 得 + 表示情态的补语

由形容词充任

Thể hiện bằng tiếng Việt

Động từ + 得 + **Bổ ngữ tình thái**

Do tính từ đảm nhiệm

Bổ ngữ tình thái đứng sau vị ngữ động từ, do tính từ đảm nhiệm và cần có sự kết hợp với trợ từ kết cấu “得”, về mặt ngữ nghĩa thì chủ yếu là miêu tả, phán đoán hoặc đánh giá về tình thái mức độ động tác, trong đó vị từ là hành vi động tác mang tính thường xuyên, đã xảy ra hoặc đang được tiến hành. Còn về trạng ngữ miêu tả do tính từ đảm nhiệm thì vị trí đứng trước vị từ mang ý nghĩa bổ sung, tu sức hoặc hạn chế cho hành vi động tác. Do đó cần nhắc nhở người học cần ghi nhớ câu khẩu hiệu là: “Trạng trước bổ sau”.

Chúng ta có thể sử dụng cách trình bày ví dụ trước để người học tự nhận xét được hai hiện tượng ngữ pháp này về mặt vị trí và sau đó chúng ta mới tiến hành giải thích ý nghĩa của chúng, làm như thế giúp người học ghi nhớ sâu sắc hơn về hai hiện tượng ngữ pháp, vừa ôn được điểm ngữ pháp cũ và học được điểm ngữ pháp mới.

(16) 我每天起得很早。(Giáo trình Hán ngữ, tập 1 quyển hạ 《汉语教程》第一册(下))

(17) 小李尴尬地点点头。¹⁰

¹⁰ 刘月华《实用现代汉语语法》，商务印书馆，2001年，第506页

Trong ví dụ (16) và (17) chúng ta đều thấy rõ vị trí của hai điểm ngữ pháp, bỏ ngữ tình thái mang tính chất bỏ nghĩa, miêu tả động tác đã diễn ra còn trạng ngữ miêu tả thì có thể là miêu tả về chủ thể của động tác hoặc miêu tả động tác, trong ví dụ trên thì trạng ngữ miêu tả chủ thể của động tác. Khi cả hai cùng miêu tả về động tác thì có thể chuyển đổi vị trí của chúng, có nghĩa là trạng ngữ miêu tả có thể chuyển thành bỏ ngữ miêu tả và ngược lại. Ví dụ:

(18) 他把事情的经过详细说了一遍。¹¹

他把事情的经过说得很详细。

Tuy nhiên nếu là trạng ngữ miêu tả chủ thể của động tác thì không thể chuyển đổi thành bỏ ngữ miêu tả được. Ví dụ:

(19) 妈妈温和地看了女儿一眼。

Không thể nói: *妈妈看了女儿看得很温和。

Khi giảng dạy về mặt ý nghĩa, chúng ta có thể sử dụng những cách như: đặt câu hỏi, đặt câu hỏi theo tình huống, cách so sánh, chủ yếu là để người học có thể hiểu về trạng ngữ miêu tả do tính từ đảm nhiệm và có thể phân biệt được trạng ngữ miêu tả và bỏ ngữ tình thái, như vậy mới giúp người học có thể những lỗi sai.

Tóm lại, trong bài viết này chúng tôi muốn thông qua những lỗi sai của người học để nêu lên đặc điểm của hiện tượng ngữ pháp tính từ làm trạng ngữ và cách so sánh phân biệt với thành phần khác trong câu, giúp người học có sự nhận thức toàn diện hơn về điểm ngữ pháp này. Trong quá trình giảng dạy chúng ta cũng cần lưu ý các bước tránh việc cung cấp kiến thức cho người học còn thiếu sót và sơ sài. Khi nêu một điểm ngữ pháp chúng ta cần phải nêu đầy đủ các đặc điểm và những hiện tượng gần giống với hiện tượng ngữ pháp này, giúp cho người học phân biệt tránh những lỗi sai mà do quá trình giảng dạy còn thiếu sót, giúp người học hiểu toàn diện, áp dụng dễ dàng, phiên dịch chính xác.

¹¹ 刘月华《实用现代汉语语法》，商务印书馆，2001年，第507页

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NHỮNG KHÓ KHĂN CỦA SINH VIÊN NGÀNH TIẾNG TRUNG Ở CẤP ĐỘ SƠ CẤP KHI HỌC MÔN ĐỌC HIỂU VÀ MỘT VÀI KIẾN NGHỊ GIẢNG DẠY

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Khi học tập tiếng Trung chuyên ngành, sinh viên sẽ được đào tạo các kỹ năng ngôn ngữ như “nghe- nói- đọc- viết” . Trong đó đọc hiểu là một trong những kỹ năng cơ bản để sinh viên có thể học và nắm vững tiếng Trung. Với nhiệm vụ đào tạo và bồi dưỡng kỹ năng đọc hiểu cho sinh viên để một mặt giúp cho các em nâng cao vốn từ vựng và mặt khác nâng cao tốc độ đọc cũng như sự chuẩn xác trong quá trình đọc, nên môn đọc hiểu là một môn kỹ năng vô cùng quan trọng đối với giảng viên dạy tiếng Trung. Và với tính đặc thù của môn học này , người học khi tiếp xúc với môn đọc hiểu chắc chắn sẽ gặp nhiều trở ngại và khó khăn. Trong quá trình giảng dạy môn đọc hiểu cho sinh viên năm nhất Đại học Mở TPHCM, tôi nhận thấy sinh viên trong quá trình dịch, quá trình hiểu câu văn và đoạn văn thường rất lúng túng và phát sinh ra nhiều lỗi sai. Chính điều này đã thôi thúc tôi tiến hành nghiên cứu và tìm hiểu xem sinh viên ngành tiếng Trung ở giai đoạn sơ cấp khi học môn đọc hiểu sẽ gặp những khó khăn gì để từ đó đưa ra một số giải pháp giảng dạy cho môn đọc hiểu với đối tượng này.

I. CƠ SỞ LÝ LUẬN

Trên thế giới có rất nhiều chuyên gia , nhà ngôn ngữ học đã thể hiện quan điểm của mình đối với quá trình đọc ngoại ngữ: Goodman đã nhận định rằng: “Đọc hiểu là một trò chơi giải đố trong tâm tâm lý học. Quá trình đọc là người đọc từ vốn kiến thức nhận biết mình đã có, dựa vào câu chữ tiến hành dự đoán, phỏng đoán kiểm chứng nội

dung đoạn văn”. Henry Winddowson cũng đã chỉ ra: “Đọc hiểu không chỉ là quá trình thu lượm thông tin mà còn là quá trình giải thích thông tin.” Từ những quan điểm của các chuyên gia nêu ở trên, chúng ta có thể thấy rằng đọc hiểu là một quá trình tương tác phức tạp giữa người đọc và tài liệu đọc, đặc biệt là quá trình đọc hiểu ngoại ngữ. Trong quá trình đọc đó, người đọc vận dụng những kiến thức về nội dung đọc, kiến thức về ngôn ngữ và kỹ năng đọc hiểu tiến hành phân tích dự đoán với tài liệu đọc, từ đó có được thông tin cần có. Quá trình đọc hiểu ngoại ngữ chịu sự tác động chi phối của nhiều nhân tố nên sẽ gây rất nhiều khó khăn cho người học ngoại ngữ, trong đó có người học tiếng Trung.

II. MỘT SỐ KHÓ KHĂN TRỞ NGẠI CỦA SINH VIÊN TIẾNG TRUNG TRÌNH ĐỘ SƠ CẤP KHI HỌC MÔN ĐỌC HIỂU

Bài nghiên cứu thông qua việc phát phiếu điều tra khảo sát đã chỉ ra một số khó khăn trở ngại đối với sinh viên năm nhất ngành tiếng Trung khi học tập môn đọc hiểu. Đối tượng khảo sát bao gồm 57 sinh viên năm thứ nhất chuyên ngành tiếng Trung trường Đại học Mở TPHCM (bao gồm 2 khóa 2015 và 2016) và 58 sinh viên năm thứ nhất chuyên ngành tiếng Trung trường Đại học Sư Phạm TPHCM, thời gian học tiếng Trung được khoảng 5 tháng, vốn từ vựng tích lũy khoảng từ 500 đến 800 từ. Những khó khăn được dự đoán bao gồm:

1. Không nhận biết được Hán tự và ý nghĩa
2. Thiếu vốn từ vựng
3. Không nắm ngữ pháp
4. Không nắm được kết cấu cấu trúc câu
5. Trong một khoảng thời gian nhất định không có khả năng phân tích phán đoán nội dung chính một đoạn văn
6. Thiếu vốn kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý, lịch sử Trung Quốc...
7. Thiếu vốn kỹ năng phương pháp đọc hiểu
8. Giáo trình đọc quá khó
9. Phương pháp giáo viên chưa phù hợp
10. Không có hứng thú động lực học

**Bảng 1: Những khó khăn sinh viên năm 1 ngành tiếng Trung ĐH
Mở gặp phải khi học môn đọc hiểu**

(sinh viên: SV)

STT	Khó khăn	Khóa 2015	Khóa 2016	Tổng số (SV)	Tỉ lệ
		Số lượng (SV)	Số lượng (SV)		
1	Không nhận biết được Hán tự và ý nghĩa	11	11	22	22/57
2	Thiếu vốn từ vựng	25	17	42	42/57
3	Không nắm ngữ pháp	20	21	41	41/57
4	Không nắm được kết cấu cấu trúc câu	19	17	36	36/57
5	Trong một khoảng thời gian nhất định không có khả năng phân tích phán đoán nội dung chính 1 đoạn văn	13	8	21	21/57
6	Thiếu vốn kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý, lịch sử Trung Quốc...	23	23	46	46/57
7	Thiếu vốn kỹ năng phương pháp đọc hiểu	17	14	31	31/57
8	Giáo trình đọc quá khó	11	10	21	21/57
9	Phương pháp giáo viên chưa phù hợp	4	8	12	12/57
10	Không có hứng thú động lực học	3	6	9	9/57
Tổng số sinh viên: 57					

Từ bảng thống kê cho thấy, sinh viên tiếng Trung giai đoạn sơ cấp của ĐH Mở khi học môn đọc hiểu thường gặp những khó khăn phổ biến sau: Thiếu vốn kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý, lịch sử Trung Quốc...(46 SV); thiếu vốn từ vựng (42 SV); không nắm ngữ pháp (41 SV); Không nắm được kết cấu cấu trúc câu (36 SV).

Trong quá trình khảo sát, tôi cũng đặt ra câu hỏi rằng: những khó khăn mà sinh viên tiếng Trung giai đoạn sơ cấp ĐH Mở đang gặp phải liệu có phải là khó khăn chung của sinh viên tiếng Trung giai đoạn sơ cấp ở các trường khác không? Để trả lời cho câu hỏi này, tôi cũng đã tiến hành khảo sát 58 sinh viên đến từ ĐH Sư phạm TPHCM, kết quả khảo sát thể hiện ở bảng sau :

Bảng 2: Những khó khăn sinh viên năm 1 ngành tiếng Trung ĐH Sư Phạm gặp phải khi học môn đọc hiểu

(sinh viên: SV)

	Khó khăn	Số lượng (SV)	Tỷ lệ
1	Không nhận biết được Hán tự và ý nghĩa	34	34/58
2	Thiếu vốn từ vựng	52	52/58
3	Không nắm ngữ pháp	26	26/58
4	Không nắm được kết cấu câu trúc câu	26	26/58
5	Trong một khoảng thời gian nhất định không có khả năng phân tích phán đoán nội dung chính 1 đoạn văn	12	12/58
6	Thiếu vốn kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý, lịch sử Trung Quốc...	34	34/58
7	Thiếu vốn kỹ năng phương pháp đọc hiểu	16	16/58
8	Giáo trình đọc quá khó	16	16/58
9	Phương pháp giáo viên chưa phù hợp	4	4/58
10	Không có hứng thú động lực học	0	
Tổng số sinh viên: 58			

Bảng thống kê cho thấy, sinh viên tiếng Trung giai đoạn sơ cấp ĐH Sư phạm TPHCM khi học môn đọc hiểu thường gặp những khó khăn phổ biến sau: Thiếu vốn từ vựng (52 SV); không nhận biết được Hán tự và ý nghĩa (34 SV); thiếu vốn kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý, lịch sử Trung Quốc...(34 SV); không nắm ngữ pháp và không nắm

được kết cấu câu trúc câu. Từ kết quả khảo sát 2 trường trên, chúng ta có thể kết luận sinh viên tiếng Trung ở giai đoạn sơ cấp khi tiếp cận môn đọc hiểu sẽ có những trở ngại chung (xem bảng 3). Những khó khăn trở ngại này ít nhiều sẽ ảnh hưởng đến hiệu quả quá trình đọc.

Bảng 3: Những khó khăn sinh viên năm 1 ngành tiếng Trung của hai trường gặp phải khi học môn đọc hiểu

(sinh viên: SV)

STT	Khó khăn	Khóa 2015	Khóa 2016	ĐH Sư phạm TPHCM	Tổng số (SV)	Tỉ lệ
		Số lượng (SV)	Số lượng (SV)	Số lượng (SV)		
1	Không nhận biết được Hán tự và ý nghĩa	11	11	34	56	49%
2	Thiếu vốn từ vựng	25	17	52	94	82%
3	Không nắm ngữ pháp	20	21	26	67	58%
4	Không nắm được kết cấu câu trúc câu	19	17	26	62	54%
5	Trong một khoảng thời gian nhất định không có khả năng phân tích phán đoán nội dung chính 1 đoạn văn	13	8	12	33	29%
6	Thiếu vốn kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý, lịch sử Trung Quốc...	23	23	34	80	70%
7	Thiếu vốn kỹ năng	17	14	16	47	41%

STT	Khó khăn	Khóa 2015	Khóa 2016	ĐH Sư phạm TPHCM	Tổng số (SV)	Tỉ lệ
		Số lượng (SV)	Số lượng (SV)	Số lượng (SV)		
	phương pháp đọc hiểu					
8	Giáo trình đọc quá khó	11	10	16	37	32%
9	Phương pháp giáo viên chưa phù hợp	4	8	4	16	14%
10	Không có hứng thú động lực học	3	6	0	9	8%
Tổng số sinh viên: 115						

Căn cứ vào bảng thống kê tổng hợp trên, đã có 4 trở ngại chính ảnh hưởng trực tiếp đến sinh viên ngành tiếng Trung sơ cấp khi học môn đọc hiểu khiến cho họ bộc lộ những lỗi sai khi tìm hiểu thông tin nội dung bài đọc. Những trở ngại chính đó là: thứ nhất: thiếu vốn từ vựng (85%); thứ hai: thiếu vốn kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý, lịch sử Trung Quốc (70%); thứ ba: không nắm ngữ pháp (58%); thứ tư: không nắm được kết cấu cấu trúc câu (54%). Như vậy có thể thấy rằng, sinh viên ngành tiếng Trung gặp khó khăn chính là ở mảng kiến thức ngôn ngữ (thể hiện ở từ vựng, ngữ pháp, kết cấu câu), nó ảnh hưởng trực tiếp đến hiệu quả đọc của sinh viên. Với những khó khăn đã chỉ ra, giảng viên trong quá trình giảng dạy cần chú ý tìm ra phương pháp dạy học phù hợp để giúp sinh viên hạn chế những trở ngại này.

Cũng qua kết quả điều tra khảo sát, tôi cũng tìm ra được những hướng tích cực mà môn **đọc hiểu** mang lại cho sinh viên sơ cấp. Qua quá trình học môn đọc hiểu sinh viên cũng đạt được một số mặt tiến bộ đáng kể ở một số phương diện sau:

1. Nâng cao khả năng nhận biết chữ Hán
2. Nâng cao vốn từ vựng
3. Nắm được các điểm ngữ pháp, cấu trúc câu
4. Cải thiện khả năng phân tích phán đoán nội dung đoạn văn
5. Nâng cao các kỹ năng đọc hiểu
6. Nâng cao tốc độ đọc hiểu
7. củng cố kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý, lịch sử Trung Quốc.

Bảng 4: Mặt tích cực sinh viên năm nhất ngành tiếng Trung đạt được khi học xong môn đọc hiểu

(sinh viên: SV)

STT	Mặt tích cực	Khóa 2015	Khóa 2016	ĐH Sư phạm	Tổng số (SV)	Tỉ lệ
		Số lượng (SV)	Số lượng (SV)	Số lượng (SV)		
1	Nâng cao khả năng nhận biết chữ Hán	22	23	40	85	74%
2	Nâng cao vốn từ vựng	20	22	50	92	80%
3	Nắm được các điểm ngữ pháp, cấu trúc câu	9	14	22	45	39%
4	Cải thiện khả năng phân tích phán đoán nội dung đoạn văn	11	13	20	44	38%
5	Nâng cao các kỹ năng đọc hiểu	15	15	44	74	64%
6	Nâng cao tốc độ đọc hiểu	16	12	42	70	61%
7	Củng cố kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý, lịch sử Trung Quốc.	17	16	34	67	58%
Tổng số sinh viên : 115						

Căn cứ vào kết quả thống kê ở bảng trên ta thấy, sau quá trình học môn đọc hiểu các bạn sinh viên có thể hiện một số mặt tiến bộ như sau : nâng cao vốn từ vựng (80%); nâng cao khả năng nhận biết chữ Hán (74%); nâng cao các kĩ năng đọc hiểu (64%); nâng cao về tốc độ đọc hiểu (61%) và củng cố kiến thức về văn hóa, địa lý , lịch sử Trung Quốc (58%). Những mặt tích cực mà thống kê chỉ ra chính là một trong những mục tiêu giảng dạy trong môn đọc mà giảng viên cần hướng đến. Giảng viên trong quá trình soạn bài, tổ chức hoạt động giảng dạy trên lớp nên chú ý đến mục tiêu này.

III. MỘT SỐ KIẾN NGHỊ GIẢNG DẠY MÔN ĐỌC HIỂU

Môn đọc hiểu là một môn kĩ năng trong tiếng Trung chuyên ngành. Sinh viên học tiếng Trung như một ngôn ngữ thứ hai ở giai đoạn sơ cấp sẽ không tránh được những trở ngại khó khăn. Những khó khăn phổ biến thường bao gồm là thiếu vốn từ vựng, thiếu kiến thức về văn hóa lịch sử địa lý Trung Quốc, không nắm được ngữ pháp và kết cấu cấu trúc câu. Giảng viên trong quá trình soạn giáo án cũng như khi tổ chức các hoạt động học tập trên lớp phải dự đoán được các khó khăn đã dẫn đến những sai lầm của sinh viên, để từ đó lựa chọn những phương pháp dạy học hữu hiệu nhằm giúp sinh viên giảm thiểu những khó khăn nêu trên, và cũng là để tăng hứng thú học tập môn đọc hiểu cho sinh viên, từ đó chất lượng học tập của sinh viên được cải thiện

1. Nâng cao khả năng nhận biết Hán tự

Chữ Hán của Trung Quốc là loại chữ tượng hình. Hán tự là hệ thống các ký tự tượng hình mang ý nghĩa, trong đó tồn tại những hiện tượng phức tạp như đồng âm, đa âm và đa nghĩa..., do đó việc nắm vững Hán tự với những người vừa tiếp xúc với tiếng Trung là cả một vấn đề lớn. Trong giai đoạn này, do thời gian tiếp xúc chữ Hán chưa lâu nên khả năng nhận biết chữ Hán của sinh viên còn thấp, họ dễ nhầm lẫn và cần phải được giảng viên hướng dẫn kỹ. Bước nắm bắt và nhận biết chữ Hán rất quan trọng trong đọc hiểu sơ cấp. Nếu bước này bị xem nhẹ và làm không cẩn thận , sẽ ảnh hưởng lớn đến quá trình hiểu từ và câu của sinh viên.

1.1. Khi bắt đầu luyện đọc bài khóa , giảng viên có thể cho sinh viên đọc qua một lượt một số Hán tự xuất hiện trong bài, sau đó giải thích cặn kẽ ý nghĩa của từng Hán tự (nghĩa gốc và nghĩa xuất hiện trong bài đọc) , trong quá trình giảng giải, cần chú ý hiện tượng đồng âm, đa âm đa nghĩa nếu xuất hiện.

a. Hiện tượng đồng âm: Là những Hán tự có cùng cách đọc nhưng cách viết và ý nghĩa khác nhau

Vd: (1)“第”và“弟”đều đọc là “dì”, nhưng“第”dùng trước số nguyên để biểu thị thứ tự, còn“弟”chỉ em trai (em trai ruột, hoặc cũng có thể em trai cùng cha khác mẹ, cùng mẹ khác cha).

(2)“成”và“城”đều đọc là “chéng”, nhưng“成”là động từ biểu có nghĩa “hoàn thành” hoặc “thành công”; còn“城”là danh từ, chỉ “thành phố” hay “tường thành”

(3)“建”và“健”đều đọc “jiàn”, nhưng “建”là động từ có nghĩa “xây dựng”, “thiết lập” hay “tạo nên”; còn “健”là tính từ biểu thị nghĩa “mạnh khỏe” hay “cường tráng”

b. Hiện tượng đa âm đa nghĩa: là chỉ cùng một Hán tự nhưng có hai hoặc trên hai cách đọc, và mỗi một cách đọc mang một ý nghĩa hoặc cách dùng độc lập.

Vd: (1)“得”có ba âm đọc “dé”, “děi” và “de”. “dé” là động từ, biểu thị “đạt được” hay tiếp nhận ; “děi” là động từ năng nguyện, biểu thị “cần phải” hoặc “bắt buộc” ; “de” là trợ từ kết cấu

(2)“种”có ba âm đọc “zhòng”, “zhǒng” và “chóng”。“zhòng” là động từ, nghĩa là “trồng” ; “zhǒng”là lượng từ, biểu thị chủng loại ; “chóng” rất ít xuất hiện, là họ trong họ tên.

Giảng viên với mỗi một cách đọc và cách dùng phải giải thích kỹ càng cho sinh viên và cho ví dụ minh họa cụ thể

1.2. Thông qua một số hoạt động trên lớp và bài tập cụ thể sẽ nâng cao năng lực nhận biết Hán tự của sinh viên, cũng để tăng hứng thú học tập Hán tự đối với sinh viên.

+ Đoán nghĩa chữ Hán:

Sinh viên có thể căn cứ vào các bộ thủ đoán được nghĩa Hán tự.

Vd : 桃 có bộ mộc, sinh viên có thể đoán là một loại cây hoặc một loại thực vật; hay推 có bộ thủ, có thể là liên quan đến một hành động của tay.

+ Bài tập điền Hán tự để tạo thành từ:

Vd : (1) 他的衣....又....宜又好看。 (“服”/“便”)

(2) 今天天....很好, 很....快, 我们一起出去玩吧。 (“气”/“凉”)

+ Bài tập lựa chọn từ điền vào ô trống

Vd : (1) 我.....一次来中国是在2006年的。 (第 / 弟)

(2) 你的自行车....在哪儿了? (放/摆)

(3) 这些都是近几年的心....筑 (建/健)

2. Mở rộng vốn từ vựng

Trong môn nghe và môn nói thì ngữ liệu chủ yếu dựa vào văn nói. Nhưng trong môn đọc chủ yếu lấy ngữ liệu đa số từ văn viết, một bộ phận là lấy từ báo chí do đó là rất khó với trình độ sơ cấp. Trước khi bước vào quá trình đọc, giảng viên có thể giúp sinh viên bằng việc giải đáp từ vựng, giúp sinh viên nắm được những từ khó trong bài, như vậy sẽ có lợi hơn trong quá trình hiểu câu và đoạn văn.

2.1. Giải thích từ vựng

Có một số từ giảng viên có thể để sinh viên đoán trước dựa vào những kiến thức về Hán tự có sẵn, khi sinh viên đoán không được thì giảng viên có thể giải thích kỹ về ý nghĩa và cách dùng. Có một vài từ ngữ có thể đặt vào trong câu, kết hợp với từ khác giải thích

Vd: (1) 只要人人都**献**出一点**爱**，世界变成美好的人间。

(2) 音乐和歌曲可以**增进**人与人之间的**感情**。

(3) 这时候能看到蓝蓝的天上**飘**着白白的**云**。

Trong quá trình đọc, sinh viên có thể gặp phải một số từ ngữ dùng trong văn viết, thành ngữ hay ngữ cố định, trong quá trình soạn bài giảng viên phải thực sự chú ý đến điều này để giảng giải cho các em

Vd:

“者”；“位于”；“之一”；“奠基”；丰富多彩；“以...为...”；“把...作为”；“把...看为”...

2.2. Mở rộng vốn từ

Vd : (1) 展览→展览会；展览厅

(2) 歌：歌曲；歌词；歌手；歌星

2.3. Cung cấp thêm cho sinh viên tài liệu đọc

Việc cung cấp thêm nhiều tài liệu đọc cho sinh viên trong thời gian cho phép trên lớp hoặc về nhà sẽ là cơ hội tốt cho sinh viên mở rộng vốn từ. Ngoài bài khóa trên lớp, giảng viên có thể sắp xếp một vài bài đọc có nội dung tương tự gần giống với bài khóa, như vậy một mặt vừa củng cố kiến thức vừa học được trên lớp, vừa giúp sinh viên mở rộng thêm vốn từ.

3. Nâng cao vốn kiến thức về mọi mặt Trung Quốc như văn hóa, lịch sử...

Học bất cứ một ngôn ngữ nào trên thế giới ít nhiều chúng ta cũng phải hiểu về văn hóa, lịch sử...mọi mặt quốc gia ấy. Trong đa số tài liệu hay giáo trình đọc hiểu, kiến thức về văn hóa Trung Quốc hay một vài mảng kiến thức các lĩnh vực khác chắc chắn sẽ xuất hiện, và có thể sẽ là những điều lạ lẫm với sinh viên. Căn cứ vào từng nội dung học, giảng viên trước khi vào bài chính có thể giới thiệu sơ lược một chút kiến thức cơ bản về văn hóa, lịch sử...của

Trung Quốc để sinh viên có cái nhìn ban đầu về nội dung mình đang được học, như vậy vừa giúp sinh viên gia tăng hứng thú với môn học, vừa nâng cao hiệu quả đọc.

Vd: Khi học đến bài “ Tứ hợp viện Bắc Kinh”, giảng viên có thể giảng thêm về đặc điểm kiến trúc của Tứ hợp viện.

4. Nâng cao kỹ năng đọc

Nhiệm vụ chủ yếu của môn đọc hiểu là bồi dưỡng kỹ năng đọc hiểu cho sinh viên, các kỹ năng này sinh viên không thể tự có mà phải có sự hướng dẫn của giảng viên. Trong quá trình do hạn chế về mặt vốn từ và ngữ pháp nên sinh viên sẽ khó hoàn thành bài đọc một cách thuận lợi. Việc cung cấp những kỹ năng đọc cho sinh viên sẽ giúp nâng cao tốc độ đọc và tính chuẩn xác trong quá trình đọc. Dưới đây là một vài kỹ năng giảng viên có thể hướng dẫn cho sinh viên.

4.1. Kỹ năng đọc lướt: Đọc lướt là đọc sơ một lần cả đoạn văn, yêu cầu là phải hiểu được đại ý cả đoạn văn, nắm được nội dung chủ yếu cả đoạn.

4.2. Kỹ năng đoán nghĩa Hán tự: Mục đích là để nâng cao kỹ năng nhận biết Hán tự cho sinh viên. Có thể căn cứ bộ thủ để thực hiện điều này. Ví dụ chữ có bộ 木(bộ mộc) thì thường liên quan đến thực vật, chữ có bộ hỏa 火(bộ hỏa) thì đa phần liên quan đến lửa.

4.3. Kỹ năng đoán nghĩa từ thông qua ngữ cảnh: Trong một câu hoặc một đoạn thường xuất hiện những từ mới đối với sinh viên, đây là điều hết sức bình thường. Giảng viên nên dạy cho sinh viên mình biết cách căn cứ vào ngữ cảnh đoạn văn hoặc dựa vào những từ bên cạnh để đoán ra nghĩa từ mới.

4.4. Kỹ năng tìm từ trọng tâm: Trong quá trình đọc, đặc biệt là trong quá trình đọc nhanh, việc tìm kiếm thông tin chính rất quan trọng. Việc tìm kiếm ra những từ trọng tâm trong cả đoạn văn cũng đóng vai trò quan trọng trong việc hiểu nội dung chính đoạn văn.

4.5. Kỹ năng tìm câu trọng tâm: Những câu trọng tâm thường thể hiện hết ý chính của cả đoạn văn, cũng phản ánh được thái độ và quan điểm của tác giả. Câu trọng tâm thường xuất hiện ở đầu hoặc cuối đoạn văn. Giảng viên nên giúp sinh viên trong quá trình luyện đọc hình thành thói quen tìm câu trọng tâm. Nếu như sinh viên không thể tìm ra, giảng viên có thể sử dụng hình thức phân nhóm để các sinh viên có thể cùng hỗ trợ nhau học tập .

Thông qua bài nghiên cứu này tôi đã chỉ ra một số những khó khăn trở ngại của sinh viên ngành tiếng Trung giai đoạn sơ cấp khi học môn đọc hiểu để từ đó có những giải pháp về giảng dạy môn đọc hiểu phù hợp. Người giáo viên nên căn cứ vào trình độ sinh viên mình đang dạy để lựa chọn những cách dạy phù hợp với các em để giúp các em hạn chế những khó khăn trở ngại đang gặp phải , và cũng là để nâng cao chất lượng giảng dạy của mình

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MỘT SỐ VẤN ĐỀ TRONG DẠY VÀ HỌC MÔN KỸ NĂNG VIẾT NGÀNH TIẾNG TRUNG TẠI KHOA NGOẠI NGỮ ĐH MỞ TP. HỒ CHÍ MINH

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Tóm tắt

Trong bốn kỹ năng ngôn ngữ của tiếng Trung, kỹ năng viết được xem là một môn học khó đối với sinh viên chuyên ngữ. Các cấp lớp kỹ năng viết chuyên ngành tiếng Trung cũng không nằm ngoài hiện tượng đó, những vấn đề tồn tại có thể xuất phát từ giáo trình, phương pháp giảng dạy thậm chí là yếu tố của bản thân người dạy, đồng thời cũng rất có thể đến từ yếu tố kỹ năng học tập của người học. Vì vậy, với tinh thần cầu thị, bài viết mong muốn phân tích vài vấn đề từ góc độ phương pháp, giáo trình có ảnh hưởng đến dạy và học của môn kỹ năng viết tiếng Trung tại khoa Ngoại ngữ - Đại học Mở TP.HCM.

Từ khóa: *Kỹ năng viết; kỹ năng học tập; thụ đắc ngoại ngữ; phân tích lỗi sai*

1. Thực trạng và một số vấn đề của môn kỹ năng Viết

Những năm gần đây, giới nghiên cứu giảng dạy tiếng Trung ngày càng quan tâm nhiều hơn đến các vấn đề xuất hiện trong dạy và học môn kỹ năng viết. Một số học giả xuất phát từ góc độ quá trình thụ đắc ngoại ngữ hai, họ đã chú trọng đến kỹ năng học tập được đề cập trong nghiên cứu quá trình thụ đắc Hán ngữ, trong đó có khá nhiều bài viết tìm hiểu sâu quá trình tri nhận của người học, các kết luận nghiên cứu mang lại đều rất khả quan, ví dụ như trong bài viết “Nghiên cứu tri nhận ban đầu của SV nước ngoài trong việc học kỹ năng viết” của hai tác giả Xu Li Hua và Peng Lu Ying, họ cho rằng

nghiên cứu tri nhận ban đầu trong quá trình thụ đắc ngoại ngữ đang là một xu thế chung, nó có sự liên hệ với mật thiết với quá trình tri nhận của người học, nhưng nó lại thâm nhập sâu hơn vào chủ thể học tập, đó là một sự nghiên cứu về quá trình tri nhận bản thân của người học. Bài viết đã thông qua các câu hỏi khảo sát, phân tích bài tập và quan sát lớp học để phân tích và tìm hiểu kỹ năng tri nhận ban đầu của người học, từ đó đưa ra một số giải pháp hiệu quả qua việc hướng dẫn các kỹ năng tri nhận ban đầu cho người học để nâng cao khả năng viết.¹² Ngoài ra còn có hai tác giả Zhang Xiang Rong và Lin Li với bài “Phân tích kỹ năng ngữ dụng trong kỹ năng viết của lưu học sinh”¹³, bài viết đã đứng trên góc độ lý thuyết “Trò chơi ngôn ngữ” của Ludwig J.J Wittgenstein, nhấn mạnh quy tắc và ý nghĩa nghiên cứu ngôn ngữ từ hoạt động sử dụng ngôn ngữ, đồng thời đưa ra phương pháp luận xác đáng trong quá trình thụ đắc ngữ dụng. Bài viết đã dựa trên lý thuyết “Trò chơi ngôn ngữ” tiến hành phân tích ngữ dụng trong kỹ năng viết của du học sinh và đã đưa ra một số kiến nghị trong dạy học môn viết rất đáng suy ngẫm. Ngoài ra, còn có luận văn thạc sĩ “So sánh dạy học môn viết Việt Trung” của Nguyễn Thu Hằng, nội dung luận văn đã xoay quanh các vấn đề giáo trình, giáo viên và phương pháp giảng dạy tiến hành phân tích. Có thể nói đây là một công trình nghiên cứu khá thực tiễn khi tìm hiểu về thực trạng dạy và học môn viết tại Việt Nam và Trung Quốc, tuy nhiên bài viết cũng chỉ dừng lại ở mức độ mô tả mà chưa có những dẫn chứng thiết thực từ góc độ lý luận dạy học ngôn ngữ để đưa ra các giải pháp hữu hiệu hơn. Cho nên tác giả có thể đã nắm được vấn đề, nhưng các kết luận vẫn chưa thực sự khách quan; hoặc như trong bài viết “Nghiên cứu về phương pháp nhiệm vụ và phương pháp quá trình trong môn viết” của Liu Yu Meng¹⁴, tác giả đã đề cao hai phương pháp này vì đó là một trong những phương pháp những năm

¹² Xu Li Hua, Peng Lu Ying “Nghiên cứu tri nhận ban đầu của SV nước ngoài trong việc học kỹ năng viết”, Tạp chí khoa học ĐHSP Triết Giang, số 6-2010

¹³ Zhang Xiang Rong, Lin Li (2012), Phân tích kỹ năng ngữ dụng trong kỹ năng viết của lưu học sinh, Tạp chí khoa học ĐH Ngoại thương ngoại ngữ Quảng Đông

¹⁴ Liu Yu Meng (2014), Nghiên cứu về phương pháp nhiệm vụ và Phương pháp quá trình trong giảng dạy môn viết, Tạp chí khoa học ĐH Cấp Nhĩ Tân

gần đây thường được áp dụng khi biên soạn giáo trình môn viết, vì hai phương pháp này có thể quan sát được và trắc lượng được sự tiến bộ của người học. Những thành quả trên đều khiến cho chúng ta thấy phấn khởi, vì điều đó đã chứng tỏ rằng kỹ năng viết không còn là một hiện tượng xa lạ và “kém hấp dẫn” nữa, đó cũng là nguyên nhân khiến cho các học giả đứng trên bình diện quá trình thụ đắc Hán ngữ để tìm ra các giải pháp thiết thực trong giảng dạy. Trong phạm vi bài viết này, chúng tôi sẽ chú trọng phân tích và trình bày vài vấn đề xoay quanh giáo trình, phương pháp giảng dạy, thực trạng của sinh viên và một số lỗi sai trong quá trình viết câu, để góp thêm tiếng nói trong việc nâng cao hiệu quả dạy và học bộ môn này.

Kỹ năng viết là một trong bốn học phần kỹ năng ngôn ngữ bên cạnh các kỹ năng nghe, nói, đọc trong chương trình đào tạo tiếng Trung Quốc. So với các kỹ năng khác, sinh viên tiếp xúc môn học này tương đối trễ hơn so với các kỹ năng khác. Phần lớn sinh viên đều xuất phát từ con số 0 khi vào học chương trình này, khi vào học năm thứ nhất, sinh viên đều phải trải qua các giai đoạn ngữ âm, bộ thủ, chữ đơn, mẫu câu đơn giản để tích lũy dần kiến thức ngôn ngữ, cũng có nghĩa là trước khi có năng lực trình bày ngôn ngữ (out-put), nhiệm vụ của các học phần trước là tích lũy kiến thức từ vựng, ngữ pháp và mẫu câu. Môn kỹ năng viết của ngành tiếng Trung khoa ngoại ngữ trường đại học Mở TP.HCM thường được đưa vào giảng dạy ở học kỳ 4, sau khi sinh viên đã học hết học phần tiếng Trung Quốc tổng hợp 3, nên có thể nói là môn kỹ năng viết được đưa vào giảng dạy khi sinh viên đã đạt đến cấp độ sơ cấp. Vậy nếu theo thiết kế của chương trình, đáng lý ra trong lúc học kỹ năng viết, sinh viên sẽ dễ dàng tiếp thu và có thể vận dụng được những kỹ năng theo yêu cầu, đồng thời dễ dàng kiểm soát được ngôn ngữ output của mình. Song, hiệu quả dạy học thường không như được mong đợi, rốt cuộc khâu dạy học nào đã xảy ra vấn đề hay do yếu tố môi trường chủ quan lẫn khách quan đưa đến? Chúng tôi cho rằng, tất cả các hiện tượng nêu trên đều có khả năng ảnh hưởng đến quá trình dạy học.

Ngoài ra, với tư cách là một môn kỹ năng ngôn ngữ, kỹ năng viết không là một phân môn độc lập, mà có một sự liên hệ biện

chúng và hỗ trợ bổ sung từ những môn kỹ năng khác. Ví dụ như trong mỗi một học kỳ, việc xếp môn viết và kỹ năng đọc phải có mức độ kiến thức liên thông nhau, những ngữ liệu bao gồm các kiến thức lịch sử, văn hóa, kinh tế của môn đọc hiểu có thể làm kiến thức nền cho môn kỹ năng viết, để khả năng diễn ngôn của sinh viên có thể đạt đến mức độ khả quan hơn; ngược lại, ngôn ngữ diễn đạt lưu loát chính xác, phù hợp với ngôn ngữ đích của kỹ năng viết cũng sẽ hỗ trợ kỹ năng khái quát vấn đề và tư duy logic trong đọc hiểu các văn bản. Cùng với kỹ năng viết, kỹ năng nói cũng có những đặc thù tương tự như lối trình bày ngôn ngữ output, khác chẳng là kỹ năng nói sử dụng ngữ âm để trình bày nội dung, các chủ đề cuộc sống, học tập, quan điểm trong kỹ năng nói đều có thể trở thành các dàn ý trước để đưa vào các bài tập yêu cầu của kỹ năng viết. Với tư cách là môn chủ đạo trong chương trình đào tạo, môn tiếng Trung Quốc tổng hợp cũng nên được coi trọng với vai trò và ý nghĩa vốn có của nó, các kiến thức về từ vựng, ngữ pháp, ngữ nghĩa, ngữ dụng nên được xem là các yếu tố có liên quan trực tiếp các môn kỹ năng khác, trong đó việc giảng dạy từ vựng và ngữ pháp phải được coi trọng, chỉ có như vậy, các môn kỹ năng ngôn ngữ mới có thể phát huy tác dụng và vai trò của mình, để cùng hướng đến mục tiêu chung của chương trình đào tạo.

2. Giáo trình và phương pháp giảng dạy

Các lý luận và phương pháp dạy học chỉ có thể phát huy tác dụng tích cực khi nó được áp dụng trong môi trường dạy học nhất định và nhắm đến đối tượng người học có chủ đích. Vậy nguyên nhân gì có thể khiến một sinh viên có kết quả học tập tương đối khá nhưng lại trở nên khá bị động trong giờ học môn viết và không thể phát huy ưu thế sẵn có của mình? Với những băn khoăn này, chúng tôi đã làm một cuộc phỏng vấn bỏ túi với sinh viên các khóa 2012, 2013 và 2014. Để có thể chế tác ra những tác phẩm kiệt xuất thì công cụ được xem là thứ quan trọng, cho nên nếu giáo trình có thể đem đến sự hứng thú cho người học, chắc chắn sẽ phát huy được tính tích cực của sinh viên. Ngành tiếng Trung trường đại học Mở TP.HCM kể từ năm 2005 thành lập trở lại đây, các giáo trình được đưa vào giảng

dạy phần lớn là giáo trình do NXB Đại học ngôn ngữ Bắc Kinh xuất bản, trong đó “Giáo trình môn viết tiếng Trung” nằm trong Bộ sách kỹ năng ngôn ngữ Hán ngữ của NXB này. Quyển giáo trình này gồm có 17 bài học, nội dung bao gồm cách sử dụng dấu câu, văn ứng dụng (viết mẫu tin ngắn, bản tin, thông báo), xem tranh viết nội dung, phóng tác, văn trần thuật, văn mô tả, văn giải thích, ký sự... Có thể nói rằng, quyển giáo trình này khá điển hình khi đã bao gồm hầu hết các thể loại văn viết, sinh viên ngành tiếng Trung khi học môn viết đều phải biết nắm được các kỹ năng viết các dạng bài này. Song, cũng chính vì như thế, đối với một sinh viên mặt bằng kiến thức tiếng Trung khởi điểm thấp như thế, vốn từ tích lũy được chưa đến 1000 từ, bỗng chốc được yêu cầu viết các dạng câu và ngữ đoạn phục vụ cho những bài tập yêu cầu này, điều đó hoàn toàn không đảm bảo được tính vừa sức trong giáo học pháp. Giáo trình trên được học trong 2 học kỳ, sau đó giáo trình “Kỹ năng viết tiếng Trung” dùng cho sinh viên du học sinh năm thứ 3 do hai tác giả Wu Zhen Bang và Lv Wen Zhen biên soạn được đưa vào giảng dạy tiếp cho kỹ năng viết 3 và 4. Đây là quyển giáo trình được xuất bản năm 1994 và được NXB ĐH ngôn ngữ Bắc Kinh tái bản lại vào năm 2004 với lần in thứ 7, giáo trình gồm 10 chương bao gồm: Ký sự du lịch, văn giải thích, văn nghị luận, tùy bút, kể chuyện, viết cảm nhận, phê bình văn học và khóa luận tốt nghiệp.

Nhìn chung, cả hai quyển giáo trình như đã đề cập trên đều có những ưu khuyết điểm của mình, tính mục đích của tác giả rất rõ ràng trong quá trình biên soạn, trong mỗi chương ngoài giới thiệu các kỹ năng viết ra, giáo trình còn cung cấp khá nhiều bài văn mẫu với nội dung phong phú, mục đích của tác giả là muốn hỗ trợ, rèn người học tìm hiểu các mẫu câu, ngữ nghĩa câu thông qua quá trình đọc hiểu để từng bước mô phỏng. Tuy nhiên, đây sẽ là con dao hai lưỡi nếu như giảng viên quá sa đà vào nội dung văn mẫu, nó sẽ chiếm khá nhiều thời gian của cả thầy lẫn trò khi cố gắng tìm hiểu nội dung. Một quyển giáo trình được cho ra đời và sử dụng trong khoảng thời gian dài như thế, bản thân quyển giáo trình đã tự nói lên giá trị và sức hấp dẫn của nó.

Tuy nhiên, theo đà phát triển không ngừng của lĩnh vực giảng dạy tiếng Trung cho người nước ngoài, nhất là các nghiên cứu trong những năm gần đây đã ứng dụng khá nhiều thành quả nghiên cứu của ngành ngôn ngữ học ứng dụng của các học giả phương Tây, nên các khó khăn và hạn chế trong giảng dạy tiếng Trung cũng từng bước được gỡ bỏ. Cho nên trong hoàn cảnh dạy học mới, hai quyển giáo trình đã đề cập cũng đã hoàn thành sứ mạng lịch sử của mình. Căn cứ theo một cuộc điều tra quy mô nhỏ đối với SV khóa 2012 và 2013, có 85% SV cho rằng nội dung của hai quyển giáo trình này lạc hậu; 70% SV không có hứng thú với các nội dung của bài văn mẫu; có 89% SV nhớ lại khi mới bắt đầu học môn kỹ năng viết 1 cảm thấy rất khó khăn; có đến 83.2% SV khi bắt tay vào viết câu nhưng không hề có ý tưởng, và các câu viết ra đều không đúng ngữ pháp hoặc không diễn đạt được suy nghĩ của mình. Từ các số liệu này cho thấy, hai quyển giáo trình kể trên tồn tại một mức độ khó nhất định cho sinh viên, điều tệ hại hơn là nó sẽ khiến cho sự hứng thú học tập của sinh viên giảm xuống, vì áp lực tâm lý sẽ trở thành một trở lực gây cản trở cho động lực học tập của người học.

Trên cơ sở đó, kể từ năm 2014, chúng tôi đã mạnh dạn thay mới giáo trình môn kỹ năng viết. Các quyển “Giáo trình viết sơ cấp” và “Giáo trình viết trung cấp” nằm Bộ giáo trình “Phát triển Hán ngữ” do Li Quan và Cai Yong Qiang chủ biên và quyển “Quá trình viết tiếng Trung dành cho người nước ngoài” của Yang Li đã được lựa chọn như một giải pháp tạm thời nhằm hỗ trợ việc rèn luyện kỹ năng viết cho sinh viên chuyên ngữ. Song song đó, chúng tôi còn đưa bộ giáo trình “Trải nghiệm tiếng Trung” (体验汉语) – Giáo trình kỹ năng viết như là giáo trình tham khảo bắt buộc cho kỹ năng viết 1 và 2. Có thể nói, các giáo trình này đều có ưu điểm là cụ thể hóa được các thành quả nghiên cứu trong lý luận dạy học tiếng Trung. Ưu điểm của giáo trình hoàn toàn lấy người học làm trung tâm như thông qua việc lập bản đồ tư duy, viết các từ khóa để sau đó dùng phép liên tưởng để nối kết thành câu v.v... Nhưng khi được áp dụng vào giảng dạy tại ĐH Mở TP.HCM, nó vẫn bộc lộ một số vấn đề như các mô đun kiến thức bài học quá chi tiết và dàn trải, thời lượng mỗi bài học

chỉ thiết kế cho 2 tiết, tuy đã đảm bảo được tính vừa sức chung cho người học, nhưng khi đưa vào tình huống dạy học thực tế thì nó lại trở nên quá công kênh. Vì với thời lượng 4.5 tiết một buổi học cho môn 45 tiết, thực học chỉ 10 tuần, mỗi buổi học dạy 1 bài thì lại quá nhẹ nhàng, nếu một buổi dạy 2 bài thì lại khiến cho SV bị “bội thực” kiến thức trong khi nội dung mỗi một cấp lớp phải học khoảng 18 bài. Vì vậy giáo trình “Trải nghiệm Hán ngữ” tuy rất phù hợp với trình độ và mặt bằng kiến thức của SV, nhưng vẫn tồn tại một số bất cập vừa nêu.

“Giáo trình viết trung cấp” của Li Quan và Cai Yong Qiang được thiết kế gồm 15 bài, phần lớn nội dung đều là văn trần thuật, có một đặc điểm là các bài văn mẫu đều rất ngắn gọn, thường không quá 500 chữ, có thể thấy được rằng chủ đích của người biên soạn không nhằm thông qua văn mẫu để luyện tập câu, mà thông qua các dạng bài tập yêu cầu để tiến hành trình bày, diễn đạt ngữ đoạn, nội dung quyền giáo trình luôn tuân thủ quy tắc “dạy học theo nhiệm vụ thực tế” (Task-Based), sau mỗi một bài văn mẫu, sẽ có các câu hỏi xoay quanh nội dung để yêu cầu người học trả lời theo kiểu đọc hiểu, mà rất ít chú trọng đến việc sử dụng từ vựng, ngữ nghĩa, mẫu câu để luyện viết câu. Cho nên, tuy là “nhiệm vụ” đã được đặt ra, nhưng trong giảng dạy thực tế lại có rất ít dịp để người học thực hành viết câu để diễn đạt theo yêu cầu của đề bài, nên việc sử dụng giáo trình này có thực sự đem lại hiệu quả hay không vẫn còn phải xem xét lại. Giáo trình “Quá trình viết tiếng Trung dành cho người nước ngoài” của tác giả Yang Li lại cung cấp cho người học khá nhiều dữ liệu thông tin thông qua hàng loạt bài văn mẫu, tuy là phần đầu mỗi bài học trong giáo trình đều có đề cập đến kiến thức kỹ năng viết, nhưng theo sự quan sát của chúng tôi, người học vẫn không thực sự mặn mà với các hướng dẫn trong đó, vì theo nhận định của Zhou Hong và Bao Xu Yuan trong “Phân tích và khảo sát giáo trình viết tiếng Trung”, họ cho rằng quan điểm của tác giả biên soạn là xuất phát từ chủ nghĩa hình thức trong ngôn ngữ học và chủ nghĩa hành vi trong tâm lý học; tác giả nhấn mạnh sự mô phỏng, xem trọng kinh nghiệm, họ chủ trương thông qua việc đọc hiểu và phân tích ngữ nghĩa văn

mẫu để luyện viết. Đọc giá cuối cùng là giáo viên, do giáo viên chỉ chú trọng đến thành phẩm là bài viết hoàn chỉnh nên sẽ tương đối xao nhãng các khâu trong quá trình hình thành bài viết.¹⁵ Nhiệm vụ dạy học trong giáo trình là hoàn thành câu, bài tập thay thế và mô phỏng, diễn đạt mẫu câu, sắp xếp đoạn và đọc hiểu văn bản, các dạng bài tập này nhằm mục đích nâng cao tính chuẩn xác diễn đạt của người học, nhưng ở một khía cạnh nào đó lại hạn chế rất nhiều đến tự do tư duy diễn đạt của người học.

Nói tóm lại, các giáo trình được lựa chọn sử dụng cho môn kỹ năng viết không nằm ngoài mục đích rèn luyện cách sử dụng từ vựng, ngữ nghĩa, ngữ dụng để từ đó người học có thể quá độ lên diễn đạt ngữ đoạn và cuối cùng là có thể trình một nội dung hoàn chỉnh theo ngôn ngữ viết. Do vậy, khi sử dụng các giáo trình đang được lưu hành hiện nay, điều băn khoăn lớn nhất là giáo viên làm sao thông qua việc giới thiệu văn mẫu, ứng dụng phương pháp dạy học theo nhiệm vụ, dạy học theo quá trình để giúp người học có thể kiểm soát tốt vấn đề từ vựng, câu cú sau đó là diễn đạt theo ngữ đoạn. Điều này cũng phù hợp với yêu cầu của chức năng viết mà ông Lv Bi Song đã đề cập trong công trình nghiên cứu “Giáo dục ngôn ngữ và giảng dạy tiếng Trung”, ông cho rằng rèn luyện “viết” là phải bắt đầu việc viết câu ngắn, câu dài, diễn đạt câu cho suôn sẻ trước đã, triệt tiêu các cản trở tâm lý bằng cách giảm áp lực tư tưởng cho người học.¹⁶ Có lẽ đây cũng là một nhận thức chung của giới giảng dạy tiếng Trung là muốn nỗ lực để giúp người học có những bước đột phá khi học kỹ năng viết. Vì thế, cho dù giáo trình có mới mẻ ra sao, nguồn kiến thức phong phú như thế nào nhưng khi được đưa vào giảng dạy thực tế, vẫn phải lấy người học làm trung tâm, kích thích sự tích cực và tiềm năng trong việc học môn kỹ năng viết trên nền tảng kiến thức ngôn ngữ sẵn có.

¹⁵ Zhou Hong, Bao Xu Yuan, “Phân tích và khảo sát giáo trình viết tiếng Trung”, Tạp chí khoa học ĐHSPT Vân Nam, số 1 năm 2012

¹⁶ Lv Bi Song (2005), Giáo dục ngôn ngữ và giảng dạy tiếng Trung, NXB Nghiên cứu và giảng dạy ngoại ngữ, trang 68

3. Một số lỗi sai thường gặp trong quá trình viết

Việc giảng dạy môn kỹ năng viết vừa là một nhiệm vụ vất vả, vừa là một công việc tốn khá nhiều thời gian của người dạy trong khâu sửa bài. Ngoài nhiệm vụ lên lớp, truyền tải các kiến thức về kỹ năng viết, người dạy còn phải đảm đương công việc là tìm và chỉ ra các lỗi sai cho người học, có thể nói việc dạy kỹ năng viết không thể tách rời khỏi khâu sửa bài. Kỹ năng tri nhận ban đầu trong kỹ năng viết được đề cập trong quá trình thụ đắc ngoại ngữ, Denine (1993) đã cho rằng tri nhận là quá trình nhận thức về tri nhận, người học có tinh thần độc lập cần phải có sự hiểu biết về quá trình tri nhận đó, sử dụng các kỹ năng học tập phù hợp cho bản thân mình một cách hợp lý. Phải bồi dưỡng cho người học khả năng quan sát và đánh giá được năng lực bản thân để họ có thể biết được trình độ của mình đang ở đâu, trên cơ sở đó mới có thể giúp họ ước lượng được khoảng cách với mục tiêu mà mình đang hướng tới mà không phải đi đường vòng. Vì thế, hỗ trợ người học nhìn ra được lỗi sai trong kỹ năng viết cũng là một trong những kỹ năng học tập cần được chú trọng.

Trong các hiện tượng lỗi sai về kỹ năng viết của sinh viên ngành tiếng Trung khoa Ngoại ngữ ĐH Mở TP.HCM, thường thấy nhất là hiện tượng chịu sự ảnh hưởng của tiếng mẹ đẻ, lỗi phối hợp sai từ vựng và lỗi xếp sai thành phần câu cũng là một hiện tượng thường gặp. Hiện tượng chịu sự ảnh hưởng tiếng mẹ đẻ bắt nguồn từ sự chuyển di ngôn ngữ tiêu cực (negative transfer) đến ngôn ngữ đích, một trong những nguyên nhân thường thấy nhất là do người học hình thành từ sức ý tâm lý, bất cứ câu ngắn câu dài đều dịch sang tiếng mẹ đẻ, từ đó sẽ hình thành thói quen khi diễn đạt bằng ngôn ngữ đích cũng sẽ dùng phương pháp đó để ứng phó, và dĩ nhiên ngữ nghĩa chuyển dịch trực tiếp từ tiếng mẹ đẻ như thế sẽ không chính xác. Ví dụ:

- 试想象一个猎人准备着击落那些只飞在空中的鸟。
与枪在手上，他看上天空，但看不到哪只鸟。(HV14 某学生)

- (Thử tưởng tượng xem một người thợ săn đang chuẩn bị bắn hạ những con chim đang bay. Với cây súng trong tay, anh ta nhìn lên bầu trời, nhưng lại nhìn không thấy con chim nào. - một SV HV14)

Từ câu trên, rõ ràng là sinh viên đã chịu sự ảnh hưởng tiêu cực từ tiếng mẹ đẻ khi diễn đạt ý câu trên bằng tiếng Trung, có thể thấy rằng sinh viên này vẫn còn dùng tư duy tiếng mẹ đẻ để diễn đạt ngôn ngữ đích, kết quả là ngữ pháp, ngữ nghĩa đều không chính xác trong câu tiếng Trung. Nhất là với trạng ngữ “Với cây súng trong tay”, ở đây đã dịch trực tiếp thành “与枪在手上” ; ngoài ra sinh viên muốn nói “bắn chim” (打鸟) hay “nhìn chim” (看鸟), ngữ nghĩa đều khá mơ hồ. Điều đáng khẳng định là sinh viên này vẫn có kiến thức ngữ pháp cơ bản nhất định, biết sử dụng trợ động từ “着” ở động từ thứ nhất khi trong câu có đến hai động từ, nhưng sử dụng gì để bắn hạ chim thì trong câu vẫn chưa nói rõ ràng. Vì vậy, giáo viên cần phải sửa đúng câu thành

“试想象，一个猎人拿着枪准备击落那些在空中飞翔的鸟。枪虽然拿在手上，但他却不能打到鸟。” sau đó giải thích tỉ mỉ tại sao phải nói như vậy để sinh viên hiểu.

Một hiện tượng phối hợp sai từ vựng cũng thường được tìm thấy trong bài tập của sinh viên, ví dụ:

- 要学习汉语有高的效果就需要学习有系统。 (HV15某学生)
- (Muốn học tiếng Trung có hiệu quả cao thì cần phải học có hệ thống. - một SV HV15)

Chúng ta không khó nhận thấy đây cũng là một sản phẩm chịu sự ảnh hưởng tiêu cực từ tiếng mẹ đẻ, ngoài hiện tượng chuyển di ngôn ngữ tiêu cực, sinh viên này còn có sơ sót trong việc phối hợp động từ và tân ngữ, như “效果” (hiệu quả) thường phối hợp với động từ “提高” (nâng cao), “达到” (đạt đến) trong tiếng Trung, thế mà ở đây sinh viên này dùng trực tiếp “有高效果” (có hiệu quả cao). Ngoài ra, sinh viên này còn mắc phải lỗi ngữ pháp là động từ “学习” không thể chịu sự bổ nghĩa bởi cụm từ “有系统” (có hệ thống), mặc dù cách nói trong tiếng Việt “học tập có hệ thống” là đúng. Vì thế, giáo viên cần phải giúp sinh viên chữa lại câu đúng là “想提高学习汉语的效果就需要有系统地学习”, đồng thời

giải thích rõ các hiện tượng ngữ pháp vừa nêu.

Chúng ta hãy tìm hiểu thêm một ví dụ dưới đây, ta sẽ thấy rằng việc phân tích trật tự từ và thành phần câu trong quá trình giảng dạy thường ngày là hết sức cần thiết, ví dụ:

- 我们要经常练习通过看电影、听音录音、跟朋友交流等等。(HV15某学生)
- (Chúng ta phải thường xuyên luyện tập thông qua việc xem phim, nghe băng, trò chuyện với bạn bè v.v... – một SV VH15)

Câu mắc phải lỗi ngữ pháp là do sinh viên không có chú ý đến “通过” là giới từ, nó phải kết hợp với ngữ động từ trước khi đứng trước vị ngữ động từ để làm trạng ngữ, thế là vị trí của thành phần câu đã bị đặt sai nên ảnh hưởng đến sự chính xác của câu. Giáo viên ngoài giúp sinh viên sửa đúng lại thành

“我们要经常通过看电影、听录音、跟朋友交流等等来练习，
cần phải giải thích rõ vị trí đúng của các thành phần câu.

Ngoài ra, trong quá trình giảng dạy môn kỹ năng viết, giáo viên cần phải chú trọng kỹ năng sử dụng ngữ dụng của sinh viên, giúp học sinh từng bước thoát khỏi sự ảnh hưởng tiêu cực từ việc chuyển di ngôn ngữ, nâng cao khả năng diễn đạt ngôn ngữ đích. Vì kỹ năng sử dụng ngữ dụng đòi hỏi người học cần phải tận dụng ngữ cảnh nhất định, thông qua sự lựa chọn kết cấu ngôn ngữ để sản sinh ra ý nghĩa ngôn ngữ cụ thể nào đó, từ đó đạt được mục đích giao tiếp ngôn ngữ, vì theo Liu Sen Lin (2007), kỹ năng sử dụng ngữ dụng thể hiện được năng lực viết câu của người học thông qua việc nắm vững ngữ cảnh; Việc lựa chọn và thực thi kỹ năng ngữ dụng có liên quan đến sự kiểm soát ngữ cảnh, nguyên tắc ngữ dụng và việc sử dụng các kết cấu ngôn ngữ.

4. Kết luận

Tổng kết lại những vấn đề đã trình bày ở trên, kỹ năng viết (viết lách) là một quá trình chuyển hóa suy nghĩ bằng văn viết, trong đó bao gồm một loạt các hoạt động tri nhận và các vấn đề, kỹ năng cần

giải quyết (Jessica Williams, 2007). Vì vậy, làm cách nào để phát động tính tích cực của sinh viên, giáo viên ngoài chú trọng các yếu tố tâm lý tri nhận và kỹ năng học tập trong quá trình giảng dạy môn kỹ năng viết, còn phải có kế hoạch hỗ trợ sinh viên tiếp cận các mục tiêu học tập trong bộ môn. Cũng chính vì thế, ngoài việc lựa chọn hoặc biên soạn một bộ sách phục vụ giảng dạy một cách thiết thực cho người học, phù hợp với điều kiện, môi trường dạy học tại Việt Nam là một nhiệm vụ không thể không nghĩ đến. Vì chỉ có xuất phát từ lợi ích người học, lấy người học làm trung tâm, lấy việc giảng dạy làm chủ đạo mới có thể hướng người học đến một lớp học bổ ích và tràn đầy niềm vui, giúp người học có thể diễn đạt suy nghĩ, tư tưởng của mình một cách tự do, thoải mái trải qua quá trình rèn luyện kỹ năng viết, hoàn thành nhiệm vụ học tập đã không còn là nguyện vọng của người đứng lớp, đó còn là một niềm mong ước chung của những người đang làm công tác giảng dạy tiếng Trung.

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BÀN VỀ BIÊN SOẠN GIÁO TRÌNH VĂN HỌC TRUNG QUỐC CHO SINH VIÊN NGÀNH NGÔN NGỮ TRUNG QUỐC

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Tóm tắt

Cùng với sự tinh giảm số lượng tín chỉ của chương trình đào tạo ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc, số tín chỉ của học phần Văn học Trung Quốc được điều chỉnh còn 2 tín chỉ. Các giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc hiện nay chưa có giáo trình nào đề cập đến cả hai mảng kiến thức văn học sử và các tác phẩm văn học ở cả giai đoạn cổ đại và giai đoạn hiện đương đại, thời lượng giáo trình cũng không phù hợp để dùng giảng dạy cho học phần Văn học Trung Quốc 2 tín chỉ. Bài viết đưa ra các nguyên tắc biên soạn và những kiến nghị về kết cấu và nội dung giáo trình.

Từ khoá: *Biên soạn; Giáo trình; Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc; Văn học Trung Quốc*

1. Đặt vấn đề

Văn học Trung Quốc là một học phần thuộc khối kiến thức văn hoá – văn học của chương trình đào tạo ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc bậc đại học. Trong các chương trình đào tạo ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc bậc đại học trước đây, mảng kiến thức văn học Trung Quốc được chia làm hai học phần: Lược sử văn học Trung Quốc và Trích giảng văn học Trung Quốc. Song, trong những năm gần đây các trường tiến hành tinh giảm số lượng tín chỉ ở tất cả các chương trình đào tạo, số tín chỉ dành cho mảng kiến thức văn học Trung Quốc cũng vì thế mà giảm còn 2 tín chỉ (30 tiết).

Có thể thấy, thời lượng học phần Văn học Trung Quốc là khá ít, nhưng khối lượng kiến thức mà học phần này cần truyền tải lại tương

đổi nhiều. Điều này cho thấy, giảng viên phụ trách học phần phải chịu một áp lực rất lớn, đồng thời đòi hỏi sinh viên phải có khả năng tự học cao, đặc biệt là nhu cầu về một giáo trình có thể đáp ứng đầy đủ các nội dung cần thiết của học phần Văn học Trung Quốc hiện nay.

Trong bài viết này, trước tiên chúng tôi nêu lên tình hình giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc hiện nay, trên cơ sở đó đưa ra các nguyên tắc biên soạn giáo trình, các kiến nghị về kết cấu và nội dung giáo trình.

2. Tình hình giáo trình hiện nay

Không giống với sinh viên ngành Ngữ văn, sinh viên các ngành ngôn ngữ nước ngoài phải tìm hiểu các kiến thức về văn học sử, thường thức các tác phẩm văn học nước ngoài bằng chính ngoại ngữ mà mình đang theo học. Cụ thể ở đây, sinh viên ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc phải học văn học sử Trung Quốc, thường thức các tác phẩm văn học Trung Quốc bằng tiếng Trung Quốc. Tuy nhiên, các giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc được xuất bản ở Việt Nam hiện nay hầu hết đều được biên soạn bằng tiếng Việt, không đáp ứng được mục tiêu học phần Văn học Trung Quốc của ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc. Tài liệu để phục vụ cho công tác giảng dạy học phần Văn học Trung Quốc tại các trường đại học đa phần là các giáo trình do các giảng viên Trung Quốc biên soạn hoặc các bài giảng do giảng viên Việt Nam tự biên soạn.

Theo khảo sát của chúng tôi, số lượng giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc viết bằng tiếng Trung và được xuất bản chính thức tại Trung Quốc là khá ít. Cụ thể như sau:

STT	Tên giáo trình (Tác giả, Nhà xuất bản, Năm xuất bản)	Nội dung giáo trình			
		Lược sử văn học		Tác phẩm văn học	
		Cổ đại	Hiện đương đại	Cổ đại	Hiện đương đại
1	中国古代文学史教程 (Ou-yang Zhen-ren chủ biên, Nxb. Đại học Bắc Kinh, 2007)	x			

STT	Tên giáo trình (Tác giả, Nhà xuất bản, Năm xuất bản)	Nội dung giáo trình			
		Lược sử văn học		Tác phẩm văn học	
		Cổ đại	Hiện đương đại	Cổ đại	Hiện đương đại
2	中国现当代文学史教程 (Ou-yang Zhen-ren chủ biên, Nxb. Đại học Bắc Kinh, 2007)		x		
3	中国文学基础 (Hu Jian-jun, Nxb. Đại học Giao thông Thượng Hải, 2010)			x	x
4	留学生中国文学读本 (Yao Hong-qiang chủ biên, Nxb. Học Lâm, 2010)			x	x
5	中国文学 (Li Hong-xiang, Li Qing-yu, Nxb. Đại học Sư phạm Hoa Đông, 2012)			x	x
6	中国当代文学作品赏析教程 (Song Zhi-ming, Nxb. Đại học Ngôn ngữ Bắc Kinh, 2013)		x		x
7	中国古代文学作品选讲 (Zhang Ying-Wei, Nxb. Đại học Nam Khai, 2014)			x	
8	中国当代文学 (Li Chun-yu, Nxb. Đại học Ngôn ngữ Bắc Kinh, 2016)		x		x

Từ bảng trên cho thấy, các giáo trình hoặc chỉ đề cập đến kiến thức văn học sử của một giai đoạn, hoặc chỉ đề cập đến các tác phẩm văn học, hoặc chỉ đề cập đến kiến thức văn học sử và các tác phẩm văn học của một giai đoạn, vẫn chưa có giáo trình nào đề cập đến cả hai

mảng kiến thức văn học sử và các tác phẩm văn học ở cả giai đoạn cổ đại và giai đoạn hiện đương đại. Nói cách khác, các giáo trình hiện có trên thị trường vẫn chưa thể đáp ứng được nhu cầu đào tạo của học phần Văn học Trung Quốc cho sinh viên ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc. Vì vậy, chúng ta cần tiến hành biên soạn một giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc phù hợp với tình hình thực tế ở Việt Nam.

3. Nguyên tắc biên soạn

Theo chúng tôi, việc biên soạn Giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc cho sinh viên ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc cần tuân thủ các nguyên tắc sau:

3.1. Phù hợp với thời lượng học phần

Số tín chỉ của học phần Văn học Trung Quốc hiện nay là 2 tín chỉ (30 tiết). Với thời lượng giờ giảng như vậy, giáo trình không thể bao quát hết toàn bộ các kiến thức về văn học sử và các tác phẩm tiêu biểu của văn học Trung Quốc. Vì vậy, giáo trình chỉ nên tập trung vào những kiến thức văn học sử quan trọng và một vài tác phẩm văn học tiêu biểu của văn học Trung Quốc.

3.2. Phù hợp với trình độ tiếng Trung của sinh viên

Học phần Văn học Trung Quốc yêu cầu sinh viên phải có trình độ tiếng Trung từ HSK cấp 4 trở lên. Việc biên soạn giáo trình cần căn cứ vào trình độ tiếng Trung của sinh viên để biên soạn nội dung văn học sử và lựa chọn các tác phẩm văn học. Trong các tác phẩm văn học nổi tiếng, ưu tiên lựa chọn các tác phẩm có ngôn ngữ phù hợp với trình độ của sinh viên. Với những tác phẩm văn học buộc phải đưa vào chương trình, nhưng độ khó tương đối lớn, cần tiến hành chú thích. Với những từ ngữ nằm ngoài bảng từ vựng HSK cấp 4, cần có những thích nghĩa, giúp sinh viên thường thức tác phẩm văn học được tốt hơn. Ngôn ngữ để sử dụng trong giới thiệu, phân tích, hướng dẫn đọc tác phẩm văn học hay để biên soạn nội dung văn học sử phải đơn giản, dễ hiểu, cần tham khảo những từ ngữ thường dùng trong bảng từ vựng HSK. Như thế, giáo trình sẽ phù hợp với trình độ tiếng Trung của sinh viên, giúp sinh viên có cảm giác thoải mái và tin rằng mình có thể học tốt được học phần này.

3.3. Kết hợp tính phổ cập, tính thú vị và tính học thuật

Giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc dành cho sinh viên ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc không giống như giáo trình dành cho sinh viên ngành Ngữ văn. Giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc dành cho sinh viên ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc hướng đến tính phổ cập, giúp sinh viên có được một cái nhìn khái quát về văn học Trung Quốc. Khi biên soạn, cũng cần chú ý đến tính thú vị, có thể kết hợp giới thiệu cuộc đời tác giả với tác phẩm văn học, văn học sử, tăng tính sinh động của giáo trình. Zhao Jin-ming (2004) từng đưa ra nhận định rằng: “giáo trình không phải chỉ phù hợp với kiến thức, tri nhận và sự trưởng thành của sinh viên, mà còn phải kích thích được hứng thú học tập, động cơ học tập của sinh viên thông qua các nội dung mang tính thú vị cao”. Khi phân tích tác phẩm văn học, giới thiệu kiến thức văn học sử, người biên soạn cũng cần cập nhật các thành quả nghiên cứu hiện có, giúp sinh viên thấy được sức hấp dẫn của văn học và quy luật phát triển của văn học.

3.4. Kết hợp văn học sử và tác phẩm văn học

Nội dung giáo trình văn học Trung Quốc cần bao gồm hai phần, một phần về kiến thức văn học sử, một phần về tác phẩm văn học. Với thời lượng giờ giảng hạn chế, giáo trình chỉ nên giới thiệu đến sinh viên các tác phẩm văn học kinh điển, để sinh viên cảm nhận sức hấp dẫn đặc biệt của tác phẩm văn học. Nếu sinh viên chưa được tiếp xúc và tìm hiểu qua tác phẩm văn học, sẽ khó có thể hiểu được các kiến thức văn học sử trừu tượng. Các tác phẩm văn học nên lựa chọn các tác phẩm của các tác giả tiêu biểu, nổi bật lên quá trình phát triển của văn học Trung Quốc. Ở mảng kiến thức văn học sử, giáo trình chỉ nên giới thiệu và phân tích sơ lược các tác phẩm tiêu biểu, giới thiệu quá trình và đặc điểm phát triển của văn học Trung Quốc, không cần giới thiệu với sinh viên những tư tưởng văn học, những trào lưu văn học, những tranh luận văn học và những nội dung phức tạp không liên quan đến sáng tác văn học, cần nổi bật các nội dung chính của văn học sử, giúp sinh viên học tập hiệu quả hơn mảng kiến thức văn học sử.

3.5. Kết hợp đọc kỹ và đọc lướt, đọc trên lớp và đọc ở nhà

Việc sắp xếp nội dung giáo trình cần chia làm hai loại: đọc kỹ và đọc lướt. Phần đọc kỹ là kiến thức văn học sử và tác phẩm văn học quan trọng nhất, sinh viên cần học ngay trên lớp. Phần đọc lướt là những kiến thức hay các tác phẩm văn học kém quan trọng hơn, sinh viên sẽ đọc ở nhà. Vì thời lượng học phần tương đối ít, cần tạo cho sinh viên hứng thú đọc ở nhà. Qua hướng dẫn của giáo trình, sinh viên có ý thức tự học một số tác phẩm văn học ở nhà, giúp phong phú thêm nội dung giảng dạy trên lớp.

3.6. Kết hợp đọc nguyên tác và phân tích hướng dẫn

Cần tiến hành phân tích các tư tưởng và nghệ thuật trong các tác phẩm văn học được lựa chọn đưa vào giáo trình. Đồng thời cần nêu lên điểm khác nhau giữa các tác phẩm đó và các tác phẩm cùng loại, cũng như giá trị và địa vị đặc biệt của các tác phẩm đó trong văn học sử. Như thế, việc đọc nguyên tác không chỉ có thể tìm hiểu tác phẩm văn học, đồng thời còn có thể phân tích đầy đủ, trọn vẹn tác phẩm trong tiến trình phát triển của văn học sử, cảm nhận sức hấp dẫn và giá trị đặc biệt của các tác phẩm văn học. Từ đó xây dựng cơ sở vững chắc cho việc tìm hiểu kiến thức văn học sử.

3.7. Chú trọng phương pháp giảng dạy và quy luật thụ đắc

Giáo trình nên hướng dẫn giảng viên sử dụng linh hoạt các phương pháp giảng dạy khác nhau trong giảng dạy văn học Trung Quốc, đặc biệt lưu ý sự tương tác và sự giao lưu giữa giảng viên và sinh viên, giữa các sinh viên với nhau, làm tăng hiệu suất giảng dạy trên lớp và làm nóng không khí lớp học. Giáo trình cũng nên đưa ra các phương pháp học tập để sinh viên tham khảo, đồng thời căn cứ vào trình độ tiếng Trung của sinh viên và đặc điểm của học phần Văn học Trung Quốc, biên soạn một số bài tập, giúp sinh viên nâng cao trình độ tiếng Trung của mình trong quá trình tư duy về các vấn đề văn học. Điều này sẽ giúp ích cho việc học tập các học phần khác thuộc khối kiến thức ngôn ngữ và văn hoá của ngành.

4. Kiến nghị về kết cấu và nội dung giáo trình

Theo Zhang Ying (2004), kết cấu và nội dung giáo trình vô cùng qua trọng, ảnh hưởng trực tiếp đến hiệu quả và hình thức giảng dạy trên lớp. Vì vậy, người biên soạn cần đặc biệt chú trọng việc xây dựng kết cấu và nội dung giáo trình.

Căn cứ vào các nguyên tắc biên soạn giáo trình nêu trên, chúng tôi xin đưa ra một ví dụ tham khảo về kết cấu và nội dung giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc dành cho sinh viên ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc.

4.1. Kết cấu giáo trình

Giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc dành cho sinh viên ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc nên có kết cấu như sau:

- (1) Hướng dẫn sử dụng giáo trình, bao gồm: hướng dẫn dành cho giảng viên và hướng dẫn dành cho sinh viên;
- (2) Mục lục;
- (3) Chính văn, bao gồm: kiến thức văn học sử, các tác phẩm tiêu biểu, câu hỏi ôn tập;
- (4) Phụ lục.

4.2. Nội dung giáo trình

Giáo trình Văn học Trung Quốc dành cho sinh viên ngành Ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc nên bao gồm các nội dung và thời lượng từng nội dung như sau:

STT	Nội dung	Thời lượng
1	Văn học Tiên Tần - Kiến thức văn học sử - Câu hỏi ôn tập	1,5 tiết
2	Văn học Tần Hán - Kiến thức văn học sử	1,5 tiết

STT	Nội dung	Thời lượng
	- Câu hỏi ôn tập	
3	Văn học Nam Bắc Triều - Kiến thức văn học sử - Câu hỏi ôn tập	1,5 tiết
4	Văn học Tuỳ Đường - Kiến thức văn học sử - Tác phẩm văn học: Hồi hương ngẫu thư (Hạ Tri Chương), Tĩnh Dạ Tứ (Lý Bạch), Hoàng Hạc Lâu tổng Mạnh Hạo Nhiên chi Quảng Lăng (Lý Bạch), Hoàng Hạc Lâu (Thôi Hiệu), Thu hứng (Đỗ Phủ) - Câu hỏi ôn tập	7.5 tiết
5	Văn học Tống Nguyên - Kiến thức văn học sử - Câu hỏi ôn tập	1,5 tiết
6	Văn học Minh Thanh - Kiến thức văn học sử - Tác phẩm văn học: Hồi trống cổ thành (Trích từ Tam Quốc Diễn Nghĩa của La Quán Trung), Tào Tháo uống rượu luận anh hùng (Trích từ Tam Quốc Diễn Nghĩa của La Quán Trung), Võ Tòng đá hổ (Trích từ Thủy Hử của Thi Nại Am) - Câu hỏi ôn tập	7.5 tiết
7	Văn học Hiện đương đại - Kiến thức văn học sử - Tác phẩm văn học: Cô hương (Lỗ Tấn), Thuốc (Lỗ Tấn), Biên thành (Thẩm Tông Văn), Vây thành (Tiền Chung Thư) - Câu hỏi ôn tập	9.0 tiết

Việc bố trí nội dung giáo trình như vậy là vì những lý do sau:

Thứ nhất, các tác phẩm được giới thiệu trong giáo trình là những tác phẩm tiêu biểu của văn học Trung Quốc. Đa số các tác phẩm này sinh viên đã được học ở giai đoạn phổ thông, như: bài thơ Hồi hương ngẫu thư của Hạ Tri Chương có trong chương trình Ngữ văn lớp 7, bài thơ Hoàng Hạc Lâu của Thôi Hiệu có trong chương trình Ngữ văn lớp 10, truyện Thuốc của Lỗ Tấn có trong chương trình Ngữ văn lớp 12...

Thứ hai, các thời kỳ Tiên Tần, Tần Hán, Nam Bắc Triều và Tống Nguyên chỉ giới thiệu kiến thức văn học sử, không giảng dạy các tác phẩm văn học. Vì các tác phẩm văn học ở các thời kỳ này được viết bằng tiếng Trung cổ đại, song trình độ HSK cấp 4 không thể đáp ứng được việc học tập các tác phẩm văn học ở các thời kỳ này.

Thứ ba, các bài thơ của thời kỳ Tuỳ Đường tuy được viết bằng tiếng Trung cổ đại, song chúng có độ dài vừa phải, các tác phẩm trong thời kỳ Minh Thanh và hiện đương đại tuy được viết bằng tiếng Trung cận hiện đại nhưng tương đối dài và từ vựng tương đối khó. Sinh viên trình độ HSK cấp 4 có thể sẽ không đọc hiểu hết được nội dung của các tác phẩm, nhưng với sự trợ giúp của giảng viên, những chú thích trong giáo trình, cùng sự quen thuộc do được học ở chương trình Ngữ văn phổ thông sẽ giúp sinh viên nhanh chóng hiểu được nội dung của các tác phẩm.

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