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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE FROM AN IDENTITY CONSTRUCTIONIST PERSPECTIVE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Abstract: This paper is aimed at reexamining intercultural communication from an identity social constructionist perspective and offering a linguistically-based research framework. The social constructionist approach holds that knowledge and reality are constructed through discourse, interactions and/or social interchange. This study maintains that language in action as communication in general serves dual purposes. It does not only build the social world, but also constructs identity - a critical issue in our global community recognized by many scholars (as most recently as Jandt, 2016; Fukuyama, 2018). Identity, though, is not just a social construct, but can operate as part of the purpose of communication as well. Recognizing that it is difficult to find clearly-defined methodologies in interdisciplinary areas such as intercultural communication (IC), this study proposes a research framework, grounded in pragmatic theory, and taking speech acts as the basic unit of analysis. The paper also offers implications for foreign language education (FLE) as the nature of FLE is the development of intercultural communication competence (ICC).

Keywords: identity, self-image, intercultural communication, social constructionist, speech acts

1. Introduction

In 2016, Jandt published "An introduction to intercultural communication: identities in a global community ". Previously, many other works deal with the issue of identity, but this one highlights the relationships between intercultural communication and identity in a big way – in the title. Communication is not limited to informing about the world, but it puts the issue of identity in play. In a globalizing world, identity seems to be the name of the game. We can even find the phrase "identity politics". It connotes how critical the issue of identities and/in intercultural communication is now. IC probably is as old as the history of mankind. The term "intercultural communication" is credited with Hall (1959). It happened when people from one tribe tried to communicate with others to satisfy their needs. The merchants who travelled the globe to sell their goods were engaged in IC, too. It explains why IC studies are believed to begin with business-related training. A large number of MBA programs include Intercultural Communication as one subject in its curriculum. Teaching a foreign language is essentially teaching the ability to communicate, and to do things in another language, or culture. This is intercultural

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communication *per se*. Following is an example illustrating the importance of ICC in our global village.

A Turkish male graduate student in the US lived in a residence hall where he shared a room with an American student. One day his roommate went into the bathroom and completely shaved his head. The Turkish student discovered this fact when he visited the bathroom and saw the hair everywhere. He returned to his room and said to his roommate, "*you've shaved your head*". "The American student replied, "*Yeah, I did*".

The Turkish student waited a little, then said, "*I discovered you shaved your head when I went into the room and saw the hair*, "*Yeah*" the American student confirmed (Varner & Beamer, 2006: 28).

Obviously, the Turkish student, who comes from a collectivist background, was being indirect. What he wanted was for the American to clean the bathroom, but he did not say something like, "Hey, you made a mess of the bath room. Now clean it". In this situation, the American failed to understand the Turkish student's intention. So, he simply said "yeah", apparently a little annoyed.

In this paper, I subscribe to the view that language in action as communication serves dual purposes: to construct the social world, and to build identity. Whenever we speak or write, we do not just say something about the world, and about us. We always and simultaneously construct. The social world and identity have become the two foci of a great deal of research in linguistics, social psychology, cross-cultural psychology, and anthropology. I should, though, add that we need to see the social world and identity in a different light. They are not just as products of the social interactions, but they can operate as purposes of our communication. This paper examines IC and ICC from an identity perspective.

2. The why of IC and ICC

The world as we know now is globalizing. Globalization 3.0 started around 2000 and was shrinking the world from a size small to a size tiny (Friedman, 2005), and easing the flow of labor and capital. There are multiple reasons why ICC is important. Ting-Toomey and Chung (2005) suggested there exists the need to enhance ICC to adapt to global and domestic workforce diversity fueled by globalization and integration. For example, an ASEAN single market and production base shall comprise five core elements: free flow of goods; free flow of services; free flow of investment; freer flow of capital; and free flow of skilled labor**.** (See *ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint*). Vietnam and Korea are now home to more than 100,000 people on each side. Next, ICC can help improve intercultural communication, and engage in creative problem solving (Ting-Toomey, 1999), and deepen our self-awareness. Without interaction with outsiders, differences become difficult to understand and difficult not to judge (Charon, 2004). Finally, what ICC can do is to help people to adapt to the new environment or ecology. It faciltates the adaptation processes among the self, the cultural community, and the larger environment. It can help to deal with conflicts in our intercultural community, and it may be good for world peace, too.

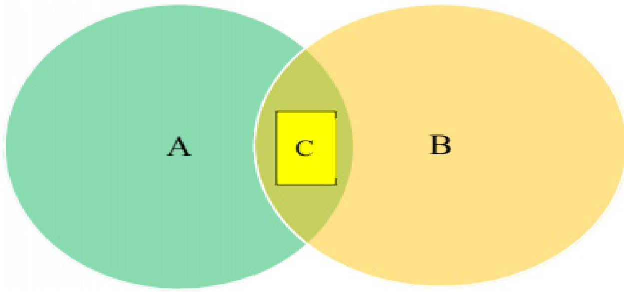
This globalization and integration process highlights the importance of one's identity as we are engaging with the intercultural world. Who am I? Our identity tells us about who we are in terms of our gender, social class, age, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, our power, ideologies, and value systems from a certain point of view (Hoa, 2017). It is often viewed as one's self-image in other disciplines such as literary studies, communication studies, social psychology.

Toomey and Chung (2006) believe that our cultural values and beliefs may provide us with the critical reference points to construct our complex identities and to make sense of others'. There is no doubt that it is identity that binds people together. Jandt (2016) attaches great significance to understanding identity as it can "explain our past, provides insights about the present and predict our future". The issue of identity is now gaining greater significance as Fukuyama (2018) describes its importance in terms of the phrase "The Triumph of Identity". Everywhere one seeks to define one's identity: who I am or just "a natural and inevitable response to injustice". Fukuyama (2018) has this to say about the role and significance of identity "People will never stop thinking about themselves and their societies in identity terms". According to Cannadine (in Jandt, 2016), there are six determinants of identity including religion, nation, class, gender, race, and civilization. The landscape is intriguing, but our identities can be defined by race, gender, workplace, education, affinities, and nation, (Fukuyama, op.cit.). In fact, other determinants may be at play such as geography, region, profession, etc. Identity, however, does change in social interactions, and can assume new meanings. And I want to add that identity can be used to define a person, or a group.

The following story was told to me. The story teller was an American professor of business and commerce from Kansai University, Japan. He was taking a group of Japanese students to the furniture-making village of Dong Ky, north of Hanoi in August 2018. They conversed with the locals there about the needs to expand their market access to Japan to make more money. To sell their products to Japan, they were told to change the styles, the details of their products to suit the Japanese tastes. What happened was that the locals said no, and the professor found out that these folks were very proud of their past, and they said they do not like the folks in towns.

What can we make of this story in modern Vietnam? We simply do not just get a glimpse of what the speakers said about their life and work in the village of Dong Ky, but we sense the identity/self-image that the folks in this narrative wished to build: traditional and conservative ideologies and respect of traditions. They wanted to set up a contrast as they were not afraid to talk about the differences between their life styles and those of the urban people. If they followed the advice of the professor, we might view them as innovative, open to change, or dynamic (the new identity).

The term "Intercultural communication" consists of two stems: culture and communication, about the relationship between these two constructs, Hall (1959), a pioneer in IC, said metaphorically, "Culture is communication. Communication is culture." IC may be defined as a symbolic interactional process whereby individuals of two or more different cultures or cultural communities construct shared meanings and identities in social contexts (Ting-Toomey, 1999). What is clear from this definition is that IC is an interactional process using symbols which can either be verbal or non-verbal. The other key thing to keep in mind is that different cultures or cultural communities are involved. A model of overlapping interacting cultures may be presented below. Culture A and culture B represents where speakers come from. The overlapped Culture C is the adaptive constructed space for them to communicate. It is expected that this C culture will continue to grow.



Last, the word "communication" may be misleading to some people as it may connote the idea of sharing or transmitting some information about a certain state of affairs only. But in reality, communication, be it intercultural or intracultural, is about constructing the social world, and creating identities in social contexts. Whenever we speak or write, we are engaged in saying, doing and being/identity (Gee, 1999). Earlier, Halliday talked in the same fashion about the three metafunctions of language: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. I subscribe to the view that in this process, identity construction assumes greater significance and really drives the interactional process. Culture is identity. Identity is culture. However, we must not forget that intercultural communication in the context of foreign language education is, first and foremost, linked to acquiring verbal communicative competence in a foreign language.

IC competence is related to the concept of intercultural competence, whose scope is broader. It refers to the ability to do many things across cultures like to think and act effectively and appropriately, to function, and to communicate and work with people from different cultural backgrounds. It includes knowledge, skills, motivation attitudes, and awareness.

3. Constructing identity

I now clarify the notion of "identity", as used in this study. Identity is viewed as the self-image of an individual. As such, it is the make-up of the major traits or defining characteristics of an entity, or in other words, of identities. An individual can possess multiple identities.

Identity can be social or personal. Social identity refers to self- and other-categories or characteristics which define the individual in terms of his or her shared similarities with members of certain social categories in contrast to other social categories. These features serve as markers that indicate what that person is, in the eyes of others (their society), and put that person in the same group as other individuals who share the same attributes. Some macro-labels are "national, religious, class, race, professional, gender, etc." Personal identity includes attributes unique to each of us or the things that make you you. Social and personal identity, however, define each other in the sense that the same self-aspect can provide the basis for a collective (social) identity, and at the same time can be construed as a constituent or element of one's individual identity (Simon, 2004).

There are two kinds of approaches to identity. The essentialist view will say that it is fixed, and variations are deemed as secondary. The constructionist view will hold that "individuals' identities are neither fixed nor necessarily given by birth." It is multiple, emerging, and continuously evolving as work in progress in social interactions. There are crucial implications. If we hold identity to be fixed (the essentialist view), we tend to put people in the boxes of their culture: we can expect individuals to behave in ways that are presumed to be in line with their fixed identities. Thus, there exists a possibility to predict how people will behave and react in their social interactions (Triandis, 1995). But this can lead to risks of stereotyping. But if we see identity as work in progress, something that is evolving, or something we can change, adjust, and construct, or negotiate, we won't risk boxing people, and we can reshape our identity as we adapt to a changing world and reality. We have an open mind as we interact with individuals from other cultures. This paper takes the constructionist approach to identity, which, inevitably, leads to the adoption of an identity construction perspective. This implies that we use verbal and nonverbal language in social contexts as resources to construct the social world, relations and identities. This view is shared by researchers in anthropology, linguistics, psychology, sociology, history, literature, gender studies, and social theories, among others (Fina, Schiffrin, & Bamberg, 2006).

According to Ting-Toomey (1999), there are three assumptions involved. First, in every type of communicative encounter, individuals represent and create their identity of "self-image", or "self-conception". The next issue is how they acquire their identity as a result. The answer is it comes about as a result of their interactions with other individuals. Finally, they can either feel secure or vulnerable in the process depending on the specific situations they find themselves in.

Using language is actually an active building process. We construct and reconstruct social reality and identities not just via language, but also via language in social interactions (Gee, 1999). This concern of this paper is IC and ICC mainly from the perspective of building identity – a social construct. Seeing identity as a social construct implies a reorientation from a more essentialist position. A person's identity, whether it be social, personal, is something that is not just enacted, but constructed in discourse; and language (verbal and nonverbal) offers choices to do this job (Potter & Whetherell, 1987).

The construction of identity spells out what it equals and what it differs from. Identity construction can happen in a myriad of ways, for example in art by way of metaphor or symbolic communication (Dowling, 2011). Discursive psychologists such as Potter and Whetherell (1987), and critical discourse analysts (Fairclough, 2001) see identity as a discursive construct. That is something we use verbal and nonverbal linguistic resources to create in socially-situated interactions. To create our identities, we can perform the speech acts (direct or indirect) of asserting, defining, or redefining, modifying, challenging and/or supporting their own and others' desired self-images" (Ting-Toomey, 1999) in socially situated interactions. In extreme cases, they have to give up on their own identities. The following example from Toomey & Chung (2006: 313) provides an illustration of how identity construction happened. This implies the crucial importance of language as resources used for constructing or re/negotiating identities.

"The 19-year old Thi Nguyen was a contestant for Miss Vietnam 2003, Southern California. Throughout the pageant, she was challenged by others and also by her own opinion concerning whether she was "Vietnamese enough" in this larger U.S. cultural world. "It's hard", she mused, "because most of us were born here in the US., and we're very Americanized. However, we're all in that same boat of not being American enough for the Americans and not being Vietnamese enough for the Vietnamese. Another contestant with red highlights in her hair, Kelly Ly, remarked, "my parents tell me all the time that I don't fit in to the traditional [image of a] Vietnamese girl … I figure I should try to stand out by being myself" (Nguyen, in Toomey & Chung, 2006).

What is apparent from this example is both Thi and Kelly were somewhat confused about their identity. They may have asked themselves, "Am I Vietnamese enough to participate in this pageant in the case of Thi, and I am American enough to be described as someone not fitting into the traditional image of a Vietnamese girl?" They can be seen as struggling with their identity identification. These two girls were experiencing a sense of identity insecurity or identity self-doubt.

The issue of identity construction has a crucial implication for language education. Intercultural communication is not exclusively concerned with representing and constructing reality, but more than that, it constructs identity verbally and nonverbally. The issue for the language educators and IC researchers is to conduct research into how these symbolic realizations of identities occur. Although IC has been well-researched, but my observation is that most of the research done to date is not linguistically grounded and based.

4. Defining ICC

ICC is closely related to IC. After all, as language educators, we want to help develop ICC in our learners. What is ICC and what will ICC consist of? ICC refers to the abilities individuals have to communicate or construct identities appropriately, effectively, and satisfactorily in intercultural encounters (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984) at cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels. As such, it has become a must-have attribute of individuals these days, who need it to assist identity definition, to make sense of the multiple institutions of a complex world, to get prepared for intercultural dialogue, and work for world peace and democracy. ICC is really about identity.

There are a number of approaches to ICC. It is "as "the ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviors that negotiate each other's cultural identity or identities in a culturally diverse environment" (Chen & Starosta, 1998-9: 28). They outline three key components of intercultural communication competence: intercultural sensitivity (affective process), intercultural awareness (cognitive process), and intercultural adroitness (behavioral process), defined as verbal and nonverbal skills needed to act effectively in intercultural interactions. Wiseman (2001) posits that ICC "involves the knowledge, motivation, and skills to interact effectively and appropriately with members of different cultures". This definition points to "effectively" and "appropriately" as the two criteria of ICC. Effective ICC means that individuals achieve its communicative goals, and appropriate ICC "entails the use of messages that are expected in a given context, and actions that meet the expectations and demands of the situation".

The psychological perspective suggests the key components of ICC include "motivation, self- and other knowledge, and tolerance for uncertainty". From this perspective, knowledge may include self- and other-awareness, mindfulness, and cognitive flexibility. Building knowledge of our own cultures, identities, and communication patterns takes more than passive experience (Martin & Nakayama, 2010). From a foreign language education perspective, ICC should consist of verbal and nonverbal competence, socio-cultural background knowledge, skills, attitudes and motivations (Toomey & Chung, op.cit.). Others add awareness and flexibility.

Verbal and nonverbal competence plays a key in successful intercultural communication. Canale and Swain (1980) posited that communicative competence consists of four components: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Of the four components mentioned above, linguistic competence assumes a pivotal role, and may take life-long efforts to acquire. It may be argued the other three components are embedded in linguistic competence.

Knowledge here refers to what one knows about a culture, its values, beliefs, and worldview. The general thinking about the relationships between culture and our behaviors is that cultural values are instrumental in determining and shaping our communication (Kluckhohn, 1967; Hofstede, 1980/2001; Rokeach, 1972). An awareness of cultural values has become imperative for effective and appropriate intercultural communication. For example, Andersen (2015) observed that individuals from high-power distance cultures consider employers to be their mentors and will not question orders. The constructs of individualism vs. collectivism lead to the differences between communication styles (Ting-Toomey, 1999; Triandis, 1995) as follows:

Individualism	Low-context	Direct	Self-enhancement	Person-oriented	Talk
Collectivism	High-context	Indirect	Self-effacement	Status-oriented	Silence

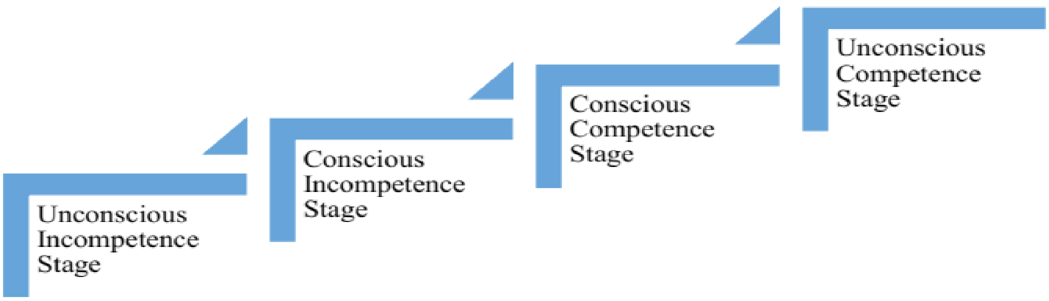
From an intercultural communication perspective, knowing that the interlocutor comes from an individualist culture could prepare us for behaviors that are not part of our being. For example, a collectivist arriving late for an appointment may blame the traffic or other factors rather than acknowledging that it is his fault. This is in line with what intercultural scholars have said, “collectivists tend to attribute to external causes where individualists attribute events to internal individual causes (Newman, 1993). “Knowledge” also refers knowledge of the linguistic systems and how they operate. We need to acquire knowledge of nonverbal communication as well. It is crucial to be able to use both types of knowledge to communicate meanings and to construct our complex identities. Ting-Toomey (1999) added the dimension of mindfulness to knowledge – the first effective step to enhancing our awareness of our thinking and judging. Mindfulness is being aware of “what is going on in our thinking, feelings, and experiencing”.

Skills and flexibility refer to our operational abilities to integrate knowledge, attitude, awareness in our intercultural social practice. Ting-Toomey mentioned such skills as values clarification skills, verbal empathy skills, identity support skills, facework management skills, and etc. Flexibility refers to the abilities to adapt to intercultural interactions in an appropriate and effective manner as is required by the situation in which the interlocutors find themselves in.

Attitude and motivations is another integral part of ICC, as it can involve the cognitive and affective layers (Toomey & Chung, op.cit.). It refers to our readiness to learn about, interact with others (Ting-Toomey, op.cit.), and adopt an open mindset. Our mindsets can be ethno-centric and ethno-relative. The ethno-centric mindset means we use our own worldviews and cultural values as the reference points.

By contrast, an ethno-relative mindset will take into account the other person's cultural frame of reference. An English native with an ethnocentric frame of mind would be critical of a speaker from Asian countries, who may ask him how old he is, and how much he makes a month. On the other hand, one with an ethno-relative mind would try to make sense of the situation: why does he ask me these questions? Is he being curious or just wanting to show some concern? This will naturally ease the interaction process as one tries to construct one's identity.

Awareness refers to the way we understand the situations, sensing the atmosphere, perceiving the interlocutors' needs and goals. It is observed that ICC does not come about all at once. Its development can be conceptualized as a staircase model (Ting-Toomey, 1999: 51-52), passing from unconscious incompetence stage through conscious incompetence and conscious competence stages to the highest level of unconscious competence stage. This model is presented below:



5. Researching IC from an identity constructionist perspective

The focus of research that this paper advocates is to study the relationships between identities and intercultural communication: how identities are constructed in this type of interactions. The missing link, though, is the apparent lack of attention given to how IC behaviors and interactions are realized verbally and nonverbally. There exists the need to use identity as a cultural variable in our research to make it theoretically based, alongside the cultural variables mostly used including individualism vs. collectivism, low vs. high context communication, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity vs. femininity (Gudykunst in Spencer-Oatley, 2007).

The emic and etic approaches

Following Pike's (1966) discussion of phonemics and phonetics, we can apply either the emic or etic approaches. The emic approach entails a study of identity and IC behaviors only from within one culture, based on constructs that are relative to internal characteristics. In contrast, the etic orientation conducts studies of IC in many cultures from an external position, using absolute or universal constructs (Berry, 1980, adapted). Emic analyses often use qualitative research methods whereas etic studies are equated with quantitative ones (Gudykunst in Spencer-Oatley, 2007). However, IC research should be theoretically based, incorporating identity as a variable.

As a language educator, I see the need for a linguistic approach to studying IC, which involves researching the linguistic realizations of those relationships. Put another way, it is about how verbal resources are used to communicate, and to construct and/or to make sense of identity in intercultural interactions. The key actor is the speaker or writer at the center of the process. He or she makes sense of the social context, has a communicative purpose in mind, and performs IC behaviors as guided by the desired self-image, and values. In this sense, social reality and identity operate as drivers behind his or her communication, not just its products. Because we want to project a certain identity and build a certain piece of social world, we will deploy the verbal (or nonverbal) resources accordingly, influenced in some way by the cultural values that we hold. It is a very complex process involving a host of factors, including cultural values, communicative purposes, social contexts. Isolating the effect being studied (identity or cultural values) presents a formidable challenge that research design of IC has to cope with.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to find clearly-defined methodologies in interdisciplinary areas. Intercultural communication studies are such an area. The search continues for a linguistic analytic basis. Positing that speech acts serve as the basis for identity construction as discussed in "Constructing identities", and that speech acts are the minimal operational unit, I suggest a pragmatically-oriented approach to study IC (Hoa, 2018: 8). It takes speech acts as the minimal unit of analysis, focusing on the following items and their linguistic realizations.

- Speech acts (such as *asserting, defining,* or *redefining, modifying, challenging* and/or *supporting* identities)
- Implicature (indirect speech acts)
- Textual organization of speech acts into larger units of discourse (moves, exchanges, and discourse)
- The use of pronouns (*I* vs. *We* cultural identity)
- Modality

Following is an example for illustration (Hoa, 2018: 10-11). The context is after a meal at the White House, President Trump asked all the guests to leave except the FBI Director, Comey (who is now ex-director because he was fired by Trump). Flynn was another ex-security adviser, and early supporter of Trump in the election. He lost his job because he did not tell the truth about his contacts with Russia in the 2016 US presidential elections. The FBI was conducting an investigation into his conduct during the 2016 elections. Following is the interaction between the two men (Hoa, 2017). This was an unequal-power situation, where Trump had more power.

Trump: *I hope you can see your way clear to letting this go, to letting Flynn go. He is a good guy. I hope you can let this go.*

Comey: *I agree he is a good guy.*

Later at his hearing at the Senate Intelligence Committee, Comey said he took Trump's words "letting Flynn" go as a direction, but Trump's press secretary said that the President was just hoping. This short exchange is very significant in light of the framework suggested above. Trump was being indirect, dropping an implicature that the FBI should drop its investigation on Flynn: *I hope you can let this go*. The use of "can" points to a possibility. (Why wasn't he direct as many of us were led to believe that individualists prefer direct communication styles?). Comey was being very tactful and indirect, aware that he is Trump's subordinate. He couched his "NO answer" in saying "*I agree he is a good guy*". What speech acts did the two men perform in this situation? With conventional wisdom, I will say that Trump was performing an act of directing. At least, this is how Comey constructed his sense of the intention of the President as he testified

– a direction from the President. Comey, on his part, literally says that he agrees, but not with the request of the President, but the fact that "*Flynn is a good guy*". This statement has nothing to do with Trump's intention. The social context that can be activated to make sense of the meanings can shed light on how Trump, with more "power", just offered a hint. Perhaps, he was afraid of being seen as illegally getting involved in an investigation carried out by the FBI. Comey, for his part as an underdog, might not want to hurt the ego of Trump, or displease the President. Based on the language both used, it is possible for us to construe Trump's identity as "an indirect speaker" and Comey's as "indirect and tactful speaker" in their respective roles.

Researching IC is concerned with nonverbal communication as well. The use of nonverbal symbols in intercultural communication has been well-researched and well-documented (Andersen, 2015; Daniel, 2015; Gibson, 2000; Jandt, 2016; Ting-Toomey, 1999; Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005). Nonverbal communication refers specifically to actions or attributes of individuals that have socially shared meanings (Jandt, 2016), or "nonlinguistic behaviors (or attributes) that are consciously or unconsciously encoded and decoded via communication channels" (Ting-Toomey, 1999: 115). I want to emphasize that the nonverbal behaviors or actions that individual performs serve to construct our social and personal identities. For example, the way a person typically uses his body language may tell us about who he is (identity). Nonverbal communication is quite subtle, multidimensional, and spontaneous, and can make the interlocutor feel uncomfortable (Andersen, 2015). It serves many purposes including reflecting and managing identities, expressing emotions and attitudes, managing conversations (Ting-Toomey, 1999), or sending uncomfortable messages, making relationships clear, or reinforcing and modifying verbal message (Jandt, 2016). Thus, having an operational knowledge of nonverbal communication is, no doubt, an asset. The literature on nonverbal communication types abound. Jandt (op.cit.) lists proxemics (the use of personal space), kinetics (gestures, body movements, facial expressions, and eye contacts), chronemics (the study of the use of time), paralanguage (use of vocal characteristics, voice qualifiers, and vocal segregates), and silence. Silence means a lot. It can communicate consent, awe, contempt, regrets, etc. Another type of nonverbal communication is haptics (the use of touch). The following example from Hall (1959, adapted in Jandt, 2016: 107) illustrates how important our knowledge of nonverbal communication is. It is proxemics for most people in North America.

	Distance	**Description**	**Voice**
Intimate	Touching to 18 inches	Private situations with people who are emotionally close. If others invade this space, we feel threatened	Whisper
Personal	18 inches to 4 feet	The lower end is handshake distance – the distance most couples stand in public	Soft voice
Casual	4 feet to 12 feet	The lower end is the distance between salespeople and customers and between people who work together in business	Full voice
Public	Greater than 12 feet	Situations such as teaching in a classroom or delivering a speech	Loud voice

Hall (1976) was aware of the role of nonverbal symbols in intercultural communication, and was often credited with distinguishing between High Context vs. Low Context communication. This distinction is based on the degree to which communication is explicit and verbal or implicit and nonverbal. Thus, meanings or identities in low-context communication are revealed mostly via the verbal code. By contrast, high-context communication depends to a large extent on the physical context, and via nonverbal symbols.

6. Implications for foreign language education

As mentioned above, foreign language teaching or education is essentially helping learners to develop their ICC. First, we have a choice to make in terms of approaches: an essentialist view or constructionist view of identity. I want to caution that although the essentialist approach can be helpful in certain contexts, but not productive because the construction of identity or meanings is very much situation-specific. In other words, individuals will construct their multiple identities as they see fit for their communicative purposes. Therefore, the constructionist approach will prevail.

There is a myriad of ways in which ICC can be cultivated and developed, but as Spitzberg (2015) commented, as our knowledge and skills increase, our competence increases. I just want to add that if we have the right and suitable attitudes, our competence increases, too. In the same vein, Ahnagari and Zamanian (2014) suggested foreign language education calls for the willingness to engage with the foreign culture, the right attitudes to see from the outside, the ability to see the world through others' lenses, to tolerate uncertainty, to act as a cultural mediator, to evaluate others' points of view, and to consciously use culture learning skills.

Enhancing ICC will entail developing communicative competence, and especially linguistic competence – knowledge of the language systems and rules as a prerequisite. This is a life-long process. Then, we need to acquire knowledge of one's and other's cultures, politics and history. This is important, but our knolwedge should not be limited to this dimension only, but rather it ought include our knowledge of how one's own and others' collective and personal identities operate. We also need to know about our own and others' values, beliefs, the social processes and institutions. Skills that are critically needed include skills of making sense of the interactional process, being able to listen to others, being open-minded, and computing meanings and identities. This can save us from making the wrong assumptions about others' behavior. Other skills are discovery and interaction. Another issue is to acquire the right attitudes and feelings that acknowledge the identities of others, repsect and empathize with others, and tolerate differences and ambiguity. We need to take the right dose of ethnorelativism and be open-minded about otherness. It is crucial to be flexible and sensitive to others' ways of communication and interaction. IC flexibility can be measured by appropriateness, effectiveness, adaptability (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005). Appropriateness represents the degree to which the interactions and exchanges are deemed as proper and matching the expectations of the insiders of the culture. Effectiveness refers to the degree to which communicators succeed in communicating their meanings and constructing their desired self-images. Adaptability is equated with the ability to make situation-specific changes. All these three components work together. Finally, there is creativity, seen as the yardstick for evaluating IC flexibility.

The landscape of models for training and developing ICC is quite diverse with a wide range of possibilities. According to Chen and Starosta (2005), they may fall into six categories such as the classroom model, the simulation model, the self-awareness model, the cultural awareness model, the behavioral model, and the interactional model. In spite of this diversity, the common denominator that we find is that the underlying constructionist approach to ICC training framework is the preferred one. This paradigm involves an experiential or learning-by-doing training framework at whatever stage it may be. For example, one of the most effective ways to develop self- and other-knowledge is by direct and thoughtful encounters with other cultures. Individuals interact directly with members from other cultures, and they will work to make sense of the value systems and appropriate behavioral patterns. We can build ICC through experiential learning and reflective practices. In this spirit, Kolb (1984) suggested a sequence of four stages:

- Concrete experience
- Reflective observation
- Abstract conceptualization
- Active experimentation

To illustrate, the following example can be used to expose learners to experience, reflect, conceptualize, and experiment actively when an opportunity presents itself. In an online newspaper, Mr. Truong Gia Binh, Chairman and CEO of FPT – a big IT company in Vietnam related this story about his experience with the Japanese trying to sell his company's software. He was quoted as saying: "câu trả lời ông hay gặp nhất là: "*Chúng tôi sẽ mua phần mềm của các bạn nhưng vì chúng tôi chưa nói tiếng Anh nên các bạn hãy chờ chúng tôi học xong tiếng Anh rồi hẵng quay lại – the reply he always got from his Japanese business counterparts is: OK, we will buy your software, but because our English is not good enough. So come back when we can speak English*". Later he understood that reply as a "NO". This is typically Japanese way of communication, he observed.

One may ask why the Japanese did not call a spade a spade. Their collectivist values will make them not give a direct and straightforward "No". They did not want to hurt the face of their interlocutors. They wanted to be polite and face-saving. This is the identity they wanted to create and to make us understand.

Gibson (2002) offered a deductive package for business (or classroom model), covering the basic concepts of IC, followed by examining natural and authentic interactions. Collier (2015) recommended a ten-step or ten-question inventory to help probe cultural identities in intercultural communication. These ten questions basically concern our beliefs about communication and culture, the relevant cultural identities, the role of power and ideology, the intercultural questions to be asked, the communicative messages to be examined, the context of intercultural problems, the how of studying data, as well as the interpretations and determinations that we can arrive at.

7. Conclusion

Intercultural communication competence (ICC) is an attribute we can't do without in a multicultural world. It has become an area of interdisciplinary study drawing on social psychology, communication studies, sociology, and anthropology. ICC research is getting more theoretically and practically relevant in the global village, where identity assumes a great deal of significance. But we are also aware that IC performance is a function of multiple variables; so studying the effect of one factor is a challenge. The ICC framework discussed in this paper includes verbal and nonverbal competence, cultural knowledge, skills, flexibility, attitudes, motivations, and awareness. We have to cultivate attitudes that motivate us to discover knowledge, to tolerate differences and ambiguity, and to develop skills that enable us. However, a satisfactory model of ICC that translates well into different cultures remains to be developed (Collier, 2015).

An identity construction approach views identity as a crucial factor in IC, but not at the expense of cultural values. This approach recognizes that identity construction process can influence the choice of linguistic and nonlinguistic resources in communication. In this regard, identity operates like a cultural value. Identity and language use are in dialectical relationships. Believing that identity is multiple, emerging, and socially constructed can change our attitudes towards the effect of intercultural communication. An individual can have multiple identities. This can save us from falling into the trap of stereotyping people or put them in cultural boxes. It will help us to make sense of others' conduct and behaviors, and adapt creatively to the new cultural environment. Incorporating identity as a variable in the research equation is crucial, but it is critical to keep in mind that developing ICC is a complex process involving other variables such as cultural values, communicative purposes, and social contexts. There exist immense opportunities for foreign language teachers, trainers and practitioners to make use of this approach in research and develop the ability to communicate appropriately, effectively and satisfactorily in global communities.

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NĂNG LỰC GIAO TIẾP LIÊN VĂN HÓA DỰA TRÊN BẢN CHẤT KIẾN TẠO XÃ HỘI CỦA BẢN SẮC RIÊNG VÀ NHỮNG GỢI Ý CHO GIÁO DỤC NGOẠI NGỮ

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Tóm tắt: Bài viết này xem xét giao tiếp văn hóa (IC) dựa trên bản chất kiến tạo xã hội của bản sắc riêng (identity), và đưa ra khung nghiên cứu mang tính ngôn ngữ học. Đường hướng kiến tạo xã hội quan niệm rằng tri thức và thực tiễn xã hội được tạo ra trong quá trình tương tác xã hội, và rằng giao tiếp nói chung có hai mục đích, không chỉ kiến tạo thế giới xã hội mà còn tạo ra bản sắc. Tuy nhiên, bản sắc không chỉ là một sản phẩm được tạo ra trong quá trình tương tác xã hội, mà nó còn là một phần của mục đích giao tiếp. Bài viết đề xuất một khung nghiên cứu dựa trên lý thuyết dụng học do việc xác định khung nghiên cứu chặt chẽ cho các lĩnh vực nghiên cứu liên ngành như giao tiếp liên văn hóa thực sự là một thách thức. Với quan niệm rằng giáo dục ngoại ngữ về bản chất là phát triển năng lực giao tiếp liên văn hóa (ICC), bài viết đã nêu ra một số gợi ý nhằm phát triển năng lực này.

Từ khóa: bản sắc, hình ảnh bản thân, giao tiếp liên văn hóa, kiến tạo xã hội, hành động ngôn ngữ

"IF MY MOTHER WERE STILL ALIVE, I AND YOU WOULD DEFINITELY GET DIVORCED": A CASE STUDY OF A VIETNAMESE WOMAN'S REFUSING IN INTERACTION

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Abstract: This paper presents the major findings from a recent study conducted to explore how a Vietnamese woman refuses a high-stakes advice or request in everyday conversations. Data used in this study are conversations excerpted from a TV series entitled *Những công dân tập thể* (lit. the citizens living in the same apartment building). The analytical tool is a combination of Conversation Analysis (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998, 2008; Sacks, 1992a, 1992b) and Multimodal Interactional Analysis (Norris, 2004, 2009). The results show that (1) Vietnamese refusing is often performed concurrently by different modes of communication and language is only one of them; (2) refusing a high-stakes advice or request often takes a long time to negotiate in a conversation and through a series of conversations; and (3) Vietnamese women's responsibility to obey their parents, a Confucian teaching, still has its role in contemporary Vietnamese society.

Keywords: Vietnamese refusing, refusal, interactional data, conversation analysis, multimodal interactional analysis

1. Introduction

In the past 40 years, research on refusing has witnessed a significant growth in different ways. First, refusing has been explored in different languages and cultures such as English, Chinese, Spanish, Persian, Arabic, and Japanese[1]. Second, refusing together with its related phenomena such as face, facework, and politeness have been explored from the point of view of different disciplines including anthropology, sociolinguistics, linguistic ethnography, psycholinguistics, among others (Sbisà & Turner, 2013). Third, refusing has been explored in different domains including intra-cultural, cross-cultural and inter-cultural studies (see Nguyễn Trọng Du (2016) for a thorough review of studies on refusing).

Despite this growth, the research theme is underexplored in relation to the Vietnamese language and culture. There are a few articles on *Ngôn ngữ* (Language) and *Ngôn ngữ và Đời sống* (Language & Life) – two most famous journals of The Vietnamese language (e.g. Lưu Quý Khương & Trần Thị Phương Thảo, 2008; Nguyễn Phương Chi, 1997, 2004a; Trần Chi Mai, 2005a, 2005b, 2005d; Vũ Tiến Dũng & Nguyễn Thị Thu Thuỷ, 2009). However, these articles are either rather narrow in their scope of research or just the publications of some of the findings from a bigger study such as an MA or a PhD dissertation; therefore, in the following paragraphs, the author focuses

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[1] For a relatively full reference of speech act types and languages explored in pragmatics see the website of the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), University of Minnesota, available at http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/bibliography/topics/focusarea.html

on reviewing these dissertations.

There are two MA theses (Nguyễn Thị Minh Phương, 2006; Phan Thị Vân Quyên, 2001) and two PhD dissertations (Nguyễn Phương Chi, 2004; Trần Chi Mai, 2005c). These theses share the following common features: (1) They are, for a large part, cross-cultural studies so they generally draw on the *etic* perspective (Pike, 1954) to explain the strategies used by language users; (2) they focus more on exploring linguistic forms than on explicating the underlying cultural factors; (3) they mainly draw on quantitative methods of data collection and analysis; and (4) they do not explore refusals in interaction.

First, all the four theses are cross-cultural studies which aim at comparing refusing strategies used by Vietnamese people and those by native speakers of English, and thus the authors generally draw on the *etic*[2] perspective to draw conclusions. This perspective typically generalises the findings to the whole population of the culture as this generalisation allows them to compare the norms of using language in one culture with those in another culture. For example, Nguyễn Thị Minh Phương (2006) stated Vietnamese native speakers were more careful than Australians about the way they refused and that Australians were more direct than the Vietnamese. Besides, both Phan Thị Vân Quyên's (2001) and Nguyễn Phương Chi's (2004b) findings showed that Vietnamese people use indirect strategies more frequently than their Anglicist counterparts, with 84.97% and 58.48% respectively in Phan Thị Vân Quyên's study and 76.1 % and 64.4% in Nguyễn Phương Chi's. While these findings are valuable for making general comparisons between the two cultures in question, the conventionalised and 'conservative' norms may not necessarily provide adequate explanation for the varied practices in real life (Mills & Kádár, 2011). Indeed, cultures should not be understood as homogeneous but as contested in nature because within each culture people may have different views on what constitutes norms and values.

Second, all the four studies on Vietnamese refusals also place more emphasis on pragmalinguistics which is "the study of the more linguistic end of pragmatics" (Leech, 1983, p. 11) than on sociopragmatics which is the study focusing more on cultural aspects than linguistic ones. As such, only the linguistic formula (Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990) are explored and so language seems to be the only means of conveying the message of a refusal. Although this focus on linguistic resources is important in cross-cultural studies, the socio-cultural factors underpinning the use of semantic formulas are also worth examining. Thomas (1983), when dealing with students' pragmatic failures in cross-cultural communication, takes this point even further arguing that pragmalinguistic failure can be easier to fix than sociopragmatic failure. She claimed that this is because the linguistic conventionalised forms "can be taught quite straightforwardly as 'part of the grammar' whereas sociopragmatic failure "involves the student's system of beliefs as much as his/her knowledge of the language" (p. 91).

The third feature, and also the consequence of the other two features, is the frequent use of Discourse Completion Tests (henceforth DCTs) as a method of eliciting data (e.g. Nguyễn Thị Minh Phương, 2006;

[2] See Triandis (1994, p. 67), Matsumoto and Juang (2004, p. 67) for further conceptualizations of *emics* and *etics*.

Phan Thị Vân Quyên, 2001; Trần Chi Mai, 2005c). DCTs[3] were originally developed by Blum-Kulka (1982) during her comparison of speech act realizations between native and non-native Hebrew speakers. In the DCTs, participants are required to fill in the blanks indicating what they think they would say in a given situation. Response data are normally coded into semantic formulas and analysed by quantitative tools. Although DCTs help researchers obtain a great deal of comparable data in a short period of time (Al-Eryani, 2007; Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Félix-Brasdefer, 2006, 2008; Kwon, 2004), they reveal a number of drawbacks (see Beebe and Cummings, 1996, p. 80). In real life people may not refuse in some of the situations given in the DCTs. Phan Thị Vân Quyên (2001), for example, admits that some informants in her study did not provide refusals to the request given in the DCTs because they said they would not refuse such a request. Moreover, they reported that if they were to refuse then a number of turns and negotiations would be likely to occur rather than just the one-to-one response provided in the DCTs. Thus, by asking participants to produce oral or written refusals, researchers using DCTs may unintentionally 'force' participants to refuse in situations in which they may not actually do so in real life.

Finally, all the studies do not explore refusing in interaction and thus they cannot touch upon non-linguistic modes of communication. The term *refusing in interaction* is creatively used in this paper as one type of the more general term *talk-in-interaction* which has been well established in conversation analysis. As Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008, p. 11) claim, conversation analysis is the study of talk produced in everyday situations of human interaction, and thus this talk is often referred to as talk-in-interaction (the term is written with hyphens). In the literature of conversation analysis, there has been a number of books and journal articles using this term with or without a replacement of the word 'talk', such as *Impoliteness in Interaction* (2008) by Derek Bousfield, or *Talk-in-interaction: multilingual perspectives* (2009) edited by Hanh Thi Nguyen and Gabriele Kasper. It has been widely evidenced that in interaction, people often concurrently use different tools to convey their intended meaning and language is only one of the tools. Norris (2004, p. 2) states that language is only one mode of communication "which may or may not take a central role at any given moment in an interaction" and thus exploring only language will limit "our understanding of the complexity of interaction".

Accordingly, this paper presents the major findings of a case study that explores the speech act of refusing performed by a Vietnamese woman from an interactional perspective. As such, it attempts to answer two main questions:

1. How are different modes of communication used by the Vietnamese woman to refuse a high-stakes advice or request?

2. How is it negotiated in one conversation and through a series of conversations?

The findings obtained from answering these two questions help to answer the third question – the conclusive one:

3. How does the Vietnamese woman's responsibility to obey her parents constrain

[3] DCTs are originally "written questionnaires including a number of brief situational descriptions, followed by a short dialog with an empty slot for the speech act under study" (Kasper & Dahl, 1991, p. 221) (see Pavaresh & Tavakoli, 2009 for other types of DCTs).

and condition her refusing?

It should be noted here that in this paper the author deliberately uses the term ‘refusing’ instead of ‘refusal’ for several reasons. First, refusing implies the whole process of making one or more refusals, and it can cover the actions (verbal or non-verbal) that do not seem to constitute a refusal (according to traditional classification) but in fact have the function of a refusal or at least of a signal to refuse. In other words, it refers to utterances or behavior that may not be classified by linguists as refusals basing on the literal meaning. For example, the utterance “Yes, OK, let me ask my wife if we have already had any plan with our saving” used to respond to a request of borrowing money may not be classified as a refusal in terms of semantics, but it is regarded by many Vietnamese people as an indirect refusal (Nguyễn Trọng Du, 2016). Second, during the process of negotiation, refusing can be changed; that is, a person may want to refuse at first, but then decide to accept or vice versa. This fact is not at all rare in real life, especially when the refusal is made in response to a high-stakes advice or request, the one that may have a great impact on the refuser’s life. Third, refusing is explored not only from the speaker’s intention but also from the hearer’s interpretation. This is quite interesting in that sometimes the refuser does not refuse directly; s/he says something very indirect and lets the hearer figure out the message of a refusal. Fourth, refusing is not only explored from the speaker’s words but also from his or her actual non-verbal actions that he or she performs later. In other words, s/he may not refuse in words but does not do things as requested or invited by his or her interlocutor. Finally, exploring refusing as a process can better reveal the full vivid picture of the sociocultural affordances underlying it.

Another term that needs clarifying is “high-stakes” which is used in this paper as a pre-modifier of the two nouns “advice” and “request”. It refers to something very important, something that may cause a big change to addressees. Thus, a high-stakes advice is an advice that may have a big impact on the person who is advised. For example, to advise a woman to get divorced from her husband can be regarded as a high-stakes one because it may lead to a big change of her life.

2. Data and the analytical tools

2.1. Data

The data used in this paper are conversations excerpted from a movie entitled *Những công dân tập thể* (lit. the citizens living in the same apartment building) produced in 2011. This 36-episode TV series, which can be downloaded free from YouTube, is about everyday matters occurring in a small community of people who are living in the same apartment building in Hanoi. The reason to choose this movie is that it depicts casual and mundane encounters between family members or between neighbours that take place in their daily life. Many of these encounters elaborate problems and conflicts such as getting divorced, quarrelling between neighbours, and the issues of inheritance where refusing is very likely to occur. It can be said that this movie mirrors the real contemporary society of Hanoi – the capital city of Vietnam – in the first decade of the 21st century.

The conversations taken for analysis in this paper are about a story of getting divorced. The main character is Dương

– a well-educated woman – who has just finished her PhD course in sociology. She is married to Kỉnh who is a car-driving instructor at a driving school and they have a pre-school son. Since Kỉnh comes from the countryside, he has to stay with his wife's family that consists of her mother and her younger brother (in Vietnam it is quite rare for a husband to stay with his wife's family). Totally, there are 5 people living in an apartment unit including Dương, her husband Kỉnh, her son Tít, her mother Mai, and her younger brother Hoàng. Her mother is a retired schoolteacher who got divorced from her father a long time ago. Her father left them and has married another lady, but her mother just stays as a single mum.

The conversations in this paper take place after Dương has decided to get divorced from her husband since she discovered that he is having a love affair with another woman, one of his driving learners at the driving school. Knowing about this problem, her mother tries to advise and request her to cancel her decision to get divorced drawing on the reason that a divorced woman will have a difficult life (the mother herself has been bearing the consequences of being a single mum). There are five conversations (or five scenes) between her and the mother and other family members. For the scope of this paper, however, the author would select two of them for analysis: the first and the last. The first is the dialogue between Dương and her mother, and the last is the dialogue between her and her husband. The other three conversations are between her and her mother (the second), between her and other adult members in her family (the third) and between her and the ghost of her mother (the fourth, after the mother dies from an accident).

2.2. Analytical tools

Taking the stance of a constructionist view which is influenced by Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodology, Goffman's (1983) interaction order and Gumperz's (1982) interactional sociolinguistics, the author treats refusing as both a process and procduct rather than just as a product; that is, how refusing is negotiated and performed through a series of conversations between persons involved rather than just what they actually say and do to refuse. Accordingly, the study relied on a combination of Conversation Analysis (CA) and Multimodal Interactional Analysis (MIA) as analytical tools which the author believes to be specifically helpful for the analysis of the interactional data.

2.2.1. A justification for the use of CA to analyze movie data

The present study drew on CA (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008; Sacks, 1992a, 1992b) as an *informed*-tool of analysis, with *informed* in the sense that CA is not applied with its full feature because the movie conversations are not considered naturally-occuring data. It has been accepted that what the persons in a TV series or a movie say and do will not be treated as naturally-occuring data; they should only be regarded as reflection of natural talks in real life. In using CA to analyze scripted data, the author is aware that he had 'violated' the principle of CA which requires the study of naturally-occuring conversations. However, he was not doing this without theoretical and methodological bases. In fact, he was always aware that filmic conversations, although having almost all features of a natural interaction, are only the reflection of what the film makers including the screenwriter, the director, actors and actresses perceive to be the case in real-life communication, as well as the reflection of what they think the viewers would think to be the case in real-life communication. Accordingly, he was aware of what kind of claims he can or cannot make based on this kind of data. There have been a number of studies (e.g. Gilmore, 2004; Holmes, 1998; Nguyen Thi Hanh & Ishitobi, 2012; Nguyen Thi Thuy Minh, 2011; Scotton & Bernsten, 1988; Uso-Juan, 2008; Wong, 2002) showing how constructed dialogues deviate from what actually happens in real life.

However, there have also been several authors (e.g. Bowles, 2009; Herman, 1998; Ivanchenko, 2007) who applied CA on analysing literary works and they argued that CA can be usefully applied to constructed conversations if attention is sufficiently paid to what can be concluded from the findings. In another article on the contribution of CA to the study of literary dialogue, Bowles (2011, p. 165) quoted Keith Richards' words (through personal communication) that "it may be legitimate to claim that talk produced by the writer is 'naturally-occurring' data and that this kind of 'writer-constructed' dialogue may be a legitimate object of CA as long as the analysis is aware of its 'constructedness' and takes it into account".

2.2.2. A justification for the use of MIA

MIA (Norris, 2004) was also used for the analysis of the data. Influenced by mediated discourse analysis (Scollon, 2001), MIA sees that every action is mediated (Norris, 2004) either by language or any other modes of communication, or by a combination of those modes. Thus, refusing as an action is mediated by a number of mediational tools among which language is only one. The tools may be utilized one at a time, but very often several tools are used concurrently, which makes a complexity of modes (Norris, 2004).

The use of MIA does not mean that CA cannot be used to analyse the non-linguistic actions such as gesture, gaze, as well as the role of the material objects. There have been a good number of studies analysing those communication modes using CA (e.g. C. Goodwin, 1981; 1994, M. H. Goodwin, 1990 etc). However, CA approach to multimodality is different from MIA in two fundamental areas (Mortensen, 2013). First, the latter often analyses each semiotic mode in its own right whereas the former does not describe each mode independently but as an interplay between various semiotic fields. Second, although MIA assumes that every mode is relevant and affects the ongoing interaction, it does not adopt an emic approach as CA does. In other words, it does not necessarily include a social (i.e., the participants' understanding of prior turn and taking next turn) interactional perspective in the analysis. As such, whereas MIA assumes that every semiotic mode is relevant, CA assumes that "everything *might* be relevant, but is not necessarily made relevant by the participants." (Mortensen, 2013, p.2).

Since the author draws on movie conversations, he needs to analyse both how the participants (i.e., the actors and actresses) make relevant the communication modes at hand (more exactly, how the film makers direct them to make use of those modes) and how the film makers make relevant other modes independent from the job of the actors and actresses. In other words, since he analysed conversations from a TV series, which are scripted, not only the modes made relevant by the participants but also those that were not would be analysed.

During an interaction, there are moments when language takes the main role and becomes the embodied mode of interaction whereas other modes such as gaze, gesture, or material objects become disembodied (Norris, 2004). There are other moments when language plays a minor role in conveying the message and thus becomes disembodied whereas another mode can become prominent. The analysis of data in this study reveals how different modes of communication have their own roles in expressing the message of a refusal.

3. Analysis and discussion

The following conversations were transcribed using transcript conventions invented by Gail Jefferson (2004). The first line is the Vietnamese version, the second is the word by word gloss and the third line is the translation. For the sake of reader-friendliness, the translation lines are all in bold.

3.1. The first conversation: Episode 22 (30'04-33'10)

3.1.1. A brief description of the first part of the conversation

The conversation, part of which is transcribed below for analysis, takes place between Dương and her mother, Mai, in Dương's bedroom. They are both sitting on Dương's bed; Mai is holding a bracelet and Dương is holding some photos. In front of them is the box used to store the bracelet, photos, and other objects. All of the things are possesions Mai had had before she divorced her husband and which she has been keeping as souvenirs that remind her of the good old time before the divorce.

Knowing that Dương has decided to divorce her husband, Mai is trying to advise her to cancel her decision. At the beginning of the conversation, Mai tells a story about the difficult time in the past when she and the whole family had to live a hard life before she got divorced from her husband (i.e., Dương's father). She starts the story by saying that every marriage is the result of love, and that because of having love, she and her husband had had a good time together. What she implies is that if a husband and a wife love each other, together they can overcome all difficulties they may encounter in their life. Therefore, although the whole family were so poor that they did not have enough food to eat and clothes to wear, she and her husband still loved each other, and there was a lot of laughter in the family. Dương listens to the story attentively. She shows her *display of recipiency* (Heath, 1984) by gazing at Mai in a sympathetic manner and then starting to cry. At the time being recounted, Dương was a small child, but old enough to remember what happened. Thus, she contributes to her mother's story by mentioning the birth of her younger brother, Hoàng. By doing so, she indicates her shared knowledge and mutual understanding with her mother. As such, both of them display their mutual understanding, or harmony, in talk.

Mai continues her story by saying that as the result of the increasing hardship, her husband felt bored and went out more often, and he ended up having a love affair with another woman. The consequence of this affair is that she decided to get divorced from him because, as she narrates, she has her own self-esteem. This divorce made her life as a single mum even more difficult, and she wishes she would not have been so intolerant to her husband. By telling this story, she wants to advise Dương that if Dương tries to get divorced, she will encounter similar difficulty; and the conversation continues as transcribed below.

01. Dương: ((crying, sniff)) *huh*
02. Mai: ((turns to Dương, gazes at her, and rubs her shoulder))
03. *(2.5) con ạ (1.0) đánh kẻ chạy đi (0.5) không ai đánh kẻ chạy lại*
child Voc beat person run away no who beat person run back
My daughter, we beat the one who runs away, not the one who's running back to us.
04. Dương: ((slightly shakes her head, glimpses at Mai, still crying)) *huh .h*
05. *(2.0) thôi mẹ ạ (2.0) con thấy mình bị tổn thương .hh*
leave off mother StaM child feel self NegM hurt
Please say no more, mum. I feel really hurt.
06. Mai: ((looks down sadly))
07. Dương: *(1.5) chắc mẹ cũng hiểu (1.5) vết thương lớn nhất (0.5)*
perhaps mother also understand wound big most
Mum, you probably understand that the worst pain,
08. *và cũng là vết thương khó lành nhất*
and also be wound difficult heal most
and also the most difficult to heal,
09. *(1.5) chính là nỗi đau tâm hồn*
be pain soul
is the pain in one's soul
10. Mai: ((turns up and gazes at Dương))
11. *(1.5) mẹ hiểu (0.5) lòng con luôn trong sạch (1.0) nhưng (.) khi*
mother understand heart child always pure but when
I know that you have a pure mind, and thus when
12. ((turns away))
13. *nó đã bị hoen ố (0.5) thì khó lòng lấy lại được (1.0)*
it already NegM stained then difficult get back possible
it has been stained there will be no way for it to restore
14. Dương: ((crying voice))
15. Mai: ((turns up to gaze at Dương, hold her hand tightly))
16. *Nhưng (.) mẹ chỉ mong con hãy vì cu Tít*
but mother only expect child please for lad Tít
But I still hope you will, for Tít's sake,
17. *(1.0) mà đừng dẫm chân vào (.) vết xe đổ (0.5)*
so not step foot on trace vehicle collapse
not follow the track of a fallen cart,
18. *đừng sai lầm như mẹ*
not faulty like mother
not make the same mistake I made.
19. Dương: ((bows her head onto Mai's shoulder crying))
20. *mẹ huh huh ((sniff))*
mother huh huh
Mum! huh huh
21. (5.0)
22. Mai: ((takes the box up))
23. *(6.0) mẹ giao những vật này lại cho con*
mother give PluM thing this again for child
I give these things to you
24. Dương: ((turns up from Mai's shoulder))
25. (3.0) ((pushes the box back)) *kia mẹ(h)*
there mother
Oh mum!
26. Mai: ((grasp Dương's hand and put the box on it))
27. *(1.0) cả đời mẹ thanh sạch (.75) mẹ cũng chẳng giầu có gì*
whole life mother pure clean mother also not rich what
I have lived my whole life in an upright way. I am not rich,
28. *(2.0) mẹ chỉ có bài học này tặng lại cho con*
mother only have lesson this present to child
so I only have this lesson as a gift for you.
29. Dương: ((keeps crying))
30. Mai: *(2.0) mẹ hy vọng (0.5) con hãy giữ lấy*
mother hope child will keep
I hope you will keep it
31. Dương: ((cries louder and bows onto Mai's shoulder)) *huhuh*
32. *(2.5) mẹ(h)*
mum
Oh mum!
33. ((non-diegetic music for 13 seconds))
34. Mai: ((silent crying – streams of tear flowing down from her eyes))

It can be seen that there are three adjacency pairs of advice – refusal in this excerpt. The first pair is from line 1 to line 9, the second from line 10 to line 21, and the third from line 22 to the end. The analysis below makes clear how each refusal in each pair is made.

3.1.2. The first refusal: language is accompanied by a number of paralinguistic and non-linguistic modes

After telling the story as a pre-advice, Mai decides to give her first piece of advice in line 3 using the proverb *đánh kẻ chạy đi không ai đánh kẻ chạy lại* (lit. to beat the person who runs away and not to beat the person who runs back). This advice is made at the point of time when Mai recognizes that Dương has been involved in the story she has been telling with sufficient understanding. It is evidenced by the fact that Dương has shown she knows the story very well, and takes part in the story telling by mentioning the birth of her younger brother - Hoàng - and the bigger difficulties they experienced after Hoàng was born. Dương's full involvement in the story is also realized by her sad mood (sympathetic gaze and crying – lines 1, 4). This involvement projects Mai to transit from giving a pre-advice turn to making the actual advice. The vocative form *con ạ* (line 3) marks this transition and the accompanying proverb functions as an indirect advice.

In the Vietnamese culture, 'the person who runs away' denotes the one who commits a fault, but does not admit his or her wrongdoing. On the other hand, 'the person who runs back' refers to the one who recognises his or her fault and feels regretful and repentant about it. The verb 'beat' metaphorically means to punish somebody who commits a wrongdoing, and hence 'not to beat' means to forgive him or her. The proverb, therefore, teaches people to forgive those who have already recognized their wrongdoing and want to correct it. In saying this, Mai indirectly advises Dương to forgive her husband because he, as far as Mai could observe, has shown that he feels regretful about his infidelity.

Upon hearing the advice, Dương concurrently conducted a number of actions: she slightly shakes her head, glimpses at her mother and then looking down, keeps crying (line 4), and making a request back to her mother that she does not need to advise her (line 5) because she really feels hurt. Dương draws on all these modes to refuse her mother's advice and this shows the complexity of modes of communication in which the linguistic form (i.e the utterance of the request back) is only one. All these actions make Mai look down and away from Dương sadly (line 6). This reveals that she perceives Dương's verbal and non-verbal actions as the constitution of a refusal.

Then Dương gives further explanation (lines 7, 8, and 9) in a mitigating way: she says *chắc mẹ cũng hiểu* (you probably understand, line 7) to seek her mother's sympathy. Seeking sympathy from Mai reveals Dương, too, is performing a perfect recipient design because she knows that she and her mother have "the existing mutual knowledge" (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008, p. 130) about how a woman feels when she is betrayed by her husband. Apart from the fact that every woman would feel badly hurt if her husband was unfaithful, Mai knows exactly what the hurt feels like because she herself was betrayed by her husband a long time ago (as she reveals in her story). Therefore, by seeking her mother's sympathy Dương can make her reason for not forgiving her husband more convincing and hence her refusal stronger. If in the story Mai draws on the fact that getting divorce can make a woman's life really difficult in order to advise Dương, Dương draws on another aspect of the story, i.e., the serious hurt a woman would get from being betrayed by her husband, which Mai has been suffering, to refuse Mai's advice.

Through the analysis of this first adjency pair, we can see that Dương draws on a number of modes to refuse her mother's advice. She uses language (by making a request back to her mother and explaining the reasons) together with a number of other non-linguistic forms including gazing, shaking head, crying, among others. These modes are concurrently utilized and they together make her refusing more gentle on the one hand but more determining on the other.

3.1.3. The second refusal: linguistic mode becomes less prominent than non-linguistic ones

Upon interpreting Dương's verbal turns (lines 4-9) and non-verbal behaviour as a refusal, Mai continues to give the second advice by outlining another reason - *vì cu Tít* (for Tít's sake, line 16) - to explain why Dương should not consider getting a divorce. In this second attempt (lines 16-18) Mai intensifies her advice with a number of other non-linguistic actions: She turns to Dương again, grasps her hand, holds it tightly, gazes at her, and then pleads to her. Mai advises Dương to reconsider her decision to divorce her husband for the sake of the happiness of her son. It is widely observed that children are seriously influenced when parents decide to separate. Thus in reality, many couples choose not to divorce for the sake of their children. Through this further negotiation Mai is highlighting to Dương the responsibility she has for the happiness of her son. Moreover, by so doing Mai thinks she is providing Dương with a more convincing reason to reconsider her decision to get divorced. However, Dương again refuses, this time by bowing her head onto Mai's shoulder and crying louder (lines 19), and uttering only one word *mẹ* (mum!) (line 20) before keeping a 5-second silence (line 21).

The utterance of only one word *mẹ* reveals that language has become less prominent than it is in Dương's first refusal. At this moment she relies more on non-linguistic modes (bowing her head onto her mother's shoulder, crying, and keeping silence), and thus these modes become embodied in this turn.

Although the utterance *mẹ* does not itself constitue a refusal, it does when accompanied by those non-linguistic modes. And Mai interprets this series of action as Dương's refusal mainly because of her non-linguistic actions (e.g. crying and keeping silent). That is why Mai goes further in her attempt to advise Dương in her next turns.

3.1.4. The third refusal: crying takes a central role

The third adjacency advice-refusal pair starts when Mai picks up the box (line 22) used to store the bracelet, photos, and some letters. She decides to give those things to Dương with the hope that they will remind Dương of her own sad story and thus help her to change her mind. At first, Dương does not want to receive them, as evidenced by her pushing the box back (line 25). Because Mai insists, however, by grasping Dương's hand and putting the box in it (line 26), Dương has to receive it reluctantly. Mai's action of giving the box, together with her words (lines 23-30), reveals that she is very insistent on advising Dương to forgive her husband. What happens in the conversation shows that Mai may have prepared to give it to Dương before the conversation starts; and if so, she must have known in advance that advising her daughter is not easy and that her advice is very likely to be refused. It is because if Dương explicitly accepts her advice right at the beginning, she may not have to give it to her. Therefore, the fact that Dương does not explicitly accept is understood by Mai as an indirect refusal, and she also interprets Dương's later actions (crying on her shoulder [line 31] and repeating the exclamation *mẹ* [line 32]) as another refusal. Thus, she keeps advising and requesting Dương in later conversations.

3.2. The last conversation: Episode 32 (26'05-28'30)

Before the last conversation takes place, there have been other interactions between Dương and her family members. The second conversation (episode 22: 48'52-51'31) is between her and Mai in which Mai continues to request her to forgive her husband. The situational setting of this interaction is in front of the altar. In this conversation, Mai draws on a superstitious reason to make her request: she blames herself for not having been worshipping the ancestors and the deities properly, and so they punish them by controlling her daughter's thoughts, the result of which is that her daughter decided to get divorced. Therefore, in this interaction, she has to pray for their mercy, then she requests Dương to cancel her decision.

The third conversation (episode 25: 4'00-5'44) takes place in a family meeting attended by all the family members (except Dương's son). This time, Mai decides to bring the issue on board as a family problem and makes an official direct request to Dương and Kỉnh to forgive each other. Once more, Dương refuses. The fourth conversation (episode 31: 54'27-56'14) is a special one because it is the dialogue in Dương's dream between her and her mother's ghost after the mother dies from an accident. In the conversation, the ghost (i.e. Dương's mother) advises Dương again to cancel divorcing and the reason she gives this time is that a lonely woman would become rigid and dry. The mother's death has had a great influence on Dương's attitude which is revealed in the last conversation analyzed below.

The excerpt below is the final part of the conversation between Dương and her husband. In this excerpt Kỉnh is trying to beg for Dương's forgiveness.

01. Kinh: *... mẹ không muốn con cái ly hôn*
… mother not want children divorce
… Our mother did not want us to get divorced,
02. *(3.0) hãy vì mẹ (.5) mà em tha thứ cho anh*
please for mother so sister forgive for elder brother
so for her sake, please follow her wish to forgive me.
03. *(1.5) anh xin em (4.0) anh có nói gì lúc này (.)*
elder brother beg younger sister elder brother have say what now
I beg you. I know whatever I say now
04. *em cũng không nghe*
younger sister also not listen
you will not listen to;
05. *(1.5) anh (.) có hối hận cũng không kịp*
elder brother have regret also not in time
it is too late for me to regret;
06. Dương: *huh.hh (keeps looking at the altar of her mother)*
07. Kinh: *(1.0) anh biết mà*
elder brother know StaM
I know that already.
08. *(2.0) anh chỉ còn có (0.5) một cách duy nhất (1.0) là*
elder brother only remain have one way only be
The only thing I can do now is
09. *xin em bỏ qua cho anh*
beg younger sister forgive for elder brother
to beg you to forgive me
10. Dương: ((shakes her head))*.hhh huh*
11. *(1.0) hhuh rất tiếc (0.5) trong mắt tôi (1.5) anh không còn tồn tại .h*
very pity in eye my elder brother no longer exist
It's a pity that in my eyes you no longer exist
12. Kinh: ((looks down disappointedly)) (4.0)
13. Dương *nhưng anh nói đúng (2.0) khi mẹ còn sống (1.0) mẹ luôn*
but elder brother speak right when mother still alive mother always
But you are right. When our mother was still alive she always
14. *phản đối chuyện ly hôn (1.0) bà (.) không muốn con cái*
oppose matter divorce grandmother not want children
protested our divorce matter. She didn't want her children
15. *dẫm vào vết xe đổ*
step into trace vehicle fall
to follow the track of a fallen cart
16. Kinh: ((grasp Dương's hand))
17. *(1.5) ơhơ em (0.5) > em hãy làm theo mong muốn của mẹ<*
uhuh younger sister younger sister please do follow wish of mother
Please, do as she wished;
18. Dương: *.hhh* ((pulls her hand back, stands up and looks at the altar))
19. (4.0)
20. Kinh: *((looks up to Dương)) >em hãy để cho cu Tít có bố< (2.0)*
younger sister please let for lad Tít have father
please let our child have his father
21. Dương: ((walks slowly to the altar))
22. Kinh: *anh* ((stands up)) *(1.5) anh xin em đấy* (1.0)
elder brother elder brother beg younger sister AffM
I hereby beg you

23. ((moves to the front of Dương, kneels down and grasp Dương's hands))
24. *em (0.5)*
younger sister
You
25. Dương: *uhuh*
26. Kinh: *em hãy tha cho anh (0.5) <u>đúng</u> một lần này thôi (1.0)*
younger sister please forgive for elder brother right one time this only
Please forgive me (0.5) just this time;
27. *một lần này thôi mà*
one time this only StaM
just only this time
28. Dương: ((shakes her head))
29. *(3.0) tôi vừa gặp mẹ trong mơ ((sniff)) (3.0)*
I just meet mother in dream
I have just met our mother in my dream;
30. *mẹ vẫn phản đối chuyện ly hô(h)n ((sniff))*
mother still oppose matter divorce
she still objected to our divorce
31. *(3.0) nếu mẹ tôi còn sống* ((looks at Kinh)) (1.5) *dứt khoát*
If mother my still alive definitely
If she were still alive I and you would definitely
32. *><u>tôi và anh sẽ ra tòa</u> .hhh< ((looks at the altar)) nhưng vì mẹ*
I and elder brother will go court but because mother
go to court, but because she
33. *((gazes at the altar)) (1.0) ((sniff)) uhuh huh huh .hhh huh huh huh*
34. ((steps back and sits down)) (7.0)
35. Kinh: ((still knees down and looks at Dương with begging eyes))
36. Dương: *nhưng vì mẹ không còn (2.0) uhuh huh .hhh*
but because mother not alive uhuh huh .hhh
but because she has passed away
37. *nên tôi không không nỡ làm trái ý nguyện của bà(h)*
so I not not have the heart do against wish of grandmother
I don't have the heart to go against her wish
38. Kinh: ((looks at Dương with hope))
39. *uhuh huh huh (3.0) tạm thời anh vẫn là chồng tôi .hhh (1.5)*
uhuh huh huh temporarily elder brother still be husband my
Temporarily you are still my husband
40. *trên danh nghĩa*
on title
on paper
41. Kinh: ((moves towards Dương, knees down and grasps her hand again))
42. *cảm ơn em (1.0) anh hứa*
thank younger sister elder brother promise
Thank you. I promise
43. Dương: *(3.0) tôi nhắc lại (1.0) chỉ là trên danh nghĩa (3.0)*
I say again only be on title
I say it again: only on paper.
44. *chúng ta (0.5) sẽ chính thức ly thân*
we will officially separate
We will officially separate
45. Kinh: *(1.5) anh hiểu mà (1.0) hy vọng thời gian sẽ giúp anh*
elder brother understand StaM hope time will help elder brother
I understand. Hopefully, time can help me

46. *chứng minh (2.0) thật lòng (0.5) anh rất ân hận (0.5)*
prove truly elder brother very regretful
to prove myself. I am really regretful
47. *và muốn sửa sai*
and want repair fault
and want to correct my fault
48. Dương: *(2.0) tôi muốn yên tĩnh ((looks at the altar))*
I want quiet
I want to stay alone
49. *(2.0) chắc mẹ cũng thế*
perhaps mother also that
our mother may also wants that
50. *(2.5) anh đi làm đi ((stands up and goes into the bedroom))*
elder brother go work AlignM
You'd better go to work now.

The excerpt can be divided into two parts. The first part is from the beginning to line 12 in which different non-linguistic actions are performed by Dương to refuse her husband. The second part is the remaining one and it marks the change in Dương's mind: she decides to forgive him. In each part, there are smaller adjacency pairs of request and refusal.

3.2.1. Refusing by ignoring, keeping silence, and shaking head

In this excerpt, Kỉnh begs Dương to accept her mother's advice to forgive him. He knows that Dương loves her mother very much and so she would accept her mother's advice. He mentions the fact that their mother did not want them to get divorced (line 1) as a pre-request with the hope that Dương will accept the mother's advice. However, she keeps silent for 3 seconds (lie 3), which is understood by him as a refusal to his pre-request, and this projects him to make the actual request by asking her to forgive him for the mother's sake (line 2). Again, what he receives is another silence of 1.5 second (line 3), which leads him again to make a real begging "I beg you" (line 3), and an even longer silence (4 seconds) is delivered. Thus, in this short moment, he has made several requests (including pre-request and begging) and receives several non-linguistic refusals in the form of silence. Dương does not bother to take her turn at the points where Kỉnh expects they are the transition relevance places (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). It proves that Dương is trying to make Kỉnh understand that begging her to forgive him is not that easy and simple even though she may follow her mother's advice, which means she may forgive him.

During the interaction, although Dương is sitting opposite Kỉnh, she does not look at him but keeps gazing at the altar (line 6) where her mother is worshipped. This ignorance reveals that she hates him and sends him a message that she will not forgive him at this moment (although by looking at the altar, she implies that she might follow her mother's advice). Kỉnh may have realized that there is still some hope, so although interpreting Dương's ignorance as another refusal, he makes another attempt by repeating the begging (line 9); and only after Dương shakes her head and keeps crying (line 10), and states that he does not exist in her eyes (line 11) does he know that all his effort to persuade her cannot succeed. His action of looking down disappointedly (line 12) proves that he has perceived all the actions made by Dương as the performance of a refusal.

In this part, Kỉnh admits that his fault is so serious that Dương will not accept any excuse; but he is smart in that he draws on the fact that her mother wanted her to forgive him as the reason she will be most likely to consider. As such, he touches upon Dương's weakest point in her psychological state; that is, she loves her mother very much and thus she will be very likely to follow her mother's advice even though she does not want to forgive him. Therefore, he is putting Dương in the context that her forgiveness will be due to her mother's sake, not to his regretful behaviour. As such, he gives her the sense that she could forgive him but could still maintain her self-esteem that may be lost if she does so.

It can be stated that not until the turn in line 10 do non-linguistic forms, including keeping silent, looking at the altar, shaking head, crying etc, become embodied (Norris, 2004) because they are the main modes of communication that convey the message of a refusal. Language only takes its role in line 11 where Dương's utterance functions as a final refusal in the series of refusals made by keeping silence.

3.2.2. From refusing to accepting

The conversation would end with a refusal by Dương if she did not continue her turn. After a pause for 4 seconds (line 12), which makes Kỉnh think she is refusing, she continues her turn with the word 'but' in line 13. This word is noticeable here because it introduces a big change in her attitude. By acknowledging that her mother did not want her to get divorced (lines 13-15), she goes back to the point Kỉnh made earlier in line 2 in which he begs her to forgive him for the mother's sake. This acknowledgement gives him a new hope because it may mean to him that she will follow her mother's advice as well as her request to forgive him.

Seeing that Dương seems to be convinced by that reason (i.e., for the mother's sake), Kỉnh takes this opportunity to make another request, this time with higher verbal density and a complexity of actions (Norris, 2004, 2009). The verbal density is realised in the different reasons he produces to ask for Dương's forgiveness. The first reason is the one he has made earlier, that is, to follow the mother's wish (line 17). The second reason is to let their son have his father (line 20). He makes these two sentences with fast speed (marked by the signs > and < on lines 17 and 20), which contributes to the urgency of his begging. Until this moment, Dương still seems to be reluctant to accept: when he grasps her hand (line 16), she pulls it back in a forceful manner (line 18), then she stands up (line 18), keeps looking at the altar, and then walks towards the altar (line 21). Normally, these non-verbal actions would be interpreted as a refusal, but in this interaction, they are performed after she has given him a hope as analysed in the paragraph above, and thus they would be regarded not as a real refusal but as a challenge she wants to give him. In other words, with these actions she may want to transmit to him a message that "you made a really serious mistake that hurts me a lot, and so I will not forgive you easily unless you beg me more". In fact, Kỉnh perceives Dương's actions in that way, so he continues to convince her by a complexity of other actions, verbal and non-verbal. He speaks faster, begs her - 'I hereby beg you' (line 22), stands up and moves to her front (lines 22, 23), kneels down in front of her and grasps her hand (line 23), and gives a heavy stress on the word *đúng* in the phrase *đúng một lần này thôi* (line 26).

Again, Dương shakes her head (line 28) but it does not seem to be a refusal because after 3 seconds she returns to talk about her dream of meeting her mother (line 29) and informs him that her mother still resists her decision to get divorced (line 30), which she has already mentioned in lines 13, 14). This information together with the head shake can be interpreted as "I will not accept your begging, but I will rethink of my mother's wish", and they give Kỉnh a new hope that she will declare her forgiveness. However, she does not explicitly say that she will forgive him as a responsibility she would take to obey her mother. Until this point, what she says is just a conditional sentence (lines 31, 32): if her mother were still alive, she and he would definitely get divorced. This utterance implies that she might forgive him because her mother has died, and Kỉnh should interpret it that way. However, he keeps kneeling in front of her (line 35) as if his fault has not been relented. Even after Dương says that because her mother has passed away, she will not go against her wish (line 36, 37), he still feels uncertain; so he looks at Dương with some hope (line 38). His actions at this moment reveal that he must have thought that his fault is so serious that his wife will not forgive him easily, and thus he is expecting an explicit statement of tolerance from her. Therefore, only after she clearly declares that he is still her husband, on paper, (lines 39, 40) does he express his thanks and gratitude.

It is noticeable here that Dương only fulfills her responsibility in order to satisfy her mother after she has passed away, and if her mother was still alive, she would not do so (lines 31, 32). This conditional shows that the Confucian teaching of women's reponsibility to do what their parents want has strongly imprinted on Vietnamese women's mind to the extent that they tend to do something as a priviledge for their deceased parents which they would not do if their parents were still alive.

Therefore, before the conversation takes place, Dương must have prepared to reconsider her decision to divorce Kỉnh after her mother died although she does not let him know her true intention at the beginning of the conversation. This is revealed by the fact that she keeps looking at the altar when talking to him, and keeps refusing him.

It can be seen from this analysis that Dương's actions of refusing and then accepting her husband's begging are performed by many means of communication apart from language. All the actions of crying, looking at the altar, bowing slightly forward and staring at her husband while he is still kneeling on the floor, and gazing angrily at him play a very important role in conveying the message and expressing her attitude.

4. Conclusion

The analysis of the two filmic excerpts has answered the two main research questions and one conclusive one as follows.

4.1. Refusing and related speech acts are mediated by different modes of communication

Drawing on CA and MIA, this paper demonstrated that refusing and related speech acts such as advising, requesting, and begging are often performed via a number of communication modes. Language is an important means of communication, but not the only one. It can play a major role at certain moments, but minor role at other times. As documented throughout this paper, modes other than language such as gazing, maintaining silence, crying and so on become embodied (Norris, 2004) in different stages of an interaction.

Material objects, often referred to as disembodied modes of communication (Norris, 2004), can also play a very important role in conveying the intended message. In the first conversation, for example, the bracelet, the photos, and the letters are used by the mother because she thinks that those things will remind Dương of the sad story of the mother's divorce which has caused a lot of difficulties to her. In the last conversation, the altar used to worship the spirit of her mother also reminds her of the responsibility she must take (i.e., to obey her mother). For this reason, when Dương is talking to Kỉnh during this conversation she always faces and gazes at the altar as if she is talking to her mother, who is already dead. It is therefore reasonable to state that not only linguistic, paralinguistic and non-linguistic modes can convey meaning, but material objects can also take certain roles. Very often, these modes are used concurrently with different degrees of complexity and intensity (Norris, 2004).

4.2. Refusing is a process of negotiation

Through the analysis of the divorce story a vivid picture was provided of how Vietnamese people refuse an advice or a request related to a high-stakes (i.e. potentially changes one's life) issue. Due to the high degree of face threat, refusing may occur several times in one interaction; for example, in the first conversation, there are three adjacency pairs of advice-refusal. Similary, in the last conversation, although Dương has already decided, right at the beginning of the conversation, to cancel her decision of getting divorced (evidenced in the fact that she keeps looking at the altar as if she is talking to her mother's spirit, which implies that she will accept her mother's requests that were made in previous conversations), she still makes a number of refusals by ignoring, maintaining silence, crying, and producing some utterances. Thus, these refusals can be understood as being made by Dương to signal her husband, Kỉnh, that she will not forgive him easily and that in order to be forgiven, he must show his really regretful behaviour.

Refusing also takes place through a long negotiation which is manifested in the five conversations in this story. Dương is very consistent at first, but since her mother does not give up advising and requesting her, she gradually changes her attitude. After a long period of negotiation, especially after her mother's death, she has become persuaded by the responsibility she has to fulfill to satisfy her mother and to please her mother's soul. As such, it can be concluded that refusals are both context-shaped and context-renewing (Heritage, 1984); that is, they are shaped by previous turns and they shape subsequent turns. It is demonstrated in the analyses of the conversations that how a refusal is made depends much on how the advice or the request is given; and how the refusal is made gives clues to how further advice or request is performed. To a larger extent, refusals are shaped by the previous conversation and shape the subsequent one. Thus, all the five conversations are linked together and constitute a coherent story containing the speech act of refusing.

4.3. Children's responsibility to obey their parents is still observed in the modern Vietnamese families

The analysis of this specific story of getting divorced reveals that a daughter's responsibility to obey her parents, one practice of filial piety, greatly influences her refusing. The fact that although Dương is very firm and consistent at first, her mother's death makes her change her decision in the last conversation proves this conclusion. That she finally takes her mother's advice to cancel her decision of getting divorced is the duty that she thinks she must do for her mother.

Although recent studies show that filial piety in the era of industrialization and globalization has become less strict than before, and children now often feel a burden to take care of their parents (Cao Thị Hải Bắc, 2018), the analysis of the interactional data in this paper explicates the fact that women's responsibility to obey their parents is still practised in Vietnam's contemporary society. However, the author does not conclude that this finding is contradictory to the trend found out in those studies. What this paper can contribute to the literature is that the finding is consonant with the view he mentions earlier that culture should be seen as very varied and even contested rather than stable and homogeneous.

In short, this paper does not aim to generalise the findings to a larger population; instead it tries to give a deep analysis of a specific case of getting divorce, which happens in a quite high percentage in contemporary Vietnam. From this analysis, we can see a relatively full picture of the impact of culture in everyday interaction. Nguyễn Hoà (2018) states that there is a dialectical relation between cultural values and the use of language, and that it is important for learners of a language to understand the underpinning culture. Since the findings of this paper show that refusing is not only manifested by language but also by non-linguistic forms, the author wants to broaden his view in that culture not only affects what people say but also what they do to convey what they want to say.

4.4. Implications

Although CA has been used quite widely in the world, it does not seem to be of great interest to Vietnamese researchers. In fact, there are few studies conducted by Vietnamese researchers drawing on CA to analyse speech acts in English and Vietnamese language. Similarly, MIA also receives the same stance in Vietnam.

It is therefore hoped that the findings presented in this paper will have some contribution to the literature of sociolinguistic research. In particular, it is expected that researchers in the field of pragmatics, especially master and PhD students who are going to apply CA and MIA in their research, will be able to find in this paper some new ideas for their selection of research topics. For example, they can select some types of conversations from some TV programmes such as conversations in some game shows. They may also be able to analyse comments taken from some social networks such as Facebook, Zalo, or Viber, or some interactions which are available on Youtube.com.

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"NẾU MẸ TÔI CÒN SỐNG, TÔI VÀ ANH SẼ RA TÒA": MỘT NGHIÊN CỨU TRƯỜNG HỢP VỀ LỜI TỪ CHỐI CỦA PHỤ NỮ VIỆT NAM

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Tóm tắt: Bài báo giới thiệu những kết quả chính của một nghiên cứu gần đây được thực hiện nhằm tìm hiểu xem người phụ nữ Việt Nam từ chối một lời khuyên hay lời yêu cầu liên quan đến việc hệ trọng như thế nào trong những tương tác hàng ngày. Dữ liệu được sử dụng để phân tích trong nghiên cứu này là các đoạn thoại trích từ bộ phim dài tập có tựa đề *Những công dân tập thể*. Công cụ phân tích dữ liệu được sử dụng là sự kết hợp giữa Phân tích hội thoại (Conversation Analysis) và Phân tích Tương tác Đa phương tiện (Multimodal Interactional Analysis). Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy (1) hành động từ chối của người Việt thường được thực hiện cùng một lúc bởi nhiều phương tiện giao tiếp khác nhau trong đó ngôn ngữ chỉ là một phương tiện; (2) hành động từ chối một lời khuyên hay lời yêu cầu liên quan đến việc hệ trọng thường mất nhiều thời gian thương lượng trong một hay nhiều cuộc thoại; (3) trách nhiệm vâng lời cha mẹ của phụ nữ Việt Nam, một giá trị Nho giáo, vẫn có vai trò nhất định trong xã hội hiện đại.

Từ khoá: hành động từ chối của người Việt, lời từ chối, dữ liệu tương tác, phân tích hội thoại, phân tích tương tác đa phương tiện

APPENDIX

Transcription conventions

[	Left square bracket: a point of overlap onset
=	Equal signs: 1. Two lines are connected; 2. One turn is latched by another
(0.5)	Numbers in parentheses: silence, represented in tenths of a second
(.)	A dot in parentheses: a micro-pause (usually less than 0.2 s)
::	Collons: prolongation or stretching of the sound
Word	Underlining: stress or emphasis by increased loudness or higher pitch
WORD	All capital letters: much louder than the surrounding words
> <	More than, less than: with a jump-start, said in rush quickly
hhh	Out-breath
.hhh	In-breath
(( ))	Double parentheses: transcriber's comments

Abbreviations

Voc	Vocative
PluM	Plural marker
NegM	Negative marker
AffM	Affirmative marker
StaM	Stance marker
AlignM	Alignment marker

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE VIETNAMESE TRANSLATION OF "THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN - CHAPTER XX" USING HOUSE'S TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT MODEL

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Abstract: It is common for people to approach a foreign literary work via its translation; therefore, whether the readers can enjoy a translation text that successfully conveys the author's intention is a concern to many researchers. In this study, with a view to assess the quality of the translation of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn", the researcher utilizes the schema of Translation Quality Assessment proposed by House. The application of House's Translation Quality Assessment shows that although the translation text achieves some success and conveys most of the author's message, it still reveals a number of mismatches in comparison with the source text, among which the inability to render America-African vernacular language results in a great loss of the target text. In addition, the ideational component of the translation text is also affected by overtly erroneous mistakes. On the basis of such findings, implications for literary translation are drawn.

Keywords: translation quality assessment, literary translation, House's TQA model

1. Introduction

People all over the world are now getting closer and closer thanks to many factors, among which literature is an important one. Not only can readers entertain but they can also approach the cultures of a far away country while staying at their home. However, naturally, not everyone is competent enough to read the original text. Therefore, the readers normally choose to read translation texts. The increasing number of translations available calls for the need of assessing the quality of such works so that the readers can enjoy reliable ones.

Given the situation, evaluation of a translation has become a concern of Translation Quality Assessment approaches and many attempts have been made to find the answer to the question of how to effectively assess the quality of a translated work. Along with those attempts are a number of related frameworks advocated by translation researchers, among which the Translation Quality Assessment Model by the German scholar Juliane House is one of the few approaches considered promising.

This assessment model by House is based on Hallidayan Systemic-Functional Theory, but it also draws eclectically on Prague School ideas, speech act theory, pragmatics, discourse analysis and corpus-based distinctions between the spoken and written language. House's Model enables us to analyze and compare an original text and its translation on three different levels: Language/Text, Register (Field, Mode and Tenor) and

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Genre. This study aims to apply House's Model on Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" – chapter XX and its Vietnamese translation by Xuân Oanh (2009).

Besides the above reasons, through library reasearch, it is realized that House's Model has been widely applied to assess legal document translation. Therefore, this study seeks to explore new aspects by utilizing House's framework to evaluate a literary translation work.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Literary translation

2.1.1. Definition

Bush (1998) defines literary translation as follows:

> Literary translation is the work of literary translators. That is a truism which has to serve as a starting point for a description of literary translation, an original subjective activity at the center of a complex network of social and cultural practices. The imaginative, intellectual and intuitive writing of the translator must not be lost to the disembodied abstraction which is often described as 'translation'. (p. 127)

Talking about the work of a literary translator, Lamberts (1998) considers "a published translation is the fruit of a substantial creative effort by the translator, who is the key agent in the subjective activity and social practice of translation" (p. 130). He claims it is the literary translator who decides how to translate and gives the literary translation its existence no matter what restraints of the network of social and cultural factors are". To emphasize the challenges of literary translation, Landers (2009), adds that "literary translation entails an unending skein of choices" (p. 9).

While the above mentioned authors view literary translation more as a subjective and creative activity of the translator, Toury (1993, cited in Sanchez, 2009) emphasizes equivalence between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) in literary translation and defines it as two different concepts.

Buzan (1993, as cited in Cottrell, 2013) stated,

i) *the translation of texts which are regarded as 'literary' in the source culture*. The focus of this kind of translation is to construct the so-called "web of relationships" of the source text, the one which makes that text a unique instance of performance.

ii) the translation of a text (in principle, at least, any text) in a way that the product be acceptable as "literary" to the recipient culture.

In the first sense, the text is considered to be a literary piece of work in the source culture and its rewriting is considered as such. In another sense, the focus is on the receiving end or the nature of the text in accordance with tastes, traditions, what is regarded as literary in the target culture independent of the source culture. In other words, source text and target text belong to two different genres. However, it is not very often that what is normally classified as a literary text in one language is not recognized as such in another language.

It can be seen that definitions of literary translation vary depending on the authors' emphasis. While some writers emphasize the subjective work of the translator, others focus on the degree of equivalence between the ST and TT. No matter how different they are in their views of literary translation, no one can deny that literary is challenging. The next part will discover prominent difficulties that translators have to cope with in literary translation as "when there is any kind of translation problem, literal translation is normally (not always) out of the question" (Newmark, 1988: 70).

2.1.2. The problems of literary translation

A literary work challenges translators in a number of ways, among which cultural translation problems, linguistic translation problems, stylistic translation problems and text specific translation problems are the most prevalent.

2.1.2.1. Cultural translation problems

It can be said that culture plays an important role that enables one to understand a literary work, which is a relatively difficult issue to tackle even in the source language, let alone that of target text. It is crucial for a translator to understand beliefs, attitudes, values, and rules of the source language audience so that he or she can successfully translate it for people of different sets of beliefs, attitudes, values, and rules. The closer the two cultures are, the less challenging the work of the translator. For example, Larson (1984) points out that some societies are more technical and others less technical; therefore, it will be really a hard job for the translator to work with a text originating from a highly technical society to a non-technical society target readers. For those reasons, failure to understand the source language's cultures will definitely affect the quality of the translation.

Though no translator can think low of cultural differences when translating, how to overcome such challenges is not an easy question to answer.

> The receptor audience will decode the translation in terms of his own culture and experience, not in terms of the culture and experience of the author and audience of the original document. The translator then must help the receptor audience understand the content and intent of the source document by translating with both cultures in mind. (Larson, 1984, p. 436)

Dealing with cultural specific problems in literary translation, Nida and Taber (1982) have their own definition and approach. They define cultural translation as "a translation in which the content of the message is changed to conform to the receptor culture in some way, and/or in which information is introduced which is not linguistically implicit in the original" (p. 199). In the context of Bible translation, they state that a cultural translation is one in which additions are made which cannot be directly derived from the original ST wording. Thus, these additions might take the form of ideas culturally foreign to ST or elements which are simply included to provide necessary background information (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997).

Different authors use different terms to refer to words in the source language that are totally unknown in the target culture. While Gambier and Stolze (2004) introduces the concept "cultural-specific references", and for Baker (1992) it is "cultural-specific items" or "cultureme" by Nord (1997), Newmark (1988a) uses "cultural word" and suggests that the translation strategies applied in such cases are dependent on elements such as text-type, requirements of the readership and client and the importance of the "cultural word" in the text. According to him, most "cultural words" are not difficult to be realized in that they have associations with a particular language and cannot be literally translated.

Newmark (1988a) advocates the utilization of two translation procedures which are of two opposite perspectives. At one end, it is transference popular in literary texts characterized by local color and atmosphere in specialist texts that make it possible for readers to identify the referent in other texts without difficulty. However, brief and concise as it is, transference may block comprehension for its emphasis on the culture and exclusion of the intended message. At the other end, it is componential analysis, the most accurate translation procedure, which excludes the culture and highlights the message. In componential analysis, one can add extra contextual distinguishing components in addition to a component common to the source language and the target language. Unavoidably, a componential analysis is not as economical and does not have the pragmatic impact of the original.

In addition, Newmark (1988b) points out that many cultural customs are described in ordinary language, where literal translation would distort the meaning and thus the translation "may include an appropriate descriptive-functional equivalent" (p. 95). Besides the above-mentioned procedures, the author also reminds of the necessity to take the motivation and the cultural specialist and linguistic level of readership into consideration when dealing with cultural words.

2.1.2.2. Stylistic translation problems

Style is also a problem challenging literary translation. Style can be understood as the way one says things or the way something is written as distinct from its subject matter. In a natural way, each language has its own style, however, the decisions that literary translators have to make seem to be similar when tackling with this kind of problem.

For a technical text, for example, style is not a problem in that its informational content in ST remains in TT. The metaphor freight-train is used to illustrate the importance of taking style into consideration in literary translation

> In technical translation the order of the cars is inconsequential if all the cargo arrives intact. In literary translation, however, the order of the cars – which is to say the style – can make the difference between a lively, highly readable translation and a stilted, rigid, and artificial rendering that strips the original of its artistic and aesthetic essence, even its very soul. (Landers, 2001, p. 7)

There are so many things to discuss concerning style. According to Landers, in theory at least, "style' in a translator is an "oxymoron". In order to perform his or her task well, it would be best if the translator strives to have no style at all and disappears into and become indistinguishable from the style of the SL author. Preferably, the translator should adapt to the style of each author translated but always as faithful to the original as circumstances permit.

2.1.2.3. Linguistic translation problems

Linguistic translation problems arise due to structural differences between the source language and the target language. Linguistically, each language has its own metaphysics, which determines the spirit of a nation and its behavioral norms, and this is what is known as linguistic relativity or the Whorfian hypothesis. It rejects the commonly held belief that all people of different countries have a common logical structure when processing with language independent of communication. Instead, it emphasizes the influence of linguistic patterns on the way people perceive the world. Consequently, the modes of thinking and perceiving in groups utilizing different linguistic systems will result in basically different world views.

Since words or images may vary considerably from one group to another, the translator needs to pay attention to the style, language and vocabulary peculiar to the two languages in question in order to produce an 'exact' translation of the source language text**.**

2.1.2.4. Text specific translation problems

These elements prove to be bound to this specific source text. In order to be able to understand and translate them, one must know what they are and what they refer to, and this is only possible when the entire novel has been read.

2.2. Translation quality assessment

2.2.1. Definition

Among a number of definitions on TQA, the one presented by Hewson (2011) would be the most comprehensive one. Translation criticism, in Hewson approach, does not stop at "stating the appropriateness of a translation, which naturally also implies a value judgment, though it does not need to be quantified or even made explicit" (p. 169). He says that translation quality assessment "attempts to set out the interpretative potential of a translation seen in the light of an established interpretative framework whose origin lies in the source text" (p. 6).

2.2.2. Role of translation quality assessment

Newmark (1988a) regards translation criticism or TQA as a crucial link between translation theory and its practice and as the keystone of any course in comparative literature, or literature in translation, and a component of any professional translation course with the appropriate text-types as an exercise for criticism and discussion. He clearly states the important role of TQA for three main reasons.

In the first place, by criticizing others' translations, translators could perfect their competences as well as gain essential professional experiences. Besides, TQA could help translators expand their knowledge and understanding of linguistics regarding their mother tongues and the foreign language, as well as topics discussed in the translation. Last but not least, this activity is a good chance for translators to, first, re-organize their knowledge of translation regarding translation principles and then, to sharpen their comprehension of translation theories which are inevitably crucial for professional translators.

2.3. House's model of translation quality assessment

2.3.1. House's original model

The key point in House's model is to compare function of the source text and the target text; therefore, to understand her model, it is necessary to understand "function" of an individual text which is different from function of language. According to House, the "function of a text is the application or use which the text has in the context of a situation." In order to see the degree of functional equivalence between source text and target text, an analysis of the source text must be done and taking the situation from which the text is created is essential. Thus, House (1977) designs a model in which the enveloping situation is discussed by breaking it into "manageable parts" – various situational dimensions as follows:

A. Dimensions of Language User:

1. Geographical Origin

2. Social Class

3. Time

B. Dimensions of Language Use:

1. Medium: Simple
   Complex
2. Participation: Simple
   Complex
3. Social Role Relationship
4. Social Attitude
5. Province

The language user's dimensions which simply concern the text producer's geographical origin, social class, and temporal provenance are quite clear.

The dimensions of language use mention four terms:

Medium: may be either simple (written to be read) or complex (written to be spoken as if not written (as in a play), or simply written to be spoken (as in a draft of a speech or sermon)

Participation may also be simple or complex. Simple here is for a monologue or dialogue; complex indicates various ways of "participation elicitation" and indirect addressee participation in a monologue manifests linguistically, e.g., in the specific use of pronouns, presence of contact parentheses, etc.

Social Role Relationship is the relationship between addresser and addressee(s). It may be symmetrical or asymmetrical in accordance with some kind of authority relationship. In considering the addresser's social role via the addressee, whether it is a relatively permanent position role or a more transient situational role, further consideration is required.

Social Attitude describes the degree of social distance or proximity indicating formality or informality. Joo (1961) mentions five different styles or degree of formality namely: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate – this can be seen as a useful schema.

The dimension of Province is a large concept referring not only to the text producer's occupational and professional activity but also to the field or topic of the text in its widest sense or "area of operation" of the language activity, as well as details of the text production as far as these can be deduced from the text itself.

House says that the above set of situational constraints enables us to judge the function of a text presented by its linguistic evidence. She then proposes to break this linguistic evidence down into three types: syntactic, lexical, textual.

Following the textual analysis of the ST, its ideational and interpersonal function can be deduced from the linguistic features that determine its situational dimensions. Afterwards, the TT should be analyzed in the same way in order to obtain its textual profile. By comparing both textual profiles, the quality of the translation can be evaluated. The more the TT's textual profile and its function are equal to those of the ST, the better the translation is. An analysis of the text on the eight above mentioned situational dimensions will help us realize the function of the text. She then claims the basic criterion of functional match for translation equivalence, "a TT should not only match its ST in function, but employ equivalent situational-dimensional mean to achieve that function". By using situational dimensions for exploring the ST, a particular textual profile is obtained for the ST, which then becomes criteria to assess the degree to which the TT's textual profile and function match with that of the ST.

In House's model, any mismatch along the dimensions is an error which is then categorized into covertly erroneous errors and overtly erroneous errors.

- Covertly erroneous errors: those which result from a mismatch in one situational dimension;
- Overtly erroneous errors: those which result from a non-dimensional mismatch. Such errors can be divided into:

- Breaches of the target language system:

+ cases of ungrammatically (clear breaches of the TL system)

+ cases of dubious acceptability (breaches of the norm usage)

- Mistakes in the denotative meanings of ST and TT

+ wrong selections

+ wrong omissions

+ ambiguities

Covertly erroneous errors is a mismatch of the denotative meanings of ST and TT elements or a breach of the target language system.

The final stage in House's model is to list both covertly and overtly erroneous errors and a statement of the relative match of the two functional components is made.

Depending on the ST, its context-situation, target audience and function, House distinguishes two types of translation.

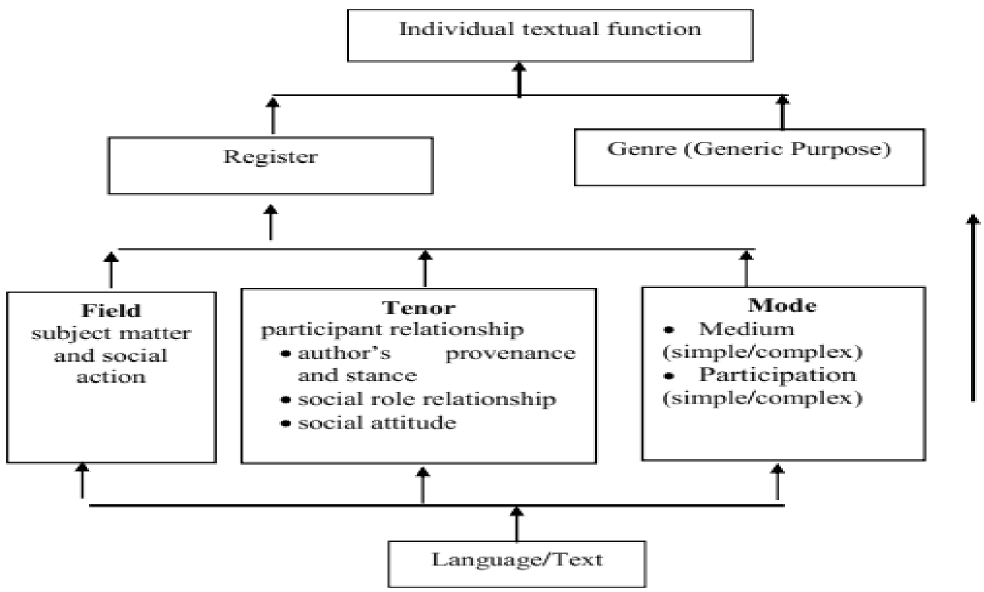
Overt translations are texts that do not directly address the target audience of the translation because they are tight to the culture and the language community where they originate. Therefore, to this type of translation, the function of the translation text cannot match with that of the ST's function, "either because the source text is tied to a specific non-repeatable historic event in the source culture […] or because of the unique status (as a literary text) that the source text has in the source culture" (House, 1997: 67).

In contrast to overt translation, covert translation appears to be "original source texts in the target culture" (p. 69). The translation text aims at addressing their audience in the same way that the source text addresses their source culture community. A source text and its covert TT are pragmatically of equal concern for source and target language addressees and they have equivalent purposes: both are based on contemporary, equivalent needs of a comparable audience in the source and target language communities. She then introduces the concept "cultural filter" (p. 70) to better adapt the translation to the target culture . In other words, a cultural filter between ST and TT enables the TT audience to view ST through the lens of the target culture member.

2.3.2. House's revised translation quality assessment model

In her revised model, in order to thoroughly categorize a text's function and the language required, House introduces the category Genre. Genre here is defined as "a socially established category characterized in terms of occurrence of use, source and a communicative purpose or any combination of these" (p. 107). Genre, Register and Language correlates to each other. Genre is the content-plane of Register, which at the same time is the expression-plane of Genre. Besides, Register is also the content-plane of Language while Language is its expression plane. According to House, Genre serves as a bridge connecting Register and Function. In general, the application of her new model enables us to examine a text on four different levels: Function, Register and Language.

Below is House's revisited scheme for analyzing and comparing ST and TT (House, 1997: 139):



House bases on Halliday's "trinity": Field, Tenor and Mode to build her model and make it easier to be applied. Field refers to the topic of the text, its subject matter. In addition, it includes the old category Province and the new one Social Action indicating whether the language used to present the topic is general or specific.

Tenor concerns the participants, the author and the audience as well as their relationship. The Author's Provenance reveals his temporal, geographical and social provenance and thus represents the former Dimensions of Language User. The Author's Stance indicates his intellectual, emotional and affective position towards the subject he presents and his personal point of view. Social Role Relationship and Social Attitude remain fairly the same as the old model. However, for Social Attitude dimension, she introduces only three levels: formal, consultative and informal.

In Mode category, two old dimensions Medium and Participation still remain. Both can be simple or complex. For dimension of Medium, she adopts Biber's dimensions to make it more precise as follows:

1. Involved vs Informational Text Production

2. Explicit vs Situation-Dependent Reference

3. Abstract vs Non-Abstract Presentation of Information

Determined by its genre, a written text can be both, involved (for example letters) or informational (for example laws). Written texts are normally more explicit and less situational-dependent than spoken language and therefore, the information is usually conveyed in a more abstract and elaborate way. However, texts rarely correspond to only one of these dimensions, the three new parameters cannot replace the old distinction between simple and complex medium but can be a helpful addition to it.

In terms of the textual function, there is no change and it stills consists of an ideational and an impersonal component, which should be equally represented in the translation. The operation of the model is also kept in the same way.

This study will utilize House's translation quality assessment revised model to assess the quality of the target text. To be more specific, a source text profile will be analyzed on dimensions of Field, Tenor, Mode and Genre via lexical, syntactic and textual means. A statement of function is then drawn to see the degree to which the original text fulfills its ideational and interpersonal function. The next stage is a comparison of original and translation text on the above-mentioned dimensions: Field, Tenor, Mode. Any violation of these dimensions is categorized as covert mistakes, and also a demonstration of overt mistakes are also given. Finally, statement of quality can be drawn from such findings under House's framework.

3. Research method

3.1. Research questions

This research aims to find out the answers to the following research questions:

- How good is the translation according to House's model?
- What are the problems of the translation?
- Is the translation an overt or covert kind of translation?
- What implications for the translation of English literature into Vietnamese can be suggested?

3.2. Research method

This study utilizes qualitative design. First, the original text will be read thoroughly and comprehensively, then the source text will be compared to its translation under the framework of House's TQA model. The procedure is briefly introduced by Munday (2001: 92) as follows:

- A profile is introduced of the ST register;

- To this is added a description of the ST genre realized by the register;

- Together, this allows a "statement of function" to be made for the ST, including the ideational and interpersonal component of that function (in other words, what information is being conveyed and what the relationship is between the sender and the receiver);

- The same descriptive process is then carried out for the TT;

- The TT profile is compared to the ST profile and a statement of "mismatches" or errors is produced, categorized according to genre and to the situational dimensions of register and genre;

- A "statement of quality" is then made of the translation;

- Finally, the translation can be categorized into one of two types: overt translation or covert translation.

As it is impossible for the researcher to analyze the whole novel, and in order to suit the applied framework, only one chapter will be selected randomly to guarantee the objectiveness of the procedure (chapter XX). However, examples from other chapters will be taken to prove the generality of the obtained findings in possible cases.

4. Results and discussions

4.1. Source text profile

4.1.1. Field

Field refers to the nature of the social action that is taking place; it captures "what is going on", i.e., the field of activity, the topic, the content of the text or its subject matter. In this category, the degrees of generality, specificity or "granularity" in lexical items will be differentiated according to rubrics of specialized, general, and popular. This dimension is similar to Crystal and Davy's Province (1969); however, it specifies some features that will now be subsumed under Genre such as professional character of a given field, i.e. professional character of a religious sermon.

The adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a novel telling about the adventures of Huck, his friend Tom and the runaway slave Jim. Huck is the innocent who serves to illuminate the hypocrisy and corruption of society through his pragmatic nature, his willingness to accept others until they show their true colors, and his innate sense of honor and fairness. The novel evolves around prominent themes that are racism and slavery, intellectual and moral education and the hypocrisy of "civilized" society. In the studied chapter, Huck narrates fraudulent activities of the duke and the dauphin in Parkville town.

Lexical means

There is preponderance of dynamic verbs likely to be part of a narration and repetition of phrases and words: "by and by", "considerable". It is typical for Huck to use the phrase "by and by" in his narration and the adjective "considerable" to denote "a lot". Below are sentences in the original chapter.

"by-and-by – I took the watch, and Jim he laid down and snored away".

"and by-and-by the storm let up for good and all".

"By-and-by", he says. "But the histrionic muse is the darling. Have you ever trod the boards, Royalty?".

"THEY asked us considerable many questions; wanted to know what we covered up the raft that way for, and laid by in the daytime instead of running – was Jim a runaway nigger?".

"Well, for the next day or two we had considerable trouble".

"He told them he was a pirate – been a pirate for thirty years out in the Indian Ocean – and his crew was thinned out considerable last spring in a fight".

According to Richard Bridgman (1987), one typical feature of Huck's speech patterns and of Twain's organizing structure in the novel is repetition. He remarks that repetition represents a particularly "conscious structural function in extended passages where phrases are repeated." In the studied chapter, "by and by" and "considerable" occurs three times; however, a careful examination of the whole novel shows that they are used at a high frequency.

Huck uses lexical items that are connected to issues of racism and religion: "nigger", "camp meeting", "A-men".

Onomatopoeic words are used to describe sounds, e.g. h-wack!-bum! Bumble-umble-um-bum-bum-bum-bum-bum-bum-.

Syntactic means

Huck tends to utter run-on sentences:

"Towards night it begun to darken up and look like rain; the heat lightning was squirting around, low down in the sky, and the leaves was beginning to shiver — it was going to be pretty ugly, it was easy to see that."

"He told them he was a pirate — been a pirate for thirty years, out in the Indian Ocean, and his crew was thinned out considerable, last spring, in a fight, and he was home now, to take out some fresh men, and thanks to goodness he'd been robbed last night, and put ashore off of a steamboat without a cent, and he was glad of it, it was the blessedest thing that ever happened to him, because he was a changed man now, and happy for the first time in his life; and poor as he was, he was going to start right off and work his way back to the Indian Ocean and put in the rest of his life trying to turn the pirates into the true path; for he could do it better than anybody else, being acquainted with all the pirate crews."

Although run-on sentences are considered ungrammatical, they do help the author reflect a child's inability to subordinate experiences; therefore, he tends to equalize the events he strings together. In addition, this ungrammaticality at the same time helps recreate a sense of dynamism. It seems that everything is changing before the narrator's eyes and ears.

In other places, Huck reveals his lack of formal education via ungrammatical sentences. For example, he uses object pronoun as subject: "So me and the king lit out for the camp-meeting;" or superlative with "a" instead of "the": "We got there in about a half an hour, fairly dripping, for it was a most awful hot day". In other cases, he uses double negative: "When we got there, there warn't nobody stirring; streets empty, and perfectly dead and still, like Sunday", and incorrect subject-verb agreement: "Some of the old women was knitting, and some of the young folks was courting on the sly." Although Standard English would find it hard to accept the above cases, they add to the authenticity and spontaneity of their descriptions. Besides, it is entirely plausible for a young Southern boy with little formal education.

This chapter mainly contains long sentences with compound, complex structures throughout the text. Huck's frequent use of long sentences again enhances dynamism for the novel. Things appear vivid in accordance with the rhythm he describes experiences that he undergoes during the journey:

"When we was three-quarters of a mile below, we hoisted up our signal lantern; and about ten o'clock it come on to rain and blow and thunder and lighten like every-thing; so the king told us to both stay on watch till the weather got better; then him and the duke crawled into the wigwam and turned in for the night."

"He told them he was a pirate — been a pirate for thirty years, out in the Indian Ocean, and his crew was thinned out considerable, last spring, in a fight, and he was home now, to take out some fresh men, and thanks to goodness he'd been robbed last night, and put ashore off of a steamboat without a cent, and he was glad of it, it was the blessedness thing that ever happened to him, because he was a changed man now, and happy for the first time in his life; and poor as he was, he was going to start right off and work his way back to the Indian Ocean and put in the rest of his life trying to turn the pirates into the true path; for he could do it better than anybody else, being acquainted with all the pirate crews."

Textual means

Strong textual cohesion is achieved through iconic and clausal linkage.

Iconic linkage:

"I yield, I submit".

"The people woke up more and more, and sung louder and louder; and towards the end some <u>begun</u> to groan, and some <u>begun</u> to shout. Then the preacher <u>begun</u> to preach, and <u>begun</u> in earnest, too".

Clausal linkages:

"We'll let it along for today, **<u>because</u>** of course we don't want to go by that town yonder in daylight".

4.1.2. Tenor

Tenor refers to who is participating, to the nature of the participants, the addresser and the addressees, and the relationship between them in terms of social power and social distance, as well as the "degree of emotional charge" in the relationship between addresser and addressees.

This category includes the addresser's temporal, geographical, social provenance as well as his intellectual, emotional or affective stance or his "personal viewpoint" through the content he is portraying and the communicative task he is engaged in.

The subdivisions of the dimension Social is simplified and a tripartite division into formal-consultative-informal is adopted by House for a more economic analysis.

Author's temporal, geographical and social provenance

Marked, Missouri Nergo dialect, the ordinary 'Pike-country' dialect.

William Faulker credits Twain as "the father of American literature" for his pioneering in depicting vernacular language in his work. It is the vernacular language Twain puts in Huck's mouth that strongly contribute to the novel's achievement referred as the "very note" of real life. In describing Huck's dialect and his vivid lexicon, Bridgman (1966) says "his dialect, nonce, slang - is that of poetry. And they contribute to the gradually accumulating feeling in American literature for the importance of the single word" (p. 118). Below is a description of language features' of Huck, the King, the Duke and Jim in the studied chapter, which are sophisticatedly handled as a way to reveal their characters and social classes.

Huck's language features

Huck often drops endings, and adds the prefix *-a* to progressive verb forms.

"It most killed Jim <u>a-laughing</u>".

"Well, the first I knowed, the king got <u>a-going</u>; and you could hear him over everybody ; and next he went <u>a-charging up</u> on to the platform and the preacher he begged him to speak to the people, and he done it".

Bridgeman (1987) notes the frequent use of present participles in Huck's prose when "there is a violent or otherwise a memorable action…"

Jim's language features

Besides Huck, Jim's language is certain to reflect interesting features of the African American Vernacular dialect. He tends to shorten words and use [d] for dental fricatives and pronounce [gw] instead of the back vowel [o]

"Huck, does you reck'n we gwyne to run acrost any mo' kings on dis trip?"

"Well," says he, "dat's all right, den. I doan' mine one er two kings, but dat's enough. Dis One's powerful drunk, en de duke am' much better."

It is Jim's vernacular language that adds to the humorous elements of the novel.

The King's language features

The King's vernacular is to some extent similar to Jim's dialect in that he drops endings: "But if Juliet's such a young gal, Duke, my peeled head and my white whiskers is **goin'** to look on-common odd on her, maybe.", which is also similar to Huck's adding the prefix "a" to progressive or past participle verb forms: "I should a reckoned the difference in rank would a sejested to you that a corn-shuck bed warn't just fitten for me to sleep on. Your Grace' ll take the shuck bed yourself."

"All right. I'm jist a-freezn's for something fresh, anyway. Less commence, right away".

The Duke's language features

The Duke's vocabulary, in contrast, is not basic and his pronunciation is not typical of the Missouri vernacular. He has careful word choices, and there seems to be rhythm and poetry in some of what he says. In addition, he uses terminology of formal technical register such as "phrenology", which is a challenge to any uneducated man. Therefore, the readers are under the impression that he is smarter or more educated than the King for Standard English he uses. Nevertheless, no matter how sophisticated the way he uses the language is to create the image of a learned and aristocratic man, his identity of a Missourian vagabond is then revealed through his use of lower register words such as "you know".

It can be seen that Twain is so excellent in using language to portray his characters and he deserves to be considered "the father of American literature" for his contribution.

Author's personal (emotional and intellectual) stance

The author clearly views the adventure he portrays with involvement and encouragement for Huck's thought when he is on the raft free from society's rule and be friends with Jim. He also saves great empathy for a run-away Negro like Jim and a sarcastic attitude is revealed when he depicts the King and the Duke as two fraudsters.

<u>Lexical means</u>: there are repetitions of the word "begun"

"The people woke up more and more, and sung louder and louder; and towards the end, some <u>begun</u> to groan, and some <u>begun</u> to shout. Then the preacher <u>begun</u> to preach; and <u>begun</u> in earnest, too".

<u>Syntactic means</u>: the syntactic means used by Mark Twain are lively narration with switches between descriptive and dialogue structures.

<u>Textual means:</u>

Textual means are notable through frequent use of semicolon enabling the author to create the movement of the raft and time as Huck is describing it. In areas where Huck is describing the imagery of the river, there are long sentences, with separate phrases combined by semicolons. This technique symbolizes the movement of the raft on the river.

In addition, there are presences of iconic linkages:

"Oh, come to the mourners' bench! Black with sin! (amen!) Come, sick and sore! (amen!) Come, lame and halt, and blind! (amen!) Come pore and needy, sunk in shame! (a-a-men). Come all that's worn, and soiled, and suffering! – come with a broken spirit! Come with a contrite heart! Come in your rags and sin and dirt!"

"Some of the young men was bare-footed, and some of the children didn't have on any clothes but just a tow-linen shirt. Some of the old women was knitting, and some of the young folks was courting on the sly."

Social role relationship

Author-reader(s): this book was written for adults and barely masquerades as a "boy book" and there is a symmetrical relationship between the author and the reader. The author chooses Huck to be the narrator and addresses the readers directly, which directs the audience into the scene and create a bond with the storyteller.

<u>Lexical means</u>: There is presence of first and second personal pronouns.

"And every second or two there'd come a glare that lit up the white-caps for a half and a mile around, and <u>you'd see</u> the islands looking dusty through the rain".

"I had the middle watch, you know, but I was pretty sleepy by that time, so Jim he said he would stand the first half of it for me."

"You couldn't make out what the preacher said, any more, on account of the shouting and crying."

"Well, the first I knowed the king got a-going, and you could hear him over everybody;"

Social attitude

Informal style

<u>Lexical means</u>: the author used lexical items marked as informal spoken language such as interjection and slang.

"Well, for the next day or two we had considerable trouble, because people was always coming out in skiffs and trying to take Jim away from me, saying they believed he was a runaway nigger."

" All right. I'm jist a-freezn' for something fresh, anyway."

"I had the middle watch, you know, but I was pretty sleepy by that time, so Jim he said he would stand the first half of it for me;"

"We judged we could make miles enough that night to get out of the reach of the **pow-wow** we reckoned the duke's work in the printing office was going to make in that little town"

4.1.3. Mode

Mode refers to both the channel- spoken or written (which can be "simple", e.g., "written to be read" or "complex", e.g. "written to be spoken as if not written"), and the degree to which potential or real participation is allowed for between the interlocutors.

Participation can also be "simple". For example, a monologue with no addressee participation "built into the text". It may also be "complex" with various addressee-involving mechanisms characterizing the text.

In taking account of the differences in texts between the spoken and the written medium, House suggests dimensions along which linguistic choices may reflect medium. These parameters are as follows:

1. involved vs informational text production

2. explicit vs situation-dependent reference

3. abstract vs non-abstract presentation of information

Medium

Simple: written to be read.

Along the three above mentioned dimensions, this text is clearly on the involved, situation-dependent and non-abstract end of the dimensions.

Participation

Simple: monologue

4.1.4. Genre

The adventures of Huckleberry Finn fall under the genre of fiction, and the subgenre of satire. Satire is a piece of work that tries to expose, attack and ridicule the foolishness, wrongdoings, or strange behavior of society. Satires are often humorous, using exaggeration, irony, sarcasm and parody to catch the attention of the reader and promote changes in behavior. Huck Finn is a satire of the American South in the 19th Century. Although slavery had been abolished by the time Twain wrote Huck Finn, racism and prejudice were still a major issue. While Twain's main target is slavery, he also explores and criticizes civility, conformity, religion, hypocrisy, and the idea of superstition.

4.1.5. Statement of function

The function of this text consisting of an ideational and an interpersonal functional component may be summed up as follows: the author's intention is to tell a good story about what Huck and Jim underwent in Parkville town with the King and the Duke.

The ideational functional component is strongly marked whereas the interpersonal component, although of course present, recedes into the background.

On FIELD, the abundance of colloquial lexical items, long compound complex sentence with semicolons to describe experiences about life certainly support ideational functional component of the text.

On TENOR, the author's humorous and sarcastic attitude is evidenced linguistically by the use of repetitions. The appearance of vernacular dialects and pike country dialect, though sometimes pose difficulties for the readers, would depict the most vivid picture of life in the novel that clearly feeds into the ideational functional component. The informal style level is marked through informal lexical items.

On MODE, both the fact that the Medium of this text is "written to be read" (involved, situation-dependent and non-abstract) and that the *Participation* is marked by frequent dialogic parts interspersed in the mono-logic framework supports the interpersonal functional component. Linguistically this is achieved through many instances of directly involving the readers.

4.2. Comparison of original and translation and statement of quality

4.2.1. Field

Lexical mismatches

While in the original text, Huck tends to repeat the phrase "by and by" as well as adjective "considerable" and repetition is deemed to be a feature of Huck language, the target text fail to reflect this habit. Instead, the translator chooses to render these expressions flexibly to avoid repetition which is considered to be awkward in Vietnamese. However, in this case, it would be preferable if the translator can find way to use a certain expression best describing Huck's repetition pattern.

What is more, while the author chooses onomatopoeic such as "h-wack!- bum! Bumble-umble-um-bum-bum-bum-bum-bum-bum" to describe the sound of the thunder in the original text, the translator renders it into nouns "một tiếng xoẹt", "một tiếng nổ mạnh", "tiếng rầm rầm".

It is easy to realize that "tiếng xoẹt", "tiếng rầm rầm" here do not match with the sound "h-wack!- bum! Bumble-umble-um-bum-bum-bum-bum-bum-bum". It would be better if the target text keeps the original way of expression so that the sound effect is more profound and the readers can feel this with their own sense and imagination as intended by the author.

Syntactic mismatches

The double negative or some ungrammatical sentences that deviate from Standard English are not reflected in the translation due to the inequivalence between the two language systems. In this case, for the sake of the target audience, the translator has to sacrifice intentionally linguistic features of the original text.

In addition, the original tends to use negative sentences while target text prefers positive whereas negative forms are more emphatic and it is suitable with what Huck is trying to do to persuade others to trust what he makes up.

Variable sentence lengths are also needed to be taken into consideration during process of translation. For the first chapters of this novel, Huck normally uses short sentences to narrate events. However, once he is on the raft, he tends to describe his experiences via long compound and complex sentences. The original chapter uses long sentences with semicolons whereas the translation breaks the long sentences into simple ones with full stop. Long sentences, sometimes run-on sentences, with simple structure, which is simple, direct, and fluent, maintaining the rhythm of the word-groups of speech and the intonations of the speaking voice, though considered as ungrammatical, in this case do help to emphasize the dynamism and intentionally reflect Huck's lack of formal education. Whereas, simple short sentences in the target text seem to slow down the peace of things described and cause a loss of rhythm.

"Đến đêm, trời tối sầm lại, có vẻ như muốn mưa. Những tia chớp loang loáng ở phía chân trời. Lá cây bắt đầu lay động. Chắc là thời tiết sẽ xấu lắm, điều này thật quá rõ ràng" vs "Towards night it began to darken up and look like rain; the heat lightning was squirting around, low down in the sky; and the leaves was beginning to shiver – it was going to be pretty ugly, it was easy to see that".

Textual mismatches

There are quite high frequencies of loss of cohesive devices in the target text.

4.2.2. Tenor

Author's temporal, geographical and social provenance

The two prominent dialects: pike-country dialect (white-vernacular language) and Missouri dialect (black vernacular language) are not visible in the target text.

Dialect, defined as non-standard variant of a language, is used to portray characters when it needs to emphasize a particular setting or a style of language. Mark Twain, in this novel, is genuine in employing various dialects to increase the authenticity to the story and its setting, American South. According to Fishkin (2006), "before Twain wrote Huckleberry Finn, no American author had entrusted his narrative to the voice of a simple, untutored vernacular speaker – or for that matter, to a child". In other words, Twain is the first to incorporate vernacular, even in a dialect typical of the most excluded social group in a novel. It is vernacular dialects of nineteenth century that contributes to the humor, the liveliness and flavor of the book. Ernest Hemingway's remark that "all modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*" could best sum up Twain's art of using vernacular language in his novel. For such reason, it can be concluded that the target text unable to convey these features is a big shortcoming. However, this undesirable situation results from a difference between the two language systems.

Although rendering vernacular language into Vietnamese is considered unpractical; in some instances such as Huck's colloquial use of the prefix "a" to progressive or past participle verb forms should be taken into consideration.

In addition, it is necessary to keep the interjection "you know" to fulfill Twain's intention of signifying the true identity of the Duke as a Missourian vagabond.

Author's personal stance

Lexical mismatches

Huck often repeats some words and in the below sentences, the author is describing a vivid picture at the camp meeting. The word "begun" is repeated four times to convey Twain's sarcastic attitude indicating that people do not involve in the meeting until the end when it nearly finishes. Consequently, not translating this in the target text is the author's failure to decode the author's implication.

"Vào đoạn cuối, một số người hát như rên rỉ, một số khác lại gào to lên. Sau đó, nhà thuyết giảng bắt đầu giảng đạo một cách rất hăng say" vs "The people woke up more and more, and sung louder and louder; and towards the end some <u>begun</u> to groan, and some <u>begun</u> to shout. Then the preacher <u>begun</u> to preach, and <u>begun</u> in earnest, too."

Social role relationship

Lexical mismatches

The translation does not address the addressees directly as the author does in the original, which clearly affects the quality of the source text due to the fact that Mark Twain always wants the readers to directly involve in the story. Below are citations of omissions of reader addressing in the translated text.

"Cứ một vài giây lại có một tia chớp làm sáng rực lên ngọn sóng bạc ở xung quanh, xa đến nửa dặm, những hòn đảo nhìn thấy qua làn mưa trông giống như nhuốm bụi bẩn" vs "And every second or two there'd come a glare that lit up the white-caps for a half and a mile around, and you'd see the islands looking dusty through the rain".

"Tôi phụ trách phiên gác giữa, nhưng lúc bấy giờ tôi buồn ngủ quá, cho nên Jim bảo hắn sẽ gác nửa đầu phiên gác hộ cho tôi" vs "I had the middle watch, you know, but I was pretty sleepy by that time, so Jim he said he would stand the first half of it for me".

"Lúc bấy giờ không còn ai nghe được vị thuyết giảng nói gì thêm nữa giữa tiếng kêu gào than khóc" vs "You couldn't make out what the preacher said, any more, on account of the shouting and crying".

"Ngay lúc ấy, tôi thấy nhà vua bước lên, giọng lão oang oang át cả tiếng nói của mọi người" vs "Well, the first I knowed the king got a-going, and you could hear him over everybody".

Social attitude

Huck uses informal languages that are sometimes considered to deviate from standard due to his lack of education at school. However, in some cases in the target text, Huck's voice tends to be rather formal, for instance:

"Thế rồi, khi nước sông lên, cha tôi may mắn bắt được chiếc bè này" vs "Well, when the river rose, pa had a streak of luck one day; he ketched this piece of raft".

"Chúng tôi dự định xuống vùng Orleans bằng bè" vs "we reckoned we'd go down to Orleans on it".

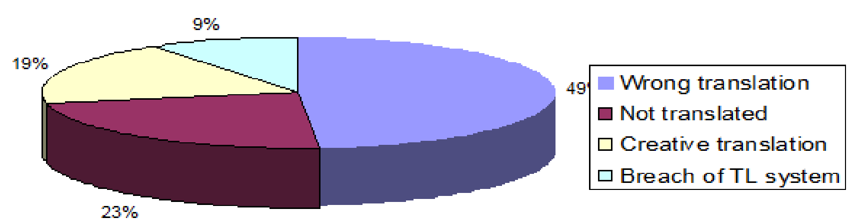
"Nhiều lúc cơn sóng suýt đánh bật tôi ra khỏi bè, nhưng vì tôi không mặc quần áo gì nên không lấy làm e ngại." vs "The waves most washed me off the raft, sometimes, but I hadn't any clothes on, and didn't mind".

In the above sentences, the translator use formal words such as "may mắn", "dự định" "không lấy làm e ngại" while it would sound more natural if they are "gặp may", "tính đến", "chẳng ngại gì" respectively.

It is shown that the style level in the Vietnamese translation is more formal, more neutral and socially distant due to the lack of addressee-involving linguistic devices and syntactic structures as characterized under Field and Author's stance above.

Overtly erroneous errors

The total number of overtly erroneous errors in the target text is 138 which are then classified into 4 categories namely: wrong translation, not translated, creative translation and breach of target language. The results are presented as follows:



Quite surprisingly, the total numbers of overt errors are quite large among which, wrong translation is 49 %, not translated is 23%, creative translation is 19% and breach of target language is 9%. It can be seen that the highest portion is wrong translation. In most case the readers do not have chance to approach the original text; therefore, they cannot discover such kind of mistakes. In addition, although those mistakes do not affect much to the comprehension of the novel, the translator's failure to give the correct denotative meanings of things would, in the first place, affect the ideational function and then the true value of the novel. Not translated is the second highest. It would be due to the translator's carelessness or his intentional ignorance of expressions difficult to render into the target language.

It would be preferable that the translator spend more effort to rectify the above overtly erroneous errors so that the readers have opportunity to enjoy a more persuasive and truthful translation that best reflects the author's intention.

4.2.3. Statement of quality

The analysis of the original and translation texts has revealed a number of mismatches along the dimensions of FIELD and TENOR, and a consequent change of the interpersonal functional component, but also Overtly Erroneous Errors which detract from the ideational component and change the transmission of information.

On FIELD, the translator's utilization of a cultural filter is not encouraged in that the setting of the original text is completely different from that of the target text. Maintaining cultural elements of the source text is necessary so that the readers can successfully approach and evaluate as well as decode the implied message of the author. In addition, ungrammatical sentences typical for an uneducated like Huck is not rendered in the target text. Hence, the interpersonal functional component of the text may be affected to an extent. Besides, a loss of cohesion through the omission of cohesion devices (and iconic linkage) reduces the accuracy of the original.

On TENOR, there is a pattern of difference in the author's temporal, geographical and social provenance that strongly affect the interpersonal function of the source text in that the author wants readers to be able to have the most vivid and sincere picture of life in the novel in a given setting. In order to standardize the dialects in the novel, the translator seemed to focus on the words in the text and their meaning within the story. Therefore, the plot itself is clear enough for Vietnamese readers to follow. However, the ways the characters speak which in turn reveal their location, educational background, social class, race have not come across in Vietnamese. As a consequence, characters and their backgrounds can not be vividly portrayed in the translation. In addition, the author's stance is affected in that the sarcasm is reduced considerably due to the translator's failure to pay attention to the repetition of some important words.

What is more, in social role relationship, the addressees are not directly addressed as in the original text, which severely affect the interpersonal functional of the translation. That change also influences the translation's style level, making it more formal.

The translation can be described as a covert one with a cultural filter having been applied whereas, according to House, it has to be an overt kind of translation since the original text is a "timeless" literary work. Implementation of House's Translation Quality Assessment Model on this particular work indicates that this work did not abide by the hypothesis stated in this model.

5. Conclusion

Application of House's translation quality assessment model enables the researcher to yield answers to her research questions.

Concerning the first research question, the Vietnamese translation of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has conveyed accurately the author's intention by means of brief and concise target language of an experienced translator.

However, there still exist some shortcomings that affect the quality of the translation. In the first place, it is the mismatches on dimension of FIELD and TENOR that have been pointed out above.

What is more, a considerable number of overt errors, to some extent, have influenced the ideational function of the translation text. However, the least expected mismatch that prevents the reader to be totally indulged in a real setting and valuable source culture of the novel results from an untranslatability to render vernacular language into Vietnamese. Hopefully, this issue will be successfully handled in the next edition if possible.

On the framework of the applied model, it can be seen that the target text is a covert kind of translation whereas it should be an overt one in that the original text is a timeless work.

From the results obtained, few implications for the translation of English literature into Vietnamese might be drawn.

In the studied chapter, Huck's typical linguistic features and his ungrammatical sentences as well as dialectal difference are sacrificed to an-easy-to-understand translation text; therefore, Jim's distinctive and non-standard voice does not come through at all. Although it is clear that finding an adequate Vietnamese dialectal equivalent for Jim's voice is a difficult task. The task is even more challenging due to the fact that there is no perfect equivalent of Black and White race relations in the Vietnamese speaking world. Whether it is possible to render American African Vernacular Language with a sociolect or dialect that represents analogous low social strata or even analogous regional linguistic identity? It is hoped that interested translators would spend time and effort to successfully render vernacular language into Vietnamese, which has been done by some other Chinese and German translators.

Another implication for literary translation is a careful review of critics relating to the original text would be useful in that some minor details that seem to be unimportant turn out to imply a lot of author's intention. Therefore, the translator's failure to acknowledge this would reduce the success of the target text.

Hopefully, the findings of this study will not only be of help to teachers of translation in their teaching but would also be a mean to present challenges facing translators who have interest in the novel as well as the need to revise translations available on the market.

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ĐÁNH GIÁ BẢN DỊCH "NHỮNG CUỘC PHIÊU LƯU CỦA HUCKLEBERRY FINN - CHƯƠNG XX" THEO MÔ HÌNH CỦA HOUSE

Hoàng Thị Diễm Hằng

Khoa Đào tạo và Bồi dưỡng Ngoại ngữ, Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ, ĐHQGHN, Phạm Văn Đồng, Cầu Giấy, Hà Nội, Việt Nam

Tóm tắt: Để tiếp cận được các tác phẩm văn học nổi tiếng trên thế giới, phần lớn bạn đọc tìm đến các ấn phẩm được dịch sang tiếng mẹ đẻ. Vì thế, chất lượng của văn bản dịch là điều ngày càng được quan tâm. Với mong muốn độc giả được tận hưởng một câu chuyện sát với văn bản gốc, truyền tải tốt nhất thông điệp của tác giả, nhiều nhà nghiên cứu dịch thuật tập trung vào đề tài đánh giá chất lượng bản dịch. Bài báo này đi sâu vào phân tích, đánh giá bản dịch "Những cuộc phiêu lưu của Huckleberry Finn" - chương XX của dịch giả Xuân Oanh vận dụng mô hình đánh giá bản dịch của House. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy mặc dù còn tồn tại một số lỗi sai về ngôn ngữ, bản dịch đã truyền tải được phần lớn nội dung văn bản gốc, tuy nhiên, tinh thần của tác phẩm gốc phần nào bị mất đi khi bản dịch không thể tái hiện được những đặc điểm phương ngữ của nhiều vùng, ngôn ngữ đặc trưng của người nô lệ Mĩ gốc Phi vốn là nhân tố quan trọng góp phần vào thành công vang dội của tác phẩm này. Trên nền tảng của các kết luận tìm được, bài báo đưa ra một số gợi ý để nâng cao chất lượng các bản dịch văn học.

Từ khóa: đánh giá chất lượng bản dịch, dịch văn học, mô hình của House

INTEGRATING CULTURE INTO EFL TEACHING BEHIND CLASSROOM DOORS: A CASE STUDY OF UPPER SECONDARY TEACHERS IN VIETNAM

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Abstract: In the context of globalization, intercultural integration has gained a better position in teaching and learning English in Vietnam, even in general education. In fact, intercultural objectives and intercultural content have been added to the expected curriculum and pilot coursebooks for teaching English in upper secondary education. Prior to the implementation of the new curriculum, it is essential to explore how teachers deal with intercultural content provided in the coursebooks. From the view of intercultural teaching, this study focuses on the positionality of intercultural objectives and intercultural teaching strategies in teachers' practice. Data collected from 101 teachers through questionnaire and six class observations illustrate that (1) teachers did not include intercultural objectives in EFL lessons and (2) they rarely conducted intercultural language activities in their teaching practice. It is recommended that intercultural education needs more attention from educational managers to support the EFL teachers in upper secondary schools to incorporate culture into their teaching more effectively, which contributes to the accomplishment of a reformed English curriculum objective – building comprehensive intercultural competence for the students.

Keywords: intercultural competence, intercultural objectives, intercultural teaching, teaching EFL in general education

1. Introduction

In regional and global integration, intercultural competence (IC) is essential for global citizens in the 21st century (Stiftung & Cariplo, 2008). In response to that trend, the incorporation of teaching cultures into teaching English to enable learners to communicate across linguistic and cultural boundaries has successfully become an increasing trend (Byram & Kramsch, 2008). In the same line, Vietnamese language-in-education policy gradually has extended the focus of foreign language teaching and learning from building communicative competence (CC) to the combination of IC and CC, or intercultural communicative competence (ICC) for the students in upper secondary schools.

For the above reason, the role of intercultural education is evidenced with the change of coursebooks and curricular objectives from the current to the expected

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curricula. The representation of culture in the pilot curriculum is more comprehensive and explicit than in the standard one. In fact, Hoang (2011) confirms one of the objectives of the standard coursebooks is to build learners' understanding of cultures of English-speaking countries and Vietnam through the familiarity of cultural input included in English lessons. For the pilot version, Hoang (2016, 2018) believes that it brings more diversity of intercultural content with the extension to other cultures such as Singapore, Malaysia, China, Thailand, South Korea, and Japan to develop students' CC and approach to comprehensive IC. The introduction of a newly-added section - Communication and Culture - is a good example of overt intercultural integration of the pilot coursebooks. Evaluating the diversity of intercultural contents in the pilot coursebooks, Lai (2016) proves that the proportions of home, target, and international cultures in English 10, volume 1, are 51%, 31%, and 18% respectively.

Therefore, it is confirmed that the integration of culture into teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in Vietnam has been recognized from macro level with the evidence of IC objectives in the curriculum and the representation of intercultural content and activities in the pilot coursebooks. However, to enact this reformation comprehensively, EFL teachers should take active roles as the main implementers, who integrate culture into their teaching appropriately to their students and teaching contexts. In defining appropriate strategies for intercultural integration, it is necessary to discuss intercultural teaching approaches with specified principles, strategies, and objectives in the literature and previous studies.

2. Literature review

There is a great body of literature in intercultural integration in language teaching in terms of intercultural teaching approaches and IC elements.

2.1. Intercultural teaching approaches and intercultural objectives

2.1.1. Intercultural teaching approaches and principles

There is no consensus in defining culture because it is defined differently from different fields of study. In language teaching, it should be viewed in relation to language because "culture shapes what we say, when we say it, and how we say it" (Liddicoat, 2002, p.5). Additionally, culture is dynamic and ever-changing and so are practices, behaviors, beliefs, and values of cultural groups of people (Browett, 2003; Sewell, 2005).

In the history of culture teaching, *culture as practice* is originated from dynamic view of culture (Newton, Yates, Shearn, & Nowitzki, 2010; Ho, 2011). This approach is widely receptive for aiming to develop skills to communicate and behave right in the target language culture, but it is blamed for ignoring the roles of learners' home culture (Crozet, Liddicoat & Lo Bianco, 1999). Therefore, Crozet et al. (1999) propose *intercultural language teaching approach* to promote students' acquisition of IC through intercultural language activities, namely exploring cultures and comparing home and target language culture. However, both the *culture as practice* and the *intercultural language teaching approach* ignore the interculturality of intercultural communication. Therefore, embracing the ideas practicing culture and acquiring culture of the two mentioned approaches, intercultural (language) teaching aims to build leaners' IC though their personal engagement in social intercultural communication in form of intercultural (language) activities (Byram, 2006; Deardorff, 2006; Liddicoat & Crozet, 1997; Newton et al. 2010; Newton, 2016). On that basis, Liddicoat and Crozet (1997), Newton et al. (2010), and Newton (2016) propose principles for intercultural integration into language teaching, also known as principles for intercultural communicative language teaching (iCLT principles).

In the context of teaching EFL at upper secondary level in Vietnam, the principles could be summarized and applied as follows. First, the iCLT principles emphasize the balance and integral integration of language and culture. Relating the position of culture in language lessons, the representation of culture could be either implicit of explicit. According to Hatoss (2004), the distinction between implicit and explicit intercultural integration is attributed to the frequency of cultural input and the depth of activities to exploit it. To clarify, implicit intercultural incorporation involves the introduction of cultural input in language skill lessons while explicit intercultural integration invokes learners' reflections on cultural input and their engagement in intercultural language activities. In this way, IC and CC are fostered through language and culture learning and acquiring. Secondly, the diversity of intercultural input is encouraged by iCLT because fostering IC to enable learners to communicate in intercultural contexts is more important than building CC like that of native-speakers. Obviously, iCLT approves a shift of language teaching objective, from IC to ICC. It is worth noticing that building ICC entails learners' engagement in social intercultural interactions, so the nature of classroom activities should be altered from language-focused to language and culture-focused.

In sum, embracing the iCLT principles, the explicit integration of culture necessitates the active implementation of teachers in which they exploit the provided language and culture input through intercultural language activities to accomplish IC or ICC objectives.

2.1.2. Defining IC models and IC objectives

As far as intercultural objectives and intercultural teaching activities are concerned, IC and ICC should be defined. In the literature, two noticeable models of IC have been introduced by Byram (1997) and Fantini (2006).

Byram (1997) develops an ICC model constituted from five interrelated components, known as the five savoirs: (1) savoir être – attitude, (2) savoirs – knowledge, (3) savoir comprendre – skills to interpret and relate, (4) savoir apprendre/faire – skills to discover and interact, and (5) savoir s'engager – critical cultural awareness. Being widely accepted, this model had some critics. To begin, it could not convey the developmental progress of and interrelatedness among the competences, as well as the language and culture relationship (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010; Matsuo, 2015). More importantly, Byram's (1997) perspective on culture was claimed for emphasising on national culture (Matsuo, 2015).

Fantini (2006) proposes ICC model including multiple constituents, of which language competence and its four IC dimensions are most noticeable. The four dimensions – knowledge, (positive) attitudes, skills, and awareness – are arranged in a spiral and dynamic circle. Intercultural knowledge refers to understanding of other cultures; intercultural skills referring to the capacity to engage in intercultural contexts; intercultural attitudes referring to the openness to the differences; and intercultural awareness referring to the feelings about the self in relation to the others (Fantini, 2006). Compared to Byram's (1997), the clear-cut separation of language and culture competence and integratedness among the dimensions provokes an ease of application in defining the levels of IC and CC in EFL teaching.

As advocates of analytical measurement of the IC, Deardorff (2006), Ho (2011) and Tran (2015) adopted the four elements of IC, suggested by Fantini (2006) for graded and separated IC objectives in EFL lessons. Depending on the context and learner difference, this research does not take *awareness*, the most advanced element, into account because building *intercultural awareness* requires the learners' critical reflection from engagement in actual intercultural interactions (Ho, 2011; Liddicoat et al., 2003), which is not quite common and accessible in EFL teaching at upper secondary level in Vietnam. In sum, the three elements of IC: *intercultural knowledge, intercultural attitudes,* and *intercultural skills* are considered three levels of IC objectives that regulate the intercultural language activities in this study.

2.2. Intercultural strategies in previous studies

A number of related studies in Europe (Gönen & Sağlam, 2012; Sercu, Bandura, Castro, Davcheva, Laskaridou & Lundgren, 2005; Sercu, María García, & Prieto, 2005) and in Vietnam (Chau & Truong, 2018; Ho, 2011; Nguyen, 2013; Tran & Dang, 2014) are found relevant to this study as they investigated teachers' practices of intercultural integration in language teaching.

Exploring how English teachers in seven European countries dealt with culture, Sercu et al. (2005a) found that they shared common practices. First, culture teaching in Europe was more teacher-centred than student-centred. Activities developing students' intercultural knowledge and attitudes were more prominent than intercultural skills. In another study, Sercu et al. (2005b) expected teachers to scaffold students by engaging them in multi-levels of input familiarity and meaning construction activities through social interactions. However, it was found that most of the cultural content was traced back to the coursebooks and high-ranking domains of culture such as values and beliefs were almost avoided. Cultural transmission was dominant while independent exploration and critical reflections of culture were rare. Similar to Sercu et al. (2005a) and Sercu et al. (2005b), Gönen and Sağlam (2012) found that English teachers in Turkey prioritized teaching intercultural knowledge to teaching intercultural attitudes and skills.

Four studies in Vietnam, conducted by Chau and Truong (2018), Ho (2011), Nguyen (2013), and Tran and Dang (2014) exploring teachers' practices of intercultural teaching, had rather similar findings. First, Chau and Truong (2018), Ho (2011), Nguyen (2013), Tran and Dang (2014) confirmed that transmitting intercultural knowledge from their coursebooks was the most common activity. Chau and Truong (2018) and Ho (2011) explained that teachers' intercultural integration was topic-dependent and peripheral due to their considerable concerns of language objectives. Chau and Truong (2018) and Nguyen (2013) assumed that teachers granted implicit and peripheral status to intercultural teaching and mostly relied on the cultural content in teaching materials. Tran and Dang (2014) proved that both Vietnamese teachers of English (VTEs) and native English teachers (NETs) were inclined to activities to develop learners' intercultural knowledge, but the strategies utilized were relatively different. While VTEs incorporated culture in EFL skill lessons thanks to artefacts and cultural informants, NETs told students about their native cultures.

As previously mentioned, teachers considered culture an integral and implicit part of language teaching and managed to conduct intercultural language activities to support students' language learning. In the transitional period of educational reformation to enable the young Vietnamese in globalization, it is necessary to investigate teachers' intercultural integrating practice to build learners' IC and CC through intercultural language activities. That issue is expressed in the following research question:

How and what do EFL teachers in upper secondary schools do to integrate culture into their teaching to build students' IC?

3. Methodology

In order to support the evidences to answer the research question, this research engages 101 EFL teachers for their responses to the questionnaire and six teachers for classroom observations. Details about the participants and instruments are discussed in this section.

3.1. Research participants

This research was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2017-2018, when the two versions of English coursebooks, the standard and pilot ones, had been implemented concurrently. One hundred and one out of 190 EFL teachers in the upper secondary schools in a Southern province of Vietnam voluntarily joined the research by giving their responses to questionnaires. Of them, 28 teachers have used both pilot and standard coursebooks and 73 having used the standard version only.

3.2. Research instruments

The research combines qualitative and quantitative data from questionnaires with an open-ended question and class observations. The quantitative data were collected and analysed statistically based on responses from 101 EFL participating teachers. The open-ended question was used additionally with the questionnaire to explore other intercultural teaching practices of the participating teachers. Classroom observations were done in six classes of Grades 10 and 11 using both standard and pilot coursebooks to provide information about teachers' actual teaching practices.

The questionnaire with the open-ended question

The questionnaire, adopted from Chau and Truong (2008) and Sercu et al. (2005), comprised 16 items (See Appendix 1). They were organized in a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire from *never* to *always* for the frequency of intercultural language activities conducted in class. The activities are categorized into the degree of student-centeredness and relevant potential IC objectives, namely *developing intercultural knowledge, fostering intercultural attitudes* (item B5, B10, B11, B12, B13, B14, and B15), and *building intercultural skills* (item B8, B9, and B16). Of them, the first one, *developing intercultural knowledge* was further divided into *teaching intercultural knowledge* (item B1, B2, and B3) and *having students explore cultures* (item B4, B6, and B7). Other practices of the teachers were collected through the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire. Gaining accepted reliability in the pilot stage (α = .775), the used questionnaire achieved satisfactory level of coefficient reliability (α = .886).

The observation

Six class observations were conducted for teachers' actual practices to cross-check with the practices self-reported through the questionnaire. Information about the observations is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Information of six class observations

Observation	Coursebook version	Grade	Lessons
1.	Pilot	Unit 2, Grade 10	Communication and Culture
2.	Pilot	Unit 5, Grade 10	Communication and Culture
3.	Pilot	Unit 2, Grade 11	Communication and Culture
4.	Pilot	Unit 3, Grade 11	Communication and Culture
5.	Standard	Unit 8, Grade 10	Skill lesson – Reading
6.	Standard	Unit 8, Grade 11	Skill lesson – Reading

The same observation scheme was used for all observations. It focused on how the teachers exploited language and cultural input in their lessons. In addition, students' engagement, nature of cultural input, and balance of language and culture were recorded to more comprehensively describe progress of the lessons.

3.3. Data collection and analysis

Data collected from responses of 101 teachers were subjected to descriptive analysis for mean score of each item, cluster, and average mean scores. Also, an independent sample T-test was used to measure the level differences between mean scores of the two groups of teachers, who had and had not used the pilot coursebooks. Qualitative data collected from the open-ended question and observation schemes were classified and coded according to the explicity of intercultural integration activities and their potential levels IC objectives.

4. Findings

Descriptive statistics of teachers' intercultural teaching practices is reported in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean scores of intercultural teaching activities

Items	Total mean	Stand. mean	Pilot mean	Sig. (*) (2-tailed)
Cluster 1: Teaching intercultural knowledge	***3.60***	***3.59***	***3.60***	***.950***
B1. I relate the cultural contents to what I have learned and experienced about the foreign cultures or countries.	3.48	3.44	3.57	.315
B2. I provide my students with appropriate language used in different communicative situations.	3.59	3.62	3.54	.513
B3. I help my students to learn about how to do things and behave in different social interactions.	3.72	3.71	3.75	.752
Cluster 2: Having students explore cultures	***2.85***	***2.81***	***2.94***	***.305***
B4. I ask my students to share aspects of their own culture in English.	3.27	3.25	3.32	.596
B6. I ask my students to do kinds of projects to introduce their own or local culture to the foreigners.	2.58	2.51	2.79	.113
B7. I ask my students to explore an aspect of the foreign culture and present it to their friends.	2.68	2.67	2.71	.789
Cluster 3: Developing positive intercultural attitudes	***2.75***	***2.75***	***2.76***	***.914***
B5. I mention the relativity of prejudices and risks of generalization.	3.08	3.12	2.96	.436

Items	Total mean	Stand. mean	Pilot mean	Sig. (*) (2-tailed)
B10. I decorate my classroom with pictures, ornaments, and so on to illustrate aspects of the foreign culture.	1.88	1.85	1.96	.562
B11. I use videos, CD-ROMs or the Internet to illustrate aspects of the foreign culture like songs, films, fashions, festivals and so on.	3.17	3.12	3.29	.372
B12. I also teach the similarities between the home and foreign cultures.	3.36	3.34	3.39	.762
B13. I encourage the students to explore the causes of differences the home and foreign cultures.	2.83	2.85	2.79	.731
B14. I have my students approach to diverse cultural facts and notions to create positive perspectives towards the differences.	2.52	2.52	2.50	.912
B15. I get my students to evaluate their home and foreign culture from different views.	2.42	2.41	2.43	.926
Cluster 4: Having students practise language and culture in different settings	***1.87***	***1.84***	***1.96***	***.382***
B8. I organize some simulated intercultural communicative activities like celebrating cultural events, role plays, solving cultural conflicts, and so on for students to practise linguistic and intercultural skills.	2.42	2.43	2.39	.864
B9. I invite a person originating from the foreign countries to my class.	1.57	1.52	1.71	.281
B16. I engage students into a chat group with foreigners to share their cultural knowledge and experience.	1.62	1.56	1.79	.208

(*) The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

For the whole group of participating teachers, average mean scores of the four clusters (M1, M2, M3, and M4) display a downward trend from teaching intercultural knowledge (M1 = 3.60) to developing intercultural attitudes (M3 = 2.75) and skills (M4 = 1.87), from conducting teacher-centred activities to student-centred ones (M1 = 3.60 and M2 = 2.85).

Noticeably, of the four clusters, the levels of mean differences between two groups of teachers were not significant (p = .950, .305, .914, and .382, > .05). Statistically, it is concluded that teachers using different coursebooks demonstrated rather similar practice of intercultural teaching. However, the number of participating teachers using the pilot coursebooks (N = 28) was small and much lower than that of the standard coursebooks (N = 73), the results of inferential statistics should be backed up with mathematical analysis. Mathematically, comparing means of the four clusters across the groups, it is shown that teachers who used the standard (stand.) coursebooks conducted intercultural language activities less often than the other group (M1 of stand. and pilot = 3.59 versus 3.60, M2 of stand. and pilot = 2.81 versus 2.94, M3 of stand. and pilot = 2.75 versus 2.76, and M4 of stand. and pilot = 1.84 versus 1.96).

In Table 2, in terms of addressing intercultural knowledge, teacher-fronted activities were more common. Noteworthily, activities to deal with culture in communication and culture in language (M B3 = 3.72 and M B2 = 3.59 respectively) were more frequent than adding related cultural content to language lessons (M B1 = 3.48). However, the opposite was proven in the observations. While adding intercultural knowledge to facilitate language learning was seen in *Observations 1 and 2* and teaching structures and expressions as language input to enable students' interactions was conducted in *Observation 4*, no activity to instruct students' conducts and behaviors was found. For example, the teachers in *Observations 1 and 2* gave more examples about the balance of yin and yang in Vietnamese eating habits and many facts about the King of Thailand to kindle students' interests for reading. In *Observation 4* students were provided with appropriate language to compare ways of bringing up children in Viet Nam and in the USA. The occurrence of this type of activities was also of high frequency in teachers' reports.

Of student-centred activities, presenting and sharing intercultural knowledge and experiences (M B4 = 3.27) are more common than participating in projects (M B6 = 2.58) and exploring cultures (M B7 = 2.68). Of the three activities, only presenting and sharing activity was conducted to get students to raise their personal and cultural voice. Particularly, teachers using the pilot coursebooks conducted project activities more often (M B6 pilot and stand. = 2.79 versus 2.52). Similarly, student-centred intercultural activities were observed in classes using different coursebooks, but they happened more frequently in classes using the pilot coursebooks. They were found in *Observations 1, 3, 4, and 6*, in which the students could use language productively to share about traditional health practices, Tet holidays, family education, and dating from their own personal and local culture perspectives. Similar activities were not found in *Observations 2 and 5* because they were not presented in the coursebooks.

Among the activities to develop students' attitudes, three most frequent activities were comparing cultures (M B12 = 3.36), using audio-visual aids to bring culture diversity to the students (M B11 = 3.17), and mentioning relativity of prejudices (M B5 = 3.08). Other advanced activities (such as exploring the roots of differences, evaluating the differences, and forming positive perspectives towards the differences and diversity) rarely happened in the classes (M B13 = 2.83, M B15 = 2.42, and M B14 = 2.52 respectively). A simple activity, displaying artefacts, almost never took place (M B10 = 1.88).

Of the three activities with positive mean scores (expressed in item B12, B11, and B5), only comparing culture was conducted. It was commonly seen in *Communication and Culture* lessons of *Observations 1 and 4*, in which the students were asked to compare health practices between Vietnamese and Indonesian cultures and child rearing between Vietnamese and American cultures. This activity engaged students in authentic interactions by presenting their own reflections and comparisons based on their prior knowledge and cultural diversity. In the two lessons, the teachers did not exaggerate the differences or mentioned the relativity of stereotyping in the comparison.

Finally, the three last activities to engage students into real or simulated intercultural communication to develop intercultural skills were never or rarely conducted. Simulated intercultural activities (e.g., celebrating cultural events, role plays, solving cultural conflicts) were rare (M B8 = 2.42) while activities engaging students into actual interactions by inviting guest speakers and joining chat groups were often ignored (M B9 = 1.57, M B16 =1.62). Creating simulated or actual intercultural communication was limited but teachers using the pilot coursebooks managed to deliver activities for students practicing intercultural skills more often (M4 of pilot and stand. = 1.96 versus 1.84). It was interesting that the teachers using the pilot coursebooks less favoured simulated intercultural communication activities (M B8 of pilot and stand. = 2.39 versus 2.43) while the teachers of the other group were less interested in the actual ones (M B9 and B16 of stand. and pilot = 1.52 versus 1.71, 1.56 versus 1.79). Scarcity of these types of activities was also proven in the observations. In fact, none of additional activities creating opportunities for students to practice intercultural skills were found. Remarkably, the existence of these activities was mentioned in open-ended question reports. As informed, intercultural activities, namely cultural quizzes, guessing the pictures, role-play to solve cultural conflicts, and drama were conducted to make opportunities for students to practice and build their IC and CC.

For most of the part, findings of this research echo those of the others in Europe and Vietnam in that intercultural teaching was inferior to language teaching and equated with teaching intercultural knowledge. However, conducted in the context of general education prior to the educational reformation, the findings have obtained its own values in the field. First, what the participating teachers did by their own attempts to integrate culture was adding intercultural facts related to cultural themes in language skill lessons. The other activities, which were comparing cultures, talking about intercultural issues, and doing projects were coursebook-prescribed. Secondly, though teachers using different coursebooks shared similar practice of intercultural integration, the representation of intercultural language activities was more apparent in the classes using the pilot coursebooks. Thirdly, there is a gap between IC objectivity prescribed in the master EFL curriculum and teachers' actual implementation. Specifically, while intercultural content and activities are considered a new focus in the pilot coursebooks, teachers have not relevantly exploited them explicitly and effectively. Therefore, the findings signify that the gap between the expected objectives and actual practices should be filled with the improvement of teachers' practices.

5. Discussion and implications

In line with the studies of Chau and Truong (2018), Gönen and Sağlam (2012), Ho (2011), Nguyen (2013), Sercu et al. (2005), Sercu et al. (2005b), Tran and Dang (2015), this research confirmed that intercultural integration in upper secondary schools was not properly treated in terms of intercultural objectives and intercultural teaching strategies.

First, though the position of IC in EFL teaching programs has been recognized in pilot curriculum, IC objectives were not specified explicitly in teachers' lessons. For example, even for the *Communication and Culture* lessons, the teachers (in *Observations 1, 2, 3, and 4*) were unaware of intercultural objectives. The inclusion of educational objectives enables language teaching to fulfil its instrumental and educational purposes (Byram, 2008). As observed and noticed, intercultural objectives were sometimes coined in more general terms - educational or moral objectives. Whatever they were called, IC objectives should be specified with the graded levels of IC and the focus of cultural aspects to regulate the intercultural language activities in EFL lessons.

Secondly, in alignment with Chau and Truong (2018), Gönen and Sağlam (2012), Ho (2011), Nguyen (2013), Sercu et al. (2005b), and Tran and Dang (2015), the participating teachers' intercultural integration was teacher-centred, knowledge-based, coursebook-dependent, and peripheral. As reported, what the teachers did to deal with intercultural integration were following the coursebooks and adding intercultural facts from their knowledge and experiences to facilitate language teaching. In most *Communication and Culture* lessons (*Observations 1, 2, 3, and 4*), the implementation of intercultural activities was traced back to the coursebooks.

Teachers had no adaption to invoke genuine interaction and critical interaction among the students. Giving reasons for that, Sercu et al. (2005b) assumed that teachers observed the language input and activities in coursebooks because it was easier and safer.

However, it is noteworthy considering that teachers using the pilot coursebooks were in favour of activities which activated students' centeredness and targeted advanced IC levels. Roughly compared means of the four clusters between the two groups of teachers, teachers using the pilot coursebooks surpassed the other group in terms of delivering activities having students explore cultures (Cluster 2) and practise language and culture in different settings (Cluster 4). Higher mean scores of the two clusters prove a consistent appreciation of teachers using the pilot coursebooks for students' independence and active engagement in intercultural activities. More importantly, the higher frequency of activities exploring culture delivered by the teachers using the pilot coursebooks was explained by the representation of intercultural content and activities in the coursebooks. In fact, exploring and presenting cultural viewpoints were common in the pilot coursebooks; even more, doing project was a recognized and separate section – *Project* – in every unit of this coursebook version.

To bridge the gap between current practice of teachers and the effective implementation of intercultural integration into EFL teaching as a requirement of educational reformation, explicit intercultural integration guided by iCLT principles should be considered besides the change of curriculum objectives and coursebooks. Stated differently, teachers should improve their intercultural teaching practice which entails the adaption of prescribed activities in the coursebooks to invoke genuine intercultural interactions among students and more critical reflection of intercultural contents from the coursebooks against the reality that they have experienced as social and cultural informants.

The implications are not likely to be feasible for the teachers without supports and guidance from educational management. Actually, teachers could not improve the intercultural integration practices due to the overwhelming focus on teaching EFL for testing and overcrowded curriculum (Chau & Truong, 2018). Besides, teachers' training on IC and intercultural teaching pedagogy was absent from pre-service and in-service teacher education (Nguyen, 2013). Without comprehensive pedagogical apprehension, teachers could make intercultural integration dissociating and superficial (Sercu et al., 2005). Hence, teachers should be trained on the positionality and teaching pedagogy of intercultural integration. Without official guidance and proper training, teachers were not flexible enough to implement intercultural integration.

6. Limitation and conclusion

Aiming to explore the status of intercultural integration in EFL teaching in upper secondary schools, this research manages to obtain data from teacher questionnaire and observations. Due to the inefficient amount of data collected from quantitative data, the actual practices of intercultural teaching were not a comprehensive representation of other EFL classes. Moreover, intercultural objectives were not presented in teachers' lesson plans or not obvious in their EFL lessons. The finding was still superficial, so the objectivity of IC should receive further and deeper investigation from teachers' perceptions through in-depth interview or other instruments.

In conclusion, prior to the reformation in general education, EFL teaching is subjected to a change with comprehensive inclusion of IC objectives and intercultural content in the curriculum. It is proven that intercultural integration has been recognized from macro level but not yet properly implemented in teaching practice due to the domination of intercultural knowledge transmission and rigidity of teachers' implementation. Since intercultural teaching aims to develop IC which requires learners' active engagement in social intercultural interactions, the teachers should "interculturalize" the coursebook activities to facilitate students to build their IC. Therefore, to enhance the effects of intercultural education, teachers should be encouraged and enabled to improve their intercultural teaching practices through more official guidance in lesson planning and implementing strategies.

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THỰC TIỄN LỒNG GHÉP VĂN HÓA VÀO GIẢNG DẠY TIẾNG ANH: TRƯỜNG HỢP CỦA GIÁO VIÊN TRUNG HỌC PHỔ THÔNG Ở VIỆT NAM

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Tóm tắt: Trong bối cảnh toàn cầu hóa, việc lồng ghép văn hóa vào giảng dạy tiếng Anh ở Việt Nam có vị thế ngày càng lớn ngay cả đối với bậc giáo dục phổ thông. Thật ra, mục tiêu và nội dung liên văn hóa đã được giới thiệu trong chương trình tiếng Anh thí điểm ở trung học phổ thông. Trước thềm đổi mới chương trình, việc nghiên cứu thực tế lồng ghép liên văn hóa là cần thiết. Trên lập trường giảng dạy liên văn hóa, nghiên cứu này tập trung vào hai vấn đề: thực hiện mục tiêu liên văn hóa và chiến lược dạy liên văn hóa. Thông tin thu thập từ 101 giáo viên tiếng Anh qua bảng hỏi và dự giờ chứng minh rằng giáo viên (1) không đề cập đến mục tiêu liên văn hóa trong giáo án; và (2) hiếm khi tổ chức các hoạt động xây dựng năng lực giao tiếp liên văn hóa cho học sinh trong lớp học. Bài viết cho rằng cần có sự quan tâm hơn nữa từ những nhà quản lý giáo dục nhằm hỗ trợ giáo viên phổ thông trung học thực hiện việc tích hợp văn hóa trong giảng dạy tiếng Anh một cách hiệu quả, từ đó, góp phần đạt được mục tiêu chương trình tiếng Anh cải cách - hướng đến xây dựng năng lực liên văn hóa cho học sinh.

Từ khóa: năng lực liên văn hóa, mục tiêu liên văn hóa, dạy liên văn hóa, dạy tiếng Anh ở phổ thông

APPENDIX 1: TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

How often do you conduct the below activities to integrate culture into your teaching practices? Write the number of your choice in the right column of the table below.

1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often 5. Usually

Items	Activities	1 2 3 4 5
B1	I relate the cultural contents to what I have learned and experienced about the foreign cultures or countries.	
B2	I provide my students with appropriate language used in different communicative situations.	
B3	I help my students to learn about how to do things and behave in different social interactions.	
B4	I ask my students to share aspects of their own culture in English.	
B5	I mention the relativity of prejudices and risks of generalization.	
B6	I ask my students to do kinds of projects to introduce their own or local culture to the foreigners.	
B7	I ask my students to explore an aspect of the foreign culture and present it to their friends.	
B8	I organize some simulated intercultural communicative activities like celebrating cultural events, role plays, solving cultural conflicts, and so on for students to practise linguistic and intercultural skills.	
B9	I invite people coming from other cultures to visit my class.	
B10	I decorate my classroom with pictures, ornaments, and so on to illustrate aspects of the foreign culture.	
B11	I use videos, CD-ROMs or the Internet to illustrate aspects of the foreign culture like songs, films, fashions, festivals and so on.	
B12	I also teach the similarities between the home and foreign cultures.	
B13	I encourage the students to explore the causes of differences the home and foreign cultures.	
B14	I have my students approach to diverse cultural facts and notions to create positive perspectives towards the differences.	
B15	I get my students to evaluate their home and foreign culture from different views.	
B16	I engage students into a chat group with foreigners to share their cultural knowledge and experience.	

2. What are other activities which you conduct to integrate culture in your teaching?

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Part of this questionnaire is referred from Sercu et al. (2005), adopted from Chau and Truong (2018)

A STUDY OF ACADEMIC GENRE: EXPLORING WRITING IN ENGLISH FOR UNIVERSITY PURPOSES WITH VIETNAMESE STUDENTS

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Abstract: Higher Education students in Vietnam are increasingly expected to write in English for university and professional purposes. This study identified the written texts in English that postgraduates had written for university purposes and explored their perceptions of or attitudes towards these. Using a classification of university genres developed from the British Academic Written English (BAWE) Corpus, ten case study students showed how their experiences of genres at lower levels of education had been heavily standardised. At undergraduate levels, English-major students and students studying in English-medium instruction were expected to write a wider variety of genres. At postgraduate levels, however, students from all subject areas were also required to write some genres, especially scientific research reports in English. Students' attitudes towards assignments were influenced by effort and achievement levels, and the extent to which they felt prepared to write the type of text required. A number of key writing challenges were identified by students via self-reports and think-aloud protocol methods. Many students felt unprepared to write the genres expected of them, including the need for academic vocabulary and critical thinking. Findings indicated that non-English major postgraduate students (especially those enrolled on science-based courses) could benefit from a genre-sensitive pedagogy at late undergraduate or early postgraduate level.

Keywords: academic genre, academic literacy, university writing in Vietnam, BAWE corpus

1. Introduction

Due to the spread of the English language combined with the internationalisation of Higher Education, university students in non-Anglophone contexts are increasingly required to graduate with a level of English proficiency (Lillis and Curry, 2006, 2010; Nunan, 2003). English is being used as the global lingua franca (a language used by non-native speakers to communicate with one another) in business, science and trade (Canagarajah, 2007; Crystal, 1999, 2012). Vietnamese students are now obliged to learn English at all levels of education (Harman et al., 2009). For those students working towards an academic career, the ability to write in English is often a key determinant of their success within the academy within Vietnam and internationally (Bolton, 2008; Curry and Lillis, 2004; Duong and Chua, 2016; Hayden and Khanh, 2010; Hoang, 2013; Huong and Fry, 2004, 2011; Kelly, 2000; Lam, 2011; Pham, 1999; Trần, 2013; Welch, 2011a, 2011b). In 2008, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) initiated 'Decision 1400', or 'Project 2020' to improve foreign language teaching across Vietnam so all learners can use English (and other foreign languages) competently in their work and communications by 2020.

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MOET had prioritised the need for better training for English language teachers (Dang et al., 2013, Manh et al., 2017; Pham, 2011) and consequentially much research had focused on teacher practices, perceptions or pedagogy (Ngoc and Iwashita, 2012; Nguyen, 2013; Pham, 2013), rather than a focus on learner views (Tomlinson and Dat, 2004) or what types of texts students are required to write in English as part of their English language learning experiences. In response, this paper aims to contribute new insights in these two areas.

1.1. The role of sociocultural context in second language acquisition and genre studies

Student attitudes towards second language (L2) learning and their writing processes are related to the sociocultural context in which the language has been learnt and used (Bayley and Langman, 2011; Canh, in Choi and Spolsky, 2007; Dang, 2010; Harman et al., 2009; Hiep, 2000; Huong, 2008; Hyland, 2002b; Nguyen, 1989; Nguyen, 2015; Pham, 1999; Pham, 2011; Pham, 2012; Phan, 2009; Watson-Gegeo and Nielson, 2003). Using models of first (L1) and second language (L2) writing, students' sociocultural background and their expectations of assignment writing have been found to influence their approach to written assignments (Flower and Hayes, 1981, Hayes and Flower 1983; Manchón and De Larios, 2007; Manchón, 2012; Oxford, 1990; Plakans, 2008). Learner-focused studies within Vietnam have yet to explore how students perceive specific types of writing for university purposes and how these may be linked to aspects of the sociocultural context. As part of the sociocultural turn within second language acquisition (SLA) work, Watson-Gegeo (2004) discussed L2 learning, use and production as an *'embodied'* experience with a dependency on social, cultural and political influences. Social and cultural models become embedded in learners' L1 and L2 language learning and these underpin 'cultural frames' including '*academic notions about teaching and learning, our assumptions about what constitutes science and how language works'* (Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen, in Doughty and Long, 2003: 163). This means that students' university writing experiences, including their preferences and writing challenges, can be influenced by educational decisions related to curriculum, assessment, teaching approaches and subject discipline, in addition to other social or cultural factors. This sociocultural dependency has also been reflected in second language writing (SLW) research (Hyland, 2002b; Karlsson, 2009; Swales, 1990) on written genres within academia.

Indeed, within the field of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), researchers have been particularly interested in the types of texts or genres that students are required to produce and how various aspects of the context influence this writing (Bruce, 2010; Lave and Wenger, 1991; Nesi and Gardner, 2012; Römer and O. Donnell, 2011; Swales, 1990). This type of research has had important implications for curriculum design and pedagogy (Basturkman, 2016; Gardner, 2016; Lap and Truc, 2014; Luu, 2011: Nguyen and Miller, 2012). Hyland (2002a) described genres as '*abstract, socially recognised ways of using language'* whereas Swales (1990: 58) described genre as "*a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes*". Swales pointed to the 'structured' and 'conventionalised' nature of genre in relation to their '*intent, positioning, form and functional value'* (Swales, 1990, cited in Bhatia, 1993: 13). The crucial element of genre is the communicative purpose, this is what provides the internal structure of the genre; although other factors such as the content, form, intended audience and medium could also be considered key influences. Within Vietnam, research about the types of genres that university students are expected to write within different subject majors is lacking. Studies have tended to focus on how to improve students' performance in writing specific genres, like argumentative essays or recount texts, rather than a mapping of genres written by different types of students (Lap and Truc, 2014; Luu, 2011a: Nguyen and Miller, 2012).

1.2. Identifying university genres and research questions

A UK-based example of this mapping endeavour was undertaken by Nesi and Gardner (2012) when they aimed to establish a '*university-wide classification of student assignment texts*'. Using 3000 good-standard student assignments taken from three universities in the UK, the British Academic Written English (BAWE) Corpus was created. They analysed the assignments and course documentation, and interviewed tutors in order to '*obtain a more rounded view'* of what students thought about the purposes of their assignments. Assignments from across discipline fields including English and Linguistics were included but texts from students studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) were not incorporated.

Nesi and Gardner's analysis drew on the work of Swales (1990), the Sydney School and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Halliday, 1971, 1990). They deployed Halliday's ideas as to how linguistic choices are made by individuals to create social meaning in a specific context (Halliday, 1971, 1990; Kecskés and Agócs, 2013). The attention here is on the functions of the language and texts that are being created in relation to '*field*', '*tenor*' and '*mode*' or the why, what, who and how of the communication (Halliday and Hassan, 1985). Swales' (1990) concept of 'moves' was also used to analyse where student writers had chosen different rhetorical strategies to achieve their cognitive intentions. For example, writers can 'establish the research field' by either '*asserting centrality of the topic, stating current knowledge or ascribing key characteristics*' (Bhatia, 1993: 31). This means that while a genre has a communicative purpose, each move within the genre also has a communicative purpose. Through their analysis, Nesi and Gardner (2012) identified 13 genre families. The term 'family' is used here to show how the texts '*share a central function or are involved in the same disciplinary context'* (Nesi and Gardner, 2012: 25). The genre families include: Case study; Critique; Specification Design; Empathy Writing; Essay; Exercise; Explanation; Literature Survey; Methodology Recount; Narrative Recount; Problem Question; Proposal; Research Report (Appendix A). This table also shows lists of genres that were included within each genre family for example, a 'Research Report' often functions to show that students can complete a piece of research including research design, and an appreciation of its significance in the field. These reports often include a research aim or question, followed by investigation, links and relevance to other research in the field. Based on the need for new insights on student views of university writing and genres and drawing on literature within the field of genre studies summarised above, two research questions (below) were used to frame the study:

1. Which genres do (ten) Vietnamese Higher Education students write in English for university purposes?

2. How do (the ten) students perceive writing for university purposes in terms of a) challenge, b) enjoyability and c) usefulness for university and/or other purposes.

2. Methods, analysis and participants

A multiple case study design (Yin, 2009) was used to explore the writing experiences and perceptions of ten Vietnamese Masters

(MA) students from 6 universities across Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The case study students were selected based on the theoretical premise that each case could reveal insight into the writing experiences of individuals while also offering opportunities for case comparisons. The sample was based on a '*maximum variability*' design where each case can be understood both intrinsically and instrumentally (Yin, 2009:51). Information from individual participants was compared across cases, identifying key recurring patterns and themes. The themes taken from this comparison are those reported in this paper. English language proficiency was a key consideration in the selection process and all potential participants were invited to participate, regardless of their communicative competence in English. It was important to understand the potential variability or similarities of English language writing experiences of learners with different proficiency levels. All participants were offered a choice of interpreter and all materials were available in Vietnamese. The study did not aim, however, to measure or make a judgment about the participants' English language levels. Two participants were selected from a specialised Science and Technology university, three were chosen from Vietnam National University (VNU), University of Languages and International Studies Hanoi (ULIS), and one student was selected from a university for Economics and Business. In order to balance a high-proficiency-biased sample and to support the maximum variability approach, two of these participants had limited communicative competence in English and studied non-English majors. In Ho Chi Minh City, two participants came from a VNU Humanities and Social Sciences department, one more was enrolled within an international university and one trainee teacher was enrolled within the Vietnamese Open University and was undertaking a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course within an International School which had an embedded teacher training programme.

Each participant took part in up to five weekly face-to-face sessions lasting up to 2 hours. Three students required an interpreter to take part in the research and an extensive validation process was used to ensure their views were accurately represented. Students answered a series of semi-structured interview questions about their English language learning experiences and gave information about their writing experiences. They then identified academic and other genres they had written in English using an adapted version of the classification of genres from the British Academic Written English corpus (Nesi and Gardner, 2012; Gardner and Nesi, 2013) (Appendix A). Students also provided copies of assignments to support their self-reports. Following the analysis undertaken by Nesi and Gardner (2012), the genre of each assignment was identified by assessing the function or purpose of the writing, by reviewing the stages of the piece, and by assessing the use of key words. The analyses included whole text structure and more sentence-level linguistic features. The identification of genres formed part of an individual writing biography for each student that provided an overall picture of the types of writing they had undertaken in English across their life course. In these sessions students were asked to rate the pieces of writing they had undertaken (using a 10-point Likert scale) in terms of a) enjoyability, b) challenge and c) usefulness (for various purposes). The scores were not used as a quantitative measure but were used as a comparison and talking point about why students had preferred some types of writing in English over others (Figure 1).

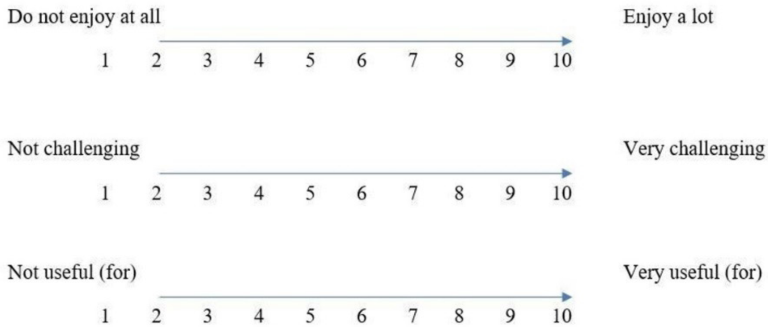

Figure 1. Likert scales used to discuss perceptions of writing tasks

Following this, the students undertook a retrospective recall of the writing process they had undertaken to complete a recent assignment, and then took part in a think-aloud protocol session where they engaged in one or two writing tasks using an adapted version of Plakans' (2008) method. Students received written instructions to complete a writing activity and were asked to share their thinking processes during their writing (Appendix B).

3. Findings

The themes outlined below were created via cross-case comparisons made in relation to the genres that students had written and their attitudes towards these genres. Unlike other case study approaches, a more detailed individual account of information from participant has been forfeited in order to share more generalised findings. The first research question aimed to establish which genres students had written in English for university and other purposes. Two recurring trends emerged including a significant standardisation of genre at pre-MA level and the demand for research-related writing in English at MA level regardless of subject-major.

3.1. Standardised genres pre-MA

The types of genres written at primary, secondary and high school were standardised. These included Exercises, Empathy writing and Reflective recounts (within Narrative Recounts). The Exercise genre family was the most predominant type at all lower levels of education. Exercises are made up of a group of activities that involve a series of responses to questions and they aim to provide 'practice in key skills'. The exercises were almost always taken from the national English language textbook and teachers were reported to have rarely introduced writing tasks from other sources outside of the prescribed textbook. The written exercises were mainly written in the classroom although this did not apply as much when students wrote longer pieces at High School. Two participants said they tended to write longer pieces at home. Referring to high school English classes, one student explained,

'Writing in English takes too long, so my teacher usually missed that out'.

Grammar gap-fill exercises were the most common type of exercise completed at secondary and high school. They were also used to test grammar and vocabulary within the national English language exams each year. Many participants enjoyed these types of exercises because they were familiar with them. Multiple-choice questions were preferred because it was deemed easier to select the correct answer by elimination; scoring high marks and passing exams were key factors related to enjoyability. At lower levels, these types of exercises were the least challenging types of writing although they were reported to become more difficult within English major university entrance exams and specialist high school entrance exams.

The second most predominant genre family at lower levels of schooling was empathy writing, specifically letter-writing. According to Nesi and Gardner (2012: 42), the purpose of these activities is to show an understanding of '*academic ideas by translating them into a non-academic writing*'. Most participants had written letters to friends or family, but this was not to show their understanding of academic ideas. Instead, the letter-writing was treated as a type of exercise to practice sentence structuring and appropriate use of vocabulary. This type of practice was deemed to be useful by the students.

3.2. Writing for research

Overall, students studying an English language-based subject had more experience of writing critiques, essays and literature surveys although all students were required to write a research report in English. Some non-English majors had been writing research reports in Vietnamese. For example, one student had been writing microbiology laboratory reports in Vietnamese but was due to write a research report in English with the support of his university teacher. The same student was being taught how to write an invitation letter as part of an English course designed for university employees and researchers, but the English programme did not offer support for the type of research report writing required within his MA programme.

Many other students were in the process of writing a research proposal for their graduation thesis. Others were writing a final research report for university and/or for publication. Many participants had first experienced these research-related genres at MA level, although some had limited research-related writing experiences towards the end of undergraduate level. For example, one participant who was studying on the International Standard Programme (which is a four-year undergraduate programme in English medium instruction), had written a research proposal and mini-research reports in English from her third undergraduate year. For those non-English majors who had no experience of writing these types of genres as undergraduate level, this was particularly challenging. A number of other reported writing challenges are summarised below.

3.3. Writing challenges

The second research question explored how students perceived writing for university purposes in terms of a) challenge, b) enjoyability and c) usefulness for university and/orother purposes. The descriptions below represent the most prominent views and attitudes voiced by the participants. In summary, participants stated that most MA-level genres were entirely new to them and they often struggled with idea generation, introduction-writing and the requirement to think and write critically at MA (or any) level. Enjoyability and perceptions of the usefulness of writing various genres tended to be influenced by prior experience of the genre and familiarity with the topic.

Writing challenges related to feeling unprepared to write some types of genres and/ or a lack of familiarity with topics.

Most participants felt a lack of preparation or scaffolding to complete the types of MA assignments required. For many participants, the genres expected at MA level were new which had an impact on the extent to which they enjoyed a piece of writing or how challenging they found it. A lack of academic vocabulary made writing for university purposes difficult. When participants knew subject-specific vocabulary or where they had access to relevant vocabulary, they found the writing process less challenging but not necessarily more enjoyable. Three non-English Language Teaching (ELT) majors found some assignments most useful for learning subject-related vocabulary. For example, two students found it useful to write a macro-economics assignment in English to learn economics and business-related vocabulary. Difficulties arose when participants had learnt terminology in English and then had to translate assignments into Vietnamese. One student had to translate their undergraduate Business graduation paper into Vietnamese. Finding subject-specific terminology in Vietnamese was challenging because the terms had been learnt in English only.

Many participants distinctly remembered when they were required to think or write 'critically' for the first time. A common response was a sense of unknowing and inferiority to challenge existing literature, research and authors. One student said,

> *"I started to learn to think critically and to make an assessment of someone else's work during the MA. This was the first time I was taught how to do this. At the beginning, I found it a little difficult because I was never taught it before, even at university when I was an undergraduate student."*

Another student spoke about her unwillingness to challenge famous linguistic academics within a 'critical review' assignment. Two further participants reported to have difficulty assessing the reliability of sources and finding 'strong and weak' points in the work of others. English-majors in Hanoi had been taught about the structure of research reports and how to evaluate research reports using a template. Fewer participants discussed how they evaluated the content, ideas or arguments in texts.

3.4. Useful writing

For some pieces of work, participants were not sure why they were useful or why they thought they had been asked to write them. Other recurring reasons for writing university assignments were reported as: finding sources, reading, brainstorming, avoiding plagiarism, and engaging in critical thinking. One student explained that a research report was useful for learning how to find relevant sources. Another students' literature review was useful to develop reading skills, especially reading research reports and other academic literature. Two students felt that essay writing and learning about different types of essays (including argumentative essays) were useful for developing idea brainstorming skills and critical thinking skills. A different student spoke about her postgraduate assignments helping to '*train her mind*', to think differently and to improve evaluation.

Some undergraduate and MA assignments were regarded as good preparation for graduation papers and research reports. Although many genres were new to participants at MA level, there was a sense of skill refinement throughout a module, semester or course. The third most common response about usefulness of writing related to grammar and subject-specific vocabulary. One students' case study of a Vietnamese company was useful to learn business-related vocabulary. The same message was shared by three other non-English majors who had written descriptions (genre) in English and felt this helped them to learn subject-specific vocabulary better than the general English language classes they had to attend at university. Three students found some essays and 'critical responses' useful to learn phrases they could reuse again in later pieces of writing. Assignments showed a recycling of sentence and paragraph structures that were altered slightly for the different topics. Many participants felt that grammar gap-fill exercises were useful to remember grammar rules, sentence structures and use of pronouns for example.

Assignments that were reported to be useful for employment purposes were job application forms, cover letters and research report writing. Six students had written 'genuine' job and university applications or cover letters in English, but not all of them had practice of writing these beforehand. Those who aspired to work in academia found research report writing useful for future employment, partly due to the desire to be published in English. For business-oriented students, their case study assignments were useful to become familiar with the context in which they could work in the future. Some MA students of English Language Teaching (ELT), who already taught at university level, were undertaking classroom-based research for their teaching roles (as a staff member), as well as research for their MA theses.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The findings show how experiences of written genres in English and student perceptions of these are influenced by aspects of the Vietnamese sociocultural context and the wider internationalisation of higher education. This included the standardising impact of national testing and assessment at lower levels of education and the (international) demand for research-related writing at postgraduate level. It would be valuable to undertake a larger mapping of the types of university-level genres that students from a range of disciplines are being asked to produce in English, possibly similar to the BAWE corpus study undertaken by Nesi and Gardner (2012). Educators in Vietnam could then consider to what extent the students are prepared and supported to manage the writing tasks expected of them. If the findings from this study are found on a larger scale, a genre-sensitive pedagogy could be introduced within English writing classes at early undergraduate or even late high school level.

Based on this analysis, students could then be introduced to a wider variety of genres earlier in their English language classes to better prepare them for the types of writing they will be working towards in higher education and/or employment purposes. Facilitating students earlier on to engage in critical thinking activities and writing could enhance their ability to engage more readily with the types of thinking and evaluative tasks that are required at university-level study. Research indicates that genre approaches to writing are not dependent on proficiency in English language, so students with lower levels of English could engage in genre-awareness classes (Hyland, 2002a, 2017). Cho (2014) found that students with lower levels of proficiency can learn and achieve in the same way as those with higher proficiency. In a study of genre pedagogy for genre and lexical-phrase knowledge, Cho (ibid) found that students' final attainment was similar, regardless of their starting levels. Rose and Martin (2012) found that less proficient students gained more than other learners when using a genre approach because their difficulties had been partly due to a lack of awareness of schematic structures within discourse communities. In particular, postgraduates from the 'pure' sciences could be better prepared to cope with writing research reports in English from the beginning of their postgraduate studies. Many international universities provide academic writing courses tailored for particular disciplines or subjects i.e. writing for Biology students, and so it may be possible for students from particular disciplines to access this type of subject-specific writing class (i.e. Gardner, 2016). Within this approach, students can learn subject vocabulary in context, which could relieve some of the problems with academic vocabulary reported in this study. These sessions could also support students to undertake text analyses to assess the stages and moves within various types of writing.

Some Vietnamese language educators have already used genre-based approaches in teaching, but it is unclear how prevalent this is in 2019 (Lap and Truc, 2014; Luu, 2011: Nguyen and Miller, 2012). For example, Luu (2011) employed a genre approach to teach the writing of Recount genres to one class of students in a University of Finance and Marketing in Vietnam. In a bid to move away from existing writing strategies where university teachers provided vocabulary lists and gave guiding questions to help students to organise their ideas into paragraphs, Luu wanted to offer students an alternative approach. Lap and Truc (2014) applied a similar genre approach to Luu (2011) and found that the quality of argumentative essays improved significantly. A similar pedagogical approach to teaching university writing was used to teach Vietnamese students how to write Business Request genres (Nguyen and Miller, 2012). Nguyen and Miller's students had already completed a 'Business Correspondence' course but had been using '*inflexible textbook examples and memorisation of formulaic structure*s' with limited application to the workplace. Although students in this study reported to enjoy writing tasks that they scored well in, they also valued writing that was relevant and meaningful to their professional field. Some students had experience of writing for professional purposes, especially in Business and Science degrees, which was deemed helpful. As Vietnam attracts more international business and as organisations continue to use English as a lingua franca, it could be worthwhile for writing educators to assess how well they are preparing their students to write for professional purposes across subject fields by exploring the range of written genres (in English) graduates are being asked to undertake in companies and organisations in Vietnam. This would require university-industry collaboration where organisations share the types of writing in English that employees typically undertake.

This genre mapping and genre-sensitive pedagogy would largely be dependent on teacher-training and researcher training. There is a reported lack of (teacher) awareness of the importance of genre-based knowledge and skills in academic success (Tuyen et al., 2016). Genre-oriented instruction could become a feature of English language teacher training in Vietnam (Devitt, 2009, 2015; Humphrey et al., 2016; Leon Perez and Martin-Martin, 2016) but there are limited examples of this type of genre-based teacher training in the country. Tuyen et al. (2016) study is one example in which TESOL lecturers were interviewed to identify core components that should be included within a Process Genre Approach to Research Paper Writing; with the intention of designing a curriculum for undergraduates (in Vietnam and Malaysia). At higher education levels, curriculum developers in Vietnam have some scope to design their own programs (as cited by Tuyen et al., 2016) and there is still much potential to allow genre-based approaches to inform this endeavour in order to meet the writing needs of students and graduates.

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NGHIÊN CỨU THỂ LOẠI VĂN BẢN KHOA HỌC: KHẢO SÁT VĂN BẢN KHOA HỌC TIẾNG ANH CỦA SINH VIÊN, HỌC VIÊN VÀ NGHIÊN CỨU SINH VIỆT NAM

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Tóm tắt: Sinh viên đại học (SV), học viên sau đại học (HV) và nghiên cứu sinh (NCS) Việt Nam phải đáp ứng yêu cầu ngày càng cao về việc viết văn bản khoa học bằng tiếng Anh phục vụ công tác học tập, nghiên cứu và chuyên môn của mình. Nghiên cứu này xác định các loại văn bản viết bằng tiếng Anh mà HV & NCS phải viết trong quá trình học tập, khảo sát nhận thức hoặc thái độ của họ đối với những loại văn bản đó. Sử dụng bảng phân loại thể loại văn bản khoa học trong Khối liệu tiếng Anh văn bản học thuật của Anh (BAWE), 10 HV & NCS trong nghiên cứu này cho thấy trải nghiệm về thể loại của họ ở các bậc học trước đã được chuẩn hóa mạnh mẽ như thế nào. Ở bậc đại học, SV chuyên và không chuyên tiếng Anh, hoặc SV sử dụng tiếng Anh làm phương tiện dạy-học phải viết nhiều thể loại khác nhau. Ở bậc sau đại học, HV & NCS tất cả các ngành cũng phải viết một số thể loại nhất định, đặc biệt là báo cáo nghiên cứu khoa học bằng tiếng Anh. Thái độ của họ đối với các loại hình văn bản này chịu ảnh hưởng của công sức bỏ ra và kết quả thu được, cũng như mức độ được chuẩn bị để viết loại văn bản yêu cầu. Nhiều thách thức lớn trong việc viết văn bản khoa học được HV & NCS chỉ ra qua các bản tự thuật cũng như phương pháp tư duy thành lời (think-aloud protocol). Nhiều HV & NCS cảm thấy chưa được chuẩn bị đầy đủ để viết các văn bản khoa học theo yêu cầu, kể cả đòi hỏi về vốn từ vựng khoa học cũng như tư duy phê phán. Những phát hiện qua nghiên cứu này cho thấy HV & NCS các ngành không chuyên tiếng Anh (đặc biệt là các ngành khoa học cơ bản) có thể sẽ được chuẩn bị tốt hơn nếu giáo viên áp dụng phương thức tiếp cận thể loại khi giảng dạy ở những năm cuối bậc đại học hoặc ngay từ đầu chương trình sau đại học.

Từ khóa: thể loại văn bản khoa học, hiểu biết khoa học, văn bản khoa học ở đại học Việt Nam, khối liệu BAWE

APPENDIX A

Adapted version of Gardner and Nesi's (2013) genre categories

Type of writing	Purpose	Examples of writing
Case study	To show understanding of professional practice by analysing a single or just one example. Includes a description of one person or one organisation with recommendations or suggestions for future action. Often used in Business, Medicine or Engineering.	▪ Business start-up company report ▪ Organisation analysis ▪ Patient report
Critique	To show understanding a topic by evaluating it and assessing why it is important or useful. This might include a description, maybe some explanation and evaluation.	▪ Academic paper review ▪ Approach evaluation ▪ Business/ organisation evaluation ▪ Financial report evaluation ▪ Interpretation of results ▪ Legislation evaluation ▪ Policy evaluation ▪ Product/ building evaluation ▪ Project evaluation ▪ Review of a book/ film/ play website ▪ System evaluation ▪ Teaching evaluation
Specification Design	To show the ability to design a product or a procedure that could be manufactured or used by others. This might include writing about its purposes, how the design was developed and how it was tested.	▪ Application design ▪ Buidling design ▪ Database design ▪ Game design ▪ Label design ▪ Product design ▪ System design ▪ Website design
Empathy Writing	To show understanding of academic ideas by translating them into a non-academic writing, for example – a letter or a newspaper article.	▪ Expert advice to industry ▪ Expert advice to members of the public ▪ Information leaflet ▪ Job application ▪ Letter to a friend ▪ News report

Essay	To show ability to create an argument and use critical thinking skills. This includes an introduction, main arguments and conclusion.	▪ Compare and contrast ▪ Discuss
Exercise	To give practice in key skills and show what has been learnt.	▪ Calculation ▪ Data analysis mixed (e.g. calculations + short answers). ▪ Short answers to questions ▪ Statistics exercise ▪ Fill the gaps
Explanation	To show understanding of a topic by describing it and writing why it is important.	▪ Business explanation ▪ Instrument description ▪ Methodology explanation ▪ Organism/ disease account ▪ Site/ environment report ▪ Species/ breed description system ▪ Process explanation ▪ Account of natural phenomenon
Literature Survey	To show knowledge of important literature in the topic maybe with some evaluation of the literature.	▪ Literature review ▪ Literature overview ▪ Research methods review ▪ Analytical bibliography ▪ Annotated bibliography ▪ Anthology ▪ Review article
Methodology Recount	To show knowledge of procedures, methods and how to record experimental findings. Includes a decription of the procedures used.	▪ Research methods report ▪ Experimental report ▪ Lab report ▪ Field report ▪ Computer analysis report ▪ Data analysis report ▪ Materials selection report ▪ Program development report
Narrative Recount	To show awareness of the motives and or behaviour of people and organisations. This can be a fictional of factual recount of events.	▪ Reflective recount ▪ Biography ▪ Character outline e.g. person in a story ▪ Plot synopsis ▪ Report of disease breakout ▪ Accident report ▪ Account of literature search ▪ Account of website search

Problem Question	To give practice in solving professional problems. This may involve being given a scenario and then offering possible solutions.	▪ Business scenario ▪ Law problem question ▪ Logistics simulation
Proposal	To show planning of action for the future. This might include the purpose, detailed plan and persuasive argumentation.	▪ Book proposal ▪ Buildng proposal ▪ Business plan ▪ Catering plan ▪ Legislation reform ▪ Marketing plan ▪ Policy proposal ▪ Research proposal
Research Report	To show ability to complete a piece of research, including research design and an appreciation of significance in the field. Includes research aim/ question, investigation, links and relevance to other research in the field.	▪ Research article ▪ Student research project ▪ Topic based dissertation or thesis

APPENDIX B

Plakans' (2008) Writing-only Think Aloud Task 1

"Most cultures have borrowed from other cultures. Choose a country that you are familiar with and write about something borrowed from another culture. Consider if this borrowing has been helpful or harmful. Write an essay on this topic."

Plakans' (2008) Reading-Writing Think Aloud Task 2

"Globalisation has had a strong impact on the world. One issue of globalisation is cultural borrowing or adaptation. Read the following passages about this issue. Then consider your opinion about the impact of globalization on culture. Write an essay supporting your position and using examples."

INSIGHTS INTO INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATION: A SYNTHESIS OF MOVE-BASED LITERATURE ON THE RESEARCH ARTICLE GENRE

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Abstract: Ever since Swales' (1981/1990) work on the research article (RA), this genre has been subject to copious investigation in the past three decades. This attraction is due to both its highly valued status as a means of disseminating academic knowledge and the high pressure on part of the university staff and PhD students to have publications in international journals in many countries where English is not a native language. This paper reviews the literature on genre/move-based investigations into writing for international publication. The three areas of focus are the rhetorical structures, the linguistics features, and the cross-cultural comparisons of these two aspects. The synthesis provides a detailed account of both consistencies and inconsistencies to the conventional structures, as well as of the similarities and differences in the linguistic realizations, across various disciplines and cultures.**

Keywords: research article, genre analysis, move analysis, international publication

1. Introduction

As a widely used genre of building and disseminating academic knowledge, research article (RA) is one of the most important genres in academic communities. RA is considered "key medium for the legitimating of claims and of disciplines" (Hyland, 1996: 252). Swales (1990: 7) states, "publication can be seen as documentary evidence that the writer qualifies for membership in the target discourse community". However, writing a RA is a formidable endeavor as it requires scholars to be knowledgeable to establish the importance of their research and to be familiar with the presentation norms of their discourse communities. As Lim (2006) noted, "RAs are generally considered a genre that embodies stringent academic requirements in terms of both textual organization and linguistic choices".

Despite the many inherent challenges of writing RAs, and given the "Anglo-American dominated scientific discourse community" (Li, 2007), non-Anglophone scholars have been increasingly pressured to publish in international journals. With the aim of promoting the country's share of global research output, the academic evaluation systems in many countries have

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imposed policies to promote publications in international journals. The publication of RAs in international journals, particularly those indexed in the ISI-Web of Science, has been a major criterion for evaluating the academic performance of university staff. For graduate students, particularly at the doctoral level, publication in specialist English-medium journals is also set as a graduation requirement in multiple universities in many non-native English speaking (NNES) countries, such as China, Taiwan, Japan, or Turkey (Huang, 2010, 2014; Isık-Tas, 2018; Li, 2007). For instance, very recently, in line with these policies, Vietnam has issued a centralized criterion for academic promotion in 2018 which dictates a minimum of two and three RAs published in a prestigious, established international journal as one of several requirements for promotion to associate professor and professor, respectively, in all disciplines.

In response to these pressures and to facilitate the entry of novice NNES scholars to the highly selective academic discourse community, the barriers to successful submission to English-medium journals have been subject to copious investigation. Some researchers (e.g. Flowerdew, 1999; Li, 2007; Huang, 2010, 2014) have noted that it is much more challenging for NNES scholars to get their work published in refereed journals than English native speakers. Ventola's (1992) investigation revealed some of the intercultural challenges facing the Finnish writers such as problems with theme-rheme patterns, with consistent tracking of participants with reference items, and with the use of various connectors. Through in-depth interviews, Flowerdew (1999) identified a range of problems which confront Hong Kong Chinese scholars in writing for publication in English and which they feel put them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis native speakers of that language. A number of key areas are identified: they have a less rich vocabulary; they find it difficult to make claims for their research with the appropriate amount of force; their process of composition may be influenced by their L1; qualitative articles are more problematic than quantitative articles; they are restricted to a simple style; and the introductions and discussions to scholarly articles are particularly problematic parts. Huang's (2010) study involved eleven PhD/Post Doc students and three professors who came from eight disciplines and ten academic institutions in Taiwan. Huang investigated their perceptions of publishing and learning to write for publication in English. The findings show that these students regard themselves as disadvantaged due to their limited proficiency in English. In addition, the nonnative English-speaking PhD students' disinclination to learn to write for publication is influenced by many factors other than perceived language incompetence.

Of the works addressing the needs of advanced non-native English speakers who learn to read and write RAs, the most influential work is undoubtedly Swales' (1981, 1990). Later on, Swales' framework was revised by himself (Swales, 2004) and extended by other scholars. Swales' work has had a tremendous influence on the studies on RAs. During the past four decades, research into this genre has flourished, basing on Swales' move-based model. These studies have investigated how the writers organize their RAs to communicate its rhetorical purposes and/or what linguistic features the writers use to realize the communicative purposes. The conventional sections of the RA have been extensively investigated, such as Introduction section (e.g. Ozturk, 2007; Kanoksilapatham, 2011), Methods section (e.g. Lim, 2006; Peacock, 2011; Cotos et al, 2017), Results section (e.g. Brett, 1994; Lim, 2011.), Discussion section (e.g. Holmes, 1997; Dobakhi, 2016). Beside the studies which treat each RA section as an independent entity, there is a growing body of research into the complete RAs (e.g. Kwan, 2017; Tessuto, 2015; Fazilatfar & Naseri, 2014; Nwogu, 1997), across diverse disciplines. Some others, still, adopting a cross-cultural stance, focused on macro- or micro- features of the RA (e.g. Mahzari & Maftoon, 2016; Elvan & Isık-Tas, 2017).

This multi-dimensional area of research over a forty-year span appears to necessitate a detailed synthesis of the existing relevant studies. Drawing on the voluminous literature on genre-based studies, this paper is practically motivated and the aim is two-fold. First, as a comprehensive but necessarily concise account of RA, it illuminates the path for those inspired to conduct research into this fruitful genre. Second, as a thorough description of the rhetorical structures and functions and the linguistic characteristics of RA cross disciplines, it is significantly beneficial to novice NNES scholars concerned with writing for international publication.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. Section 2 will provide an overview of the Swales' two-layered move/step model of the RA. Section 3 will summarize the literature in three main lines – (1) the rhetorical structure, in terms of the organization of the RA in entirety and of the individual sections, as well as combinations of two or three consecutive sections; (2) the linguistic features characteristic of the communicative purposes; and (3) both these areas of concern from a cross-cultural perspective. The last section will conclude the paper with some implications for ESP pedagogy and future research.

2. Genre analysis and move-based analysis

Genre is defined as a social practice of using language recognized by a discourse community in which its members engage to mark their membership (Swales, 1990). It is based on the assumptions that the features shared among a group of texts depend on the social context of use, and that those features can be delineated in a way that relates a text to the ones similar and to the constraints acting on the producers (Hyland, 2003). Genre theory is generally referred in three broad schools. The New Rhetoric approach focuses mainly on the rhetorical contexts in which genres are employed. The ESP approach sees genre as a class of structured communicative events used by specific discourse communities whose members share broad social purposes (Swales, 1990: 45-47). A third school, based on Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), stresses the purposeful, interactive, and sequential character of different genres and the ways language is systematically linked to context through patterns of lexico-grammatical and rhetorical features (Christie & Martin, 1997).

Genre analysis (GA) readily lends itself to the pedagogic concerns of those involved in the ESP and EAP classrooms. The rhetorical functions and their linguistic exponents can be purposefully exploited through tasks and materials which directly reflect those texts that learners have to comprehend and produce (Brett, 1994). With generic awareness, ESP students, especially post-graduates, and novice writers can better understand and generate complex genres to be a member of their academic community (Bhatia, 1997; Hyland, 2002). Dudley-Evans (2000) emphasized, "The Moves and Steps that Swales (1990) suggests for the article introduction marries the textual awareness of the register analysts with a much broader view of how rhetorical considerations govern grammatical choice. […]. The interest in discourse community and how the expectations and conventions of different discourse communities mould the texts that they use has led to this broader view and placed ESP research in a position where it can make a meaningful contribution to discussion of how ideas are disseminated and facts created in communities.” (Dudley-Evans, 2000)

One of the genre-based approaches used to identify the rhetorical schema of RAs is ‘move analysis’ (Swales, 1981, 1990, 2004). Swales’ (1981, 1990, 2004) pioneering work focused on the RA, and in particular the introduction section, known as *Creating a Research Space* model (the CARS model) (Table 1). The model consists of three Moves and a number of Steps used to realize express each move. The illustrations of complete introductions in terms of Moves and Steps can be found in Ozturk (2007) or Kanoksilapatham (2011). The model captures the ways in which academic writers justify, highlight, and present their own contribution to the ongoing research profile of the field (Dudley-Evans, 2000) by first establishing the topic, then justifying the present study and finally describing the present study. Swales’ seminal model has become a powerful tool in RA analysis because it provides insights into key characteristics of the genre, including the organizational structure as well as linguistic features.

Table 1. Modified CARS by Swales (2004) model

MOVE 1	**ESTABLISHING A TERRITORY**	
	Step 1-1	Claiming centrality and/or
	Step 1-2	Making topic generalizations and/or
	Step 1-3	Reviewing items of previous research
MOVE 2	**ESTABLISHING A NICHE**	
	Step 2-1A	Indicating a gap or
	Step 2-2B	Adding to what is known
	Step 2-2	Presenting positive justifications
MOVE 3	**PRESENTING THE PRESENT WORK**	
	Step 3-1	Announcing present research descriptively and/or purposively
	Step 3-2	Presenting RQs or hypotheses
	Step 3-3	Definitional clarifications
	Step 3-4	Summarizing methods
	Step 3-5	Announcing principal outcomes
	Step 3-6	Stating the value of the present research
	Step 3-7	Outlining the structure of the paper

The units of analysis are ‘Move’ and ‘Step’ (Swales, 1990). A Move is “a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in written or spoken discourse” (Swales, 2004: 29). It is ‘‘a segment of text that is shaped and constrained by a specific communicative function’’ (Holmes, 1997). Nwogu further specifies this semantic unit as "a text segment made up of a bundle of linguistic features (lexical meanings, propositional meanings, illocutionary forces, etc.) which gives the segment a uniform orientation and signals the content of discourse in it" (1997: 114). Pho (2008a) claimed "each move has its own communicative purpose, which, together with other moves, contributes to the general communicative purpose of the text" (p. 17). A Move can be realized by either one Step, which is the rhetorical techniques realizing the function of Move, or a combination of Steps. This two-layer analysis in terms of Move and Step, is seen as a "robust method of genre analysis" as while Move captures the communicative function of a segment of text at a more general level, Step spells out more specifically the means to realizing the rhetorical purpose of Move (Ruiying and Allison, 2003). Ruiying and Allison (2003) clarify, "The set of Steps for a Move is the set of rhetorical choices most commonly available to RA authors to realize a certain purpose. The order of Steps presented in each Move only shows a preferred sequence for the choices to occur when in combination".

Although it was acknowledged that there may be some differences between disciplines, the initial work on Move and Step analysis suggested that the models proposed were generalized and can be applied to RAs in all academic disciplines; actual RAs will vary in the degree to which they conform with these prototypes. What has become clear, still, is that disciplinary variation tends to be highly significant, as will be reviewed in the following sections.

3. Review of research into the RA genre

The constraint of an article precludes an all-rounded review of the voluminous literature growing over a span of nearly four decades. This section will therefore address the three most pertinent features – the rhetorical structure and the associated communicative functions, the linguistic features, and these two dimensions from a cross-cultural perspective.

3.1. Rhetorical structures of RAs

The growing concern for this important genre has attracted research into its structural and linguistic features of the RA in a very wide range of disciplines. The largest number chose to analyze only the RAs in just one single discipline, such as Agricultural Economics (Holmes, 2000); Applied Linguistics (e.g. Yang & Allison, 2003, 2004; Ozturk, 2007; Dujsik, 2013; Amnuai & Wannaruk, 2013; Fazilatfar & Naseri, 2014; Le & Harrington, 2015; Dobakhi, 2016); Biochemistry (e.g. Thompson, 1993; Kanoksilapatham, 2005); Biology (Martinez, 2003); Business and economics (Moreno, 1997, 1998); Chemistry (Li, 2007); Civil engineering (Kanoksilapatham, 2011); Computer (Posteguillo, 1998; Ershadi & Farnia, 2015); Education (Rahman et al, 2012); ELT (Jaroongkhongdach, et al. 012); Environmental studies (Paltridge, 1993); Exercise Physiology (Huang, 2014); Information System (Kwan, 2017); Law (Tessuto, 2015); Management (Lim, 2006); Mathematics (2013 Grave et al); Medicine (Nwogu, 1997; ElMalik & Nesi, 2008; Li & Ge, 2009; Mahzari & Maftoon, 2016); Physics (Parkinson, 2011); Sociology (Brett, 1994; Elvan Eda Is & ik-Tas, 2017).

The systematic and detailed investigations into the rhetorical structure of most studies have yielded the move/step schemas models for the disciplines in focus, such as Samraj's (2002) model of Introduction section, Cotos et al's (2017) model of Methods section, Brett's (1994), Tessuto's (2015), and Thompson's

(1993) models of Results section, Peacock's (2002), Dobakhti's (2016), Yang & Allison's (2003) models of Discussions section, and Nwogu's (1997), Kanoksilapatham's (2005), and Pho's (2008a) models of the whole RA, in a number of disciplines. For instance, Kanoksilapatham (2005) reports on the results of a move analysis of 60 biochemistry RAs and proposed a two-level rhetorical structure consisting of 15 distinct moves: three moves for the Introduction section, four for the Methods section, four for the Results section, and four for the Discussion section. The Moves and Steps in these models are also specified in terms of obligatory status. For example, in his study of the structure of medical RAs, Nwogu (1997) examined the whole body of 15 medical RAs from five authoritative medical journals. He developed a schema of 11 moves, eight of which he described as "normally required" (also known as "obligatory") and three of which as "optional". The "obligatory" moves constitute the limits of a genre and give a pattern of communication its identity, without which a genre would lose its integrity, while the "optional" moves are available choices authors or speakers may choose to use. Each move embodies "constituent elements" or "sub-moves" (also known as steps) and is characterized by some distinct linguistic features.

Rather than focusing on one field, some studies are also concerned with a number of disciplines. Gosden (1992) investigated the hard sciences – physics, chemistry, and biology; Holmes (1997) with three social sciences – history, political science, and sociology; Samraj (2002) with Wildlife Behavior and Conservation Biology; Ryvityte (2003) with medicine, economics, and linguistics; Lim (2011) with Applied Linguistics and Education. Peacock's (2002) studies dealt with a corpus of up to seven disciplines - Physics, Biology, Environmental Science, Business, Language & Linguistics, Public and Social Administration, and Law from 252 RAs (1.4 million- word corpus), and in his latter (Peacock, 2011) with 8 disciplines from 288 RAs (with the addition of Chemistry).

More recently, with corpus linguistics, the number of disciplines, and along with it the number of texts, has tended to be larger. Of special interest is Cortes' (2013) investigation involving as many as 13 disciplines – Agronomy, Applied Linguistics, Animal Science, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Civil and Materials Engineering, Communication Studies, Computer science, Economics, Physics and Astronomy, Statistics, Urban and Regional Planning. The most sophisticated in terms of size and methodology so far lies with the project conducted by Cotos et al (2017), who explored the Methods sections of a corpus of nine hundred texts representative of thirty academic fields. The analysis resulted in a comprehensive cross-disciplinary model, called Demonstrating Rigour and Credibility (DRaC). The model contains three moves and sixteen steps, which are defined in terms of functional and content realizations. DRaC further served as the analytic framework for corpus annotation. Additionally, the analytic framework allowed for intra- and cross-disciplinary comparisons and valuation by experts in the disciplines.

Overall, the findings show how RAs both draw upon and vary from the conventional Introduction – Method – Results – Discussion (IMRD) framework. It seems legitimate to accept that most RAs broadly reflect major aspects of the IMRD macro-structure (Brett, 1994; Holmes, 1997; Nwogu, 1997). These sections differ in terms of their primary communicative purposes, and this generally motivates the use of different section headings.

Nonetheless, while there is little doubt that the IMRD and CARS models are commonly found to some extent in its pure form in many disciplines, many researchers have reported remarkable deviations in some cases. The most noticeable seems to lie with the RAs in Mathematics. Graves, Moghaddasi, and Hashim (2013) report the macro-organizational structure of RAs in mathematics, based on an analysis of 30 pure and applied mathematics articles. They show that Mathematics RAs do not follow the organizational pattern of the IMRD framework, but depart considerably from it for an Introduction-Results model to enable researchers to present new knowledge as clearly and succinctly as possible. Method section is notably absent due to the well-established methodology (deduction and induction) used in the field and Discussion section required to interpret research findings is relatively uncommon. Similarly, Posteguillo (1998) presents the results which indicate that the IMRD pattern cannot be applied to RAs in computer science systematically: while Introductory and Conclusion sections are used in most instances, it is the central part of these articles which seems to depart more from the IMRD pattern.

Another detailed presentation of key variations at the macro level comes in Yang & Allison's (2004) work. They found the frequent occurrence of separate sections for Theoretical Basis, Literature Review, and Research Questions between Introduction and Method as well as a separate closing section of Pedagogic Implications, which represents noteworthy feature of the discipline of applied linguistics. The findings are consistent with Holmes (1997) on sociology and political science RAs. He reported the existence of an extensive section dealing with theoretical background, previous literature and general topical information after the Introduction section in political science and sociology RAs. The researchers argued that this could possibly be considered as a structural feature common among most social science RAs. The emphasis on theory as reflected in the macro-structure may be due to the lack of widely accepted consensus on some theories or concepts in the discipline. The authors in the social sciences are also more likely to recommend potential research directions more frequently than those in the hard sciences.

Regarding the lower levels, some studies following Swales' work on Moves and Steps have begun to find regular and systematic deviations in the patterns found in various disciplines. The RAs writers can choose to omit a particular Move or vary the order of Moves or Steps. The results of previous research indicate the existence of disciplinary variation, most notably between social sciences and hard sciences. For example, the employment of *Recommending further studies* varied in its frequency between hard and soft sciences. In hard science, its frequency was 40% in a Medical corpus (ElMalik & Nesis's, 2008), 46.15 % in a biochemistry corpus (Kanoksilapatham, 2005), and 58.82% in a computer science corpus (Posteguillo, 1998). In soft science, the frequency of this step was as high as 70% study on applied linguistics (Amirian et al., 2008).

A very detailed presentation of disciplinary variation is Peacock's (2002). In an intensive study of a 1.4 million-word corpus, involving seven disciplines, Peacock (2002) reported that there were clear interdisciplinary differences in the number of moves and types of moves, and cycles of moves used. Particularly, the authors in Physics and Environmental Science made only around half of the moves found. There were also marked differences in the type of moves used in these two disciplines: *referring to previous research*, *describing limitations*, and *making recommendations for further research* were less common. Another clear disciplinary convention was that *Background about theory* is more frequent in Biology and Physics, and less frequent in Environmental Science and Language and Linguistics. Reference to previous research appeared to be more important in Language and Linguistics. The findings also revealed differences in the type of move cycles used. For example, the cycle *unexpected outcome(s) + reason(s) for unexpected outcome(s)* was very common in Biology, Physics, and Environmental Science but rare in the other four disciplines. Peacock (2002: 490-491) maintains,

> It is not easy to explain these discipline differences. RA authors seek acceptance and appeal to their audience (editors and readers) to claim membership of their discourse community and face sanctions – rejection and/or questioning of claims – if they step far outside discipline conventions. Much might depend on publication and peer acceptance, and the potential sanctions of rejected papers and claims may strongly motivate authors to follow discipline conventions."

The researchers concluded that the differences reflect rhetorical disciplinary constraints and that the patterns found are accepted within the particular disciplines as being the recognized way for writers to persuade readers of the validity of their data and conclusions (Peacock, 2002).

Kanoksilapatham (2005) reports a move which is claimed to be unique in biochemistry RAs. Basing on the results of a move analysis of 60 biochemistry RAs, the researcher identified Move *Justifying procedures or methodology,* which provides the rationale for the scientists' decision to use particular experimental methods, procedures, or techniques. This move can be expressed by two steps, which are either *citing established knowledge of the procedure* or *referring to previous research.* Kanoksilapatham (2005) also stated that her finding was consistent with that of Thompson (1993) who identified this move in 93.75% of 16 RAs analyzed. Another unique feature of biochemistry RAs is that both *Contextualizing the study* and *Consolidating results* are obligatory. According to the researcher, these features are emphasized due to "scientists' sensitivity to carefully situating their work in the interest of their discourse community; this allows the scientists' studies to be scrutinized with respect to their contributions to their field".

Not only across different disciplines are there differences in the organization of information but also across the sub-fields of a discipline variations can be noticeable. Dobakhti's (2016) study suggests that whether the research design is qualitative or quantitative influences the conventions and norms of RAs in Applied Linguistics. The paper reports that there are similarities and differences between the move structure of the Discussion section of qualitative RAs and that concerning empirical RAs. The most significant difference was the continuous reference of qualitative RA writers to their data. The analysis revealed one new move appearing after the writers stated their findings, in which the writers referred to their data to provide evidence and support their findings. Another new move found was *Supporting the Explanation/ Interpretation/ Evaluation/ Rejected Explanation* where the writers provided evidence for their comments on findings by referring to their data and/or literature.

For more into disciplinary similarities and variations, a summary to contrast of the move/step schemas for the Methods section from some previous studies and the clusters of disciplines similar in the use of steps can be found in Cotos et al (2017).

3.2. Linguistic features of moves/steps

The linguistic features intertwined with the communicative functions of each move/step were the focus of some early studies. It is pedagogically motivated because of the implication that certain key grammatical features are vital in ESP work and that other grammatical features of little relevance to ESP work can be ignored (Dudley-Evans, 2000).

A majority of research adopted the traditional terms and their analyses were mostly based on the descriptions of English usage presented by Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik (1985), Greenbaum and Quirk (1992), or Downing and Locke (1995). Swales (1990) analyzed the texts manually to identify linguistic features in the CARS model. For instance, *Establishing a territory* was realized by an evaluative statement of importance or interest to the field (such as *it is well-known that…*), time references to previous research (such as *recently*) and reporting verbs (such as *show, claim*). Lim (2006) conducted an analysis of the relationships between rhetorical categories and salient linguistic features in the Method section of the Management RAs. In a subsequent study, Lim (2010) identified the salient linguistic choices employed to comment in the Results section of applied linguistics and education RAs; for instance, *Explaining the findings* was characterized by the occurrence of reason adverbials (*because, since…*). Other studies focused on describing particular lexico-grammatical features such as distributions of noun phrases and hedging devices (ElMalik & Nesi, 2008), tenses and first-person pronouns (Li & Ge, 2009), lexico-grammatical resources to argue and prove knowledge claims (Parkinson, 2011), or lexical choices and semantic categories of major word classes based on the work of Biber (2006) (Rahman et al, 2012). Similarly, using a corpus of management RAs, Lim (2008) examined how experienced writers use various rhetorical and linguistic strategies to accentuate the positive contributions of their research in the terminal portions of their papers. Prior studies in this vein have focused on the various linguistic resources that are used to display writer identity in RAs, such as hedges, epistemic modality, evaluative adjectives, and attitude markers.

Another line of research draws on Systemic Functional theory of language to investigate the relationship between language form and rhetorical function in RAs. These studies described the manipulation of marked theme (Gosden, 1992), unmarked theme, (Gosden, 1993), Transitivity system (Paltridge, 1993), or Thematic structure (Martinez, 2003). Gosden (1992) explores the potential for within-text structuring of marked themes and indicates that thematic flow can be predicted on the basis of the rhetorical goals in each section of RAs. Paltridge's (1993) analysis looked at the nature and structure of the transitivity system, *the experiential* system in terms of the process types, participants and circumstances involved in the individual clauses of the texts. Martinez (2003) analyzed the unmarked themes in the Methods section and the Discussions section of a corpus of 30 biology RAs. The study revealed differences in the thematic construction of the sections. The Method section was dominated by simple themes, realized by subjects that predominantly represented objects of the research. The few textual themes found were mainly temporal external themes. The simple themes of the Discussion were mainly realized by subjects that represented abstractions, particularly epistemic concepts. In this section, there was an important proportion of textual and interpersonal themes. The researcher attributed the differences to the different rhetorical purposes of the sections, which materialize in descriptive texts in the Method section and the argumentative texts in the Discussion section.

The salient linguistic features of RAs have also been captured from the phraseological patterns or lexical bundles theory with the employment of the corpus linguistic approach. Most notably, Cortes (2013) identified lexical bundles in the RA Introductions of thirteen disciplines. She further classified these bundles structurally and functionally to match to the moves and steps outlined in Swales's (2004) rhetorical framework of the Introduction. The results showed that a group of lexical bundles were exclusively linked to one move or step in a move while a second group occurred across several moves and steps. In addition, some of these expressions were "used to trigger the steps" calling for their use while others complemented other expressions and were used as comments. In this vein, Le and Harrison's (2015) paper provided a detailed account of how word clusters were used in three Steps of the *Commenting on results Move*: *Interpreting results, Comparing results* and *Accounting for results* in the Discussion section of quantitative research articles in the field of applied linguistics. The corpus linguistic approach was adopted to identify clusters in 124 Discussion texts from leading journals. A detailed description of the linguistic features, the internal structure and communicative functions of specific Steps were also presented based on the concordance analysis of the clusters. The findings further suggest that the use of specific clusters strongly manifests, and is conditioned by, the main communicative function of the Discussion section.

3.3. The RAs from a cross-cultural perspective

Also, studies on move-based analyses have been extended to compare the rhetorical moves and linguistic features of RAs in English with those in other languages, such as Chinese (Taylor & Chen, 1991), Thai (Amnuai & Wannaruk, 2013), Indonesian (Rahman et al, 2012), Turkish (Elvan Eda Is & ık-Tas, 2017), Spanish (Moreno, 1997, 1998), Lithuanian (Ryvityte, 2003), Sudanese (ElMalik & Nesi, 2008), Iranian (Fazilatfar & Naseri, 2014), Persian (Ershadi & Farnia, 2015) or Malaysian (Ahmad, 1997).

Amnuai & Wannaruk (2013) investigated the move structure of the Discussions section in English and Thai Applied Linguistics RAs. The findings displayed both similarities and differences regarding the move occurrence, move-ordering patterns, and move cyclicity. Similarly, Taylor and Chen (1991) found that Chinese scholars would hesitate to use *Indicating a gap* in their Introductions, which may be due to their perception of this move as fault-finding and potentially face-threatening to readers. Similarly, Ahmad (1997) found that Malaysian scholars tend to avoid this move. Ahmad (1997) maintained that if employed, this move is not to indicate the gap but to justify the need to conduct studies previously conducted in other countries but still unresearched in the local context. This move thus shows the vital role of socio-cultural factors in determining the rhetorical structure of RAs. Peacock's (2002) analysis unfolded various differences between native speakers' and non-native speakers' RAs in the number and type of moves and move cycles. The researcher also noted that they were "fairly sharply split along discipline lines". Native authors in Physics, Biology, and Environment Science made *Claim of generalization arising from the results/ contribution to research* more often than non-native authors. English native authors in Physics and Biology also made *Limitation* more often than non-native authors. In contrast, non-native authors in all three humanities (Business, Language and Linguistics, and Public and Social Administration) made *Recommendations for future research* much less often. Non-native authors in all three sciences had a much stronger tendency to use the move cycle *[un] expected outcome + explanation* than did native authors.

Equally detailed, Rahman et al (2012) report several differences in the Introduction between English and Indonesian RAs. At the macro level, the English RAs respectively have a higher proportion of *Reviewing previous research*, *Indicating gap*, and *Summarizing methods*. By contrast, their Indonesian counterparts use a greater deal with *making topic generalizations, presenting positive justifications*, and *stating the value of the present research*. Additionally, while the Indonesian RAs have more unidentified schematic elements and lack outlining the structure of paper, the English RAs display a larger proportion of move reiteration. At the micro level, while the English papers are featured with the strategies of self-mention, their Indonesian counterparts are characterized by the lack of self-mention. The researchers argued that these differences might be partially influenced by the writers' culture, knowledge, editorial policy, and social environment.

4. Implications

Space constraints precludes more details of the wealth of issues covered the literature relating to the RA genre in the past nearly four decades. It is nonetheless hoped that the synthesis is of practical significance to both ESP and EAP pedagogy and to the practice of writing for international publication of the non-Anglophone novice scholars. With the implications provided below for future theoretical research and pedagogical intervention, we have a great deal to look forward notwithstanding this limitation.

Firstly, this review is confined to Swalesian' move/step-based generic structure, which exclusively delineates only four sections – *Introduction, Method, Discussion*, and *Conclusion*. The other constituent sections of RAs are not looked at this this present paper, such as the *Abstracts*, as a conventional obligatory section, and *Highlights*, as a novel periphery section of many academic promotion-oriented publications, which both feature the beginning of most articles (Khedri, Heng & Ebrahimi, 2013; Pho, 2008b; Santos, 1996; Yang, 2016; amongst others). Thus, any comprehensive reviews of literature and empirical investigations on these important sections are highly essential to contribute to the present landscape of this field of study. A limitation to Swalesian's move-based framework in this paper also makes it impossible to cover any account of the equally successfully established model of generic analysis – the *generic structure potential* (GSP), fundamentally based within SFL. Hasan's (1984, 1989) GSP allows one to describe the possibilities of realization of any text type. Further syntheses and/or investigations of the RAs from this perspective must certainly yield rich insights.

Practically, although opponents to ESP undergraduates' genre-based writing courses tend to shed doubt on the effectiveness of decontextualized instruction of generic characteristic features in the classroom and the feasibility of transferring genre knowledge learned in the classroom to authentic writing tasks (Haneda & Wells, 2000; Huang, 2014), it is arguable that the RA genre be an indispensable component in discipline-specific writing courses to L2 graduates and post-graduates in order to facilitate their endeavor to build their membership in their discourse community. A rhetorical knowledge of the schematic organization, moves, and steps can effectively help learners establish a repertoire of structures and become able to exploit these to meet their needs (Hyland, 2007; Huang, 2014; Rahman et al, 2012). The goal of genre-based learning may be not only the development of the awareness of generic features, but also the development of the considerations of the socio-cultural dimensions motivating the generic features. Knowledge of move structure and the associated communicative functions of moves/steps is clearly important for the teaching of ESP. Swales (1990) and many others describe the necessity of using the models as input to provide students with the discipline-specific move structure model. The findings of multiple previous studies reinforce the notion that move structure varies to some extent from discipline to discipline, so the teaching of academic writing will clearly need to reflect this variation. No single model can be considered entirely appropriate for learners in different academic disciplines. The teacher's task is also to assist students towards a command of lexico-grammatical patterns which typically occur in different Moves/Steps through an awareness of target genres. Dudley-Evans (2000) lucidly brought this out,

> It is clearly possible to use the generalized CARS model as the starting point for the teaching of academic writing, particularly if one is teaching heterogeneous groups of students from different disciplines, but with homogeneous groups it may be much more efficient to focus on the specific features of the actual genres that students actually have to read or write. This is especially the case where students are in an EFL situation studying their subject course in their first language. Such students will not have the high proficiency levels in English that most students have in a first or second language situation and will need, in my opinion, a much more straightforwardly linguistic approach based on the actual texts they use. They do not have the linguistic sophistication to deal with issues about the readership and the discourse community in any depth. They need to see how the Moves and Steps work in the genres they use and how they are expressed in English.

Besides, as writing is a socially developed skill, it is essential to address barriers in the socializing process that hinder novice NNES writers from becoming visible in international publication contexts (Isık-Tas¸ 2018). Novice writers may lack basic familiarity with the conventionalized forms of scientific discourse (Cotos et al, 2017). Some researchers point out that genres can only be fully mastered through acquisition. This is a process to acquire the specific genres through natural exposure to their elements and interactions with the very discourse communities. According to Lim (2008), competence and readiness to write an academic genre normally come only after students have acquired sufficient experience in reading relevant texts; thus, order to achieve a level that can enable them to make independent interpretive judgments while writing, students need to study relevant texts prudently and critically through numerous background readings. These measures may present potential advantages for novice researchers in struggling with publishing in English-medium journals.

Finally, knowledge of the generic differences in different disciplines and cultures is pivotal in setting clear learning objectives and designing materials for ESP/ EAP students. The extent to which explicit pedagogy and rich immersion of the RAs can prove efficient to serve as "springboard for novices' understanding and use of genre discourse" (Hyland, 2007), undoubtedly, largely relies on further genre/move-based research into the RAs of students' target disciplines, as well those emerging from student's locally-oriented academic purposes, or those conditioned by students' socio-cultural contexts.

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TÌM HIỂU VỀ CÔNG BỐ QUỐC TẾ: TỔNG QUAN NGHIÊN CỨU VỀ BÀI BÁO KHOA HỌC THEO MÔ HÌNH PHÂN TÍCH CÁC BƯỚC

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Tóm tắt: Bắt đầu từ công trình nền móng của Swales (1981/1990) về bài báo khoa học, thể loại này đã được nghiên cứu sâu rộng trong hơn 3 thập niên qua. Thực tế này xuất phát từ tầm quan trọng trong vai trò trao đổi kiến thức học thuật của các bài báo khoa học, và cũng từ yêu cầu công bố quốc tế được đặt ra cho giới học thuật ở các nước mà tiếng Anh không phải là bản ngữ. Bài báo này trình bày những khía cạnh thiết yếu của các bài báo quốc tế trong nhiều chuyên ngành khác nhau, được tổng hợp từ các công trình nghiên cứu về thể loại này dựa trên mô hình phân tích các bước thoại của Swales. Bài báo tập trung vào (1) cấu trúc diễn đạt và các mục đích giao tiếp, (2) các đặc trưng ngữ pháp - từ vựng của các bước thoại, và (3) những so sánh đối chiếu 2 khía cạnh này giữa các bài báo quốc tế bằng tiếng Anh và bằng các ngôn ngữ khác.

Từ khóa: bài báo khoa học, phân tích thể loại, phân tích bước thoại, công bố quốc tế

EMBARKING ON RESEARCH IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES: UNDERSTANDING THE FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

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Abstract: Written primarily for new or early-career researchers and postgraduate students, this paper problematises some of the foundational concepts any beginning researcher will come across when conducting research for the first time. Understanding the oft-confused, abstract, yet important notions of ontology, epistemology and paradigms can be a daunting obstacle in the experience of a new researcher, yet there are nearly no ways of sidelining these if we were to meaningfully plan, construct and execute our research. Through familiar examples, this article engages in discussing the research approach and design and how these are grounded in the ways a researcher thinks about and understands the world - in other words, how their ontological and epistemological positions determine the methodological choices they make. As well as problematising these concepts, the article also compares the qualitative and quantitative approaches, and critically considers how, in some ways, qualitative studies can yield richer results in the social science disciplines, including in Education.**

Keywords: research, education research, ontology, epistemology, axiology, paradigm, objectivism, positivism, constructivism, interpretivism, methodology, method

1. Introduction: Situating research

This paper is written for beginning or early-career researchers and postgraduate students to clarify - as simply as possible - the fundamental terms that are essential to conducting research. Needless to say, there are entire books written on this topic - see, for example, Boden, Kenway and Epstein's (2005) lucidly written *Getting Started on Research*. While brief and occasionally simplistic, the beginning researcher will nonetheless find the discussions useful in understanding how the most common abstract terms and concepts fit together, and based on these, they can make wise decisions about their research.

Social sciences are founded on various systems of concepts and in conducting research it is important for these systems to be coherent and consistent, especially because these research-related terms and concepts are understood and defined differently by different scholars. In the social sciences it is pointless to settle on whose conceptualisation is 'true' or 'false' based solely on the reasoning one offers. Concepts, after all, are tools to understand realities and abstractions, but they are not the realities or abstractions themselves. The researcher's task is to choose concepts that are useful for a certain purpose

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and to apply them in ways that are coherent, rigorous and well justified.

In this paper, I first discuss what academic research is, and how theories, and theoretical and conceptual frameworks are essential components of research. I then discuss the philosophical foundations of research – ontology, epistemology and methodology. Finally moving on to the more practical side of research, I draw brief comparisons between quantitative and qualitative research, showing how our approach is best determined by not just the research questions we have sought to answer, but also by our worldviews and our epistemological stance. I also highlight ways in which qualitative studies can yield richer results in the social science disciplines. In this paper academic research includes teacher- or action research, as well as Masters or PhD research (graduate research).

2. Why research?

It is first important to distinguish everyday research from *academic* research. One could quite rightly say that we do research on a daily basis – whether it is when we buy a mobile phone, choose a restaurant for a special dinner, or indeed decide which the best place for *phở* in Hanoi is. In all these cases, there is some investigation, gathering of information, comparison, and then coming to conclusions. In all cases, the objective is to come to an informed decision, a well-considered conclusion, to solve a problem, or simply to seek answers to a question. It is obvious, however, that such everyday research is done for pragmatic reasons, rather than to 'create' knowledge, or to disseminate our findings in a way that will enrich existing knowledge.

On the other hand, ***academic* research**, often referred to as "scholarly" research, is much more than this. Academic research usually involves some background work – from administrative paperwork (such as ethics applications, permissions, explanatory statements and consent forms) to a more accountable and well-rationalised approach to analysing and interpreting data (Chowdhury, 2018a, p. 167). One could say, academic research is a *disciplined* and *methodical* way of seeking answers. When published, it is also subject to greater critical scrutiny in terms of its credibility, trustworthiness, validity, reliability and rigour.

3. The limitations of relying on 'common sense'

Let us then start with a consideration of why scholarly research is needed, at all. Why, for example, is it not sufficient for researchers, to base their decisions and solutions on common sense, experience, observations, and logic? Weis and Fine (2002, p. 60) warn that common sense is insufficient in informing our practices - not just because it is fluid, often uninformed and based on intuition, but because subjective biases, prejudices and ideological conflicts come into play when we rely solely on common sense to come to decisions and conclusions:

> We take for granted that the purpose of social inquiry at the turn of the century is not only to generate new knowledge but to reform "common sense" and critically inform public policies, existent social movements, and daily community life. A commitment to such "application," however, should not be taken for granted. This is a critical moment in the life of the social sciences, one in which individual scholars are today making decisions about the extent to which our work should aim to be useful.

Academic research is set apart because it is informed by theories. It is also 'systematic' and 'methodical' because it is done in a particular way, which is accounted for through a recognition or acknowledgement of what is *already* known – previous knowledge and theories. In considering such disciplined approach to academic research, let us look at the following definitions of research (all italics mine):

> Research is a *systematic* way of asking questions, a systematic method of inquiry (Drew, Hardman, & Hart, 1996, p. 2).

> Research may be defined as the *systematic* and objective analysis and recording of controlled observations that may lead to the development of generalizations, principles, or theories, resulting in prediction and possible control of events (Best & Kahn, 1998, p. 18).

> Research is a *systematic* attempt to provide answers to questions (Tuckman, 1999, p. 4).

> Research involves a *systematic* process of gathering, interpreting and reporting information. Research is disciplined inquiry characterized by accepted principles to verify that a knowledge claim is reasonable (McMillan, 2000, p. 4)

In all of these definitions[1], the common denominator is that research is 'systematic' and 'disciplined', distinguished from other forms of knowledge such as personal experience, opinion or ideology, or indeed 'common sense'. Academic research is also accountable – it is justified in terms of its validity, reliability (in case of quantitative research), or credibility and trustworthiness (in case of qualitative research). When published, academic research is also open to critique and is falsifiable, traits that are ensured through processes such as ethics approval and blind peer reviews.

4. Theory, theoretical framework and conceptual framework

When commencing research for the first time, some of the most confronting and intellectually challenging terms a new researcher will inevitably come across are 'theory', 'theoretical framework', 'conceptual framework', as well as the more abstract philosophical notions of 'ontology', 'epistemology' and 'methodology'. In this section, I explain these terms in brief, a task that is as daunting as it is impractical, given the divergence of opinions and definitions (see, for example, the very different ways in which Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; and Darlastone-Jones, 2007 have explained these terms). Despite this, the following is to help new researchers understand the differences as well as the interrelationship between and among these very useful concepts, so that they are able to make prudent decisions when embarking on research.

A **theory** is an explanation of a particular phenomenon that has been established through evidence from a research- or evidence-based study. In other words, it can be a statement that explicates how and why things happen in a particular way, and what it means for other phenomena of similar nature. Practically speaking, therefore, any extraction from an existing body of literature – such as a quote from a journal article, a definition from a book chapter – can be a theory, when it is

[1] Definitions are always reductive, especially in the social sciences. These definitions have been selected to represent common points of emphasis, nothing more. Just as with the central concepts discussed in this article, readers are advised not to get tied down with single definitions, but to consider them together in order to get an approximation of the concepts they represent.

contextualised to ‘make sense’ and illuminate the study that it is borrowed into.

What about a theoretical *framework*? To begin with, frameworks are (often visual) tools which help us locate and then logically structure the key concepts of a study and show how they relate to each other. A **theoretical framework** is a logical synthesis (or arrangement) of multiple theories whose congruence is coherent in explaining phenomena or ‘reality’, which is the object of investigation in a particular research. Therefore, it can be said that a theoretical framework is a ‘system’ of concepts and a particular combination of theories that combine to provide a tool that explains reality.

A different term that is used by some authors to denote the theoretical framework is **paradigm**. In fact, Mackenzie and Knipe use these two terms interchangeably (2005, p. 194). Hughes (2001) explained that a paradigm is a “specific collection of beliefs about knowledge… together with the practices based upon those beliefs” (p. 36). We could deduce then, that this means a paradigm is a combination of one’s theoretical framework and methodology. We will discuss the latter below.

Importantly, a theoretical framework is built with pre-existing theories. Effectively it is a ‘map’ (Grant & Osanloo, 2014) or blueprint of how *existing* theories will be used in a particular study to show relationships between multiple variables or phenomena. Compared to the conceptual framework, it is more ‘formal’, in the sense that it is based on what is *already* known. Theoretical frameworks are essential in any academic or scholarly research, and make our findings meaningful, systematic, and thus, acceptable.

However, beginning researchers often conflate the theoretical framework with a **literature review**. A literature review is when studies on a particular topic or issue (such as, say, ‘CLT’ - or communicative language teaching, ‘code-switching’, or ‘flipped classroom’) are reviewed in a single body of writing, usually involving themes and sub-themes that the theories are fitted into. This can be done with or without research questions, simply by summarising, comparing and contrasting existing literature (from journal articles, books and book chapters) on a given topic. A ‘critical essay’ on a particular topic that graduate students typically write is an example of a literature review.

In order for this literature review to *become* a theoretical framework, it has to do more. Research questions are the essential prerequisite for a theoretical framework; so too are aims of a study and, to an extent, methodology, as will be explained below. This means, we cannot have a theoretical framework if we have not decided our research questions and the aims of our study first. We could say, embedded in every theoretical framework is a literature review, but not all literature reviews have a theoretical framework embedded within them.

A **conceptual framework**, on the other hand, is not always or entirely based on existing theories; rather is it something a researcher develops based on their reason, logic and intuition. We could say conceptual frameworks are also based on theories, but they are a step further and are projective. They are less ‘formal’ in the sense that they are not something that existing theories can *already* prove or explain. Their function is to clarify and propose how concepts relate to one another in the context of the study where it belongs. By providing a context, they facilitate the potential development of new theory, which is the outcome of the research study (once it is completed).

A conceptual framework allows room to accommodate the researcher's own concepts, hypotheses and variables, which have not been proved through research yet, but are considered as potentially relevant. It is a structure a researcher uses, based on their *current* understanding, to explain how the research problem will be explored, and believes (without proof, yet) can "best explain the natural progression of the phenomenon to be studied" (Camp, 2001, in Adom, Hussein & Agyem, 2018, p. 439). In fact, Dixon, Gulliver & Gibbon (2001) are of the view that a conceptual framework is also connected to the methodology, in that it suggests the actions that need to be taken in conducting the research.

Often presented visually in the form of an integrated diagram with arrows or links showing the relationship of the variables of factors in study, conceptual frameworks are generative (Ravitch & Carl, 2016) because they reflect the researcher's position in relation to the research process - from theory selection, to methodological choices, data collection and analysis and finally, the principles adopted for critical discussion.

To sum up, whereas the theoretical framework is more specific, with references to existing theories, better developed and structured, the conceptual framework has something of a tentative nature; it is based on the researcher's views of how to make meaning of the data in their study, views that are yet to be accepted empirically. While theoretical frameworks can be 'borrowed' or applied across studies, conceptual frameworks are almost always unique to specific studies and are non-transferrable, and a researcher can take a greater sense of ownership in their formulation.

5. Ontology and epistemology: Ways of knowing

Having referred to 'reality' (or *social* reality in the case of social sciences, such as in education) above, we ask - what does this mean and how does this relate to research? This brings us to two philosophical concepts that are foundational to all research – **ontology** and **epistemology**. Ontology is the nature of social reality – what is reality? What is out there that exists? What is out that there is knowable? The well-known pre-Socratic philosophers Parmenides and Heraclitus had two diametrically opposite ways of viewing reality, and their views correspond to the two ontological positions a researcher can choose from. Whereas Parmenides thought of reality as just 'out there' in permanence and existing independent from our perception of it ('nature as being'), Heraclitus thought of nature as ever-evolving and in a state of impermanence and transience ('nature as becoming'). As exemplified in Heraclitus' famous words - "you cannot swim/no man ever steps in the same river twice", implying that because nature is ever evolving, it will never be the same river again, nor will the man be the same man (Chowdhury, 2018b).

Based on these two views on reality, there are two ontological positions - **objectivism** and **constructivism**. The objectivist stance - that of Parmenides - propounds that the human mind is not sufficient in understanding, perceiving or evaluating reality, and therefore personal opinions, subjective evaluations are discounted, and reality is to be taken as fixed, precise and measurable. Natural sciences, such as the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines, are built upon the objectivist ontological position, where reality is perceived through the lens of a microscope, through a litmus test in a chemistry laboratory, or through the application of a trigonometric formula. In such cases, it is the same reality that appears to all scientists - everyone has the same results, and there is nothing to interpret or have an opinion about. In the objectivist's world, nature exists on its own, independent of human thought and perception.

It is in this sense that English mathematical physicist, philosopher and Oxford scholar Roger Penrose argues that mathematics is *discovered*, rather than *invented* (Closer To Truth, 2016) - in other words, the 'reality' of how mathematics works in the universe is already out there in a stable form, regardless of how much we know about it at any given point of time. The disinterested, objective scientist's job is merely to discover it and formulate theories that explain what has already been out there since the beginning of time.

On the other hand, in the social sciences, including in education research, a constructivist ontological position is adopted, one which is built upon the doctrine of change and impermanence, and one that accepts that reality is in a process of perennial flux, constantly changing (like Heraclitus' river). This means reality is not fixed, and the principle of *WYSIWYG* (what-you-see-is-what-you-get) does not apply. It accepts that reality can be perceived in multiple ways, and the human subjectivity and opinions are of paramount importance, without which we only get a partial and therefore, incomplete view of reality.

Whereas ontology is about the *nature* of reality (what is reality?), **epistemology** is about ways of *knowing* reality (how can we know reality?). Corresponding to the two ontological positions discussed above are two epistemological positions - **positivism** and **interpretivism**. A positivistic epistemological stance is one accepts that the only way of knowing reality is by distancing oneself (one's opinions and subjective feelings) and taking a disinterested stance. In education research, for example, this can be done through observations, without engaging in conversations with participants – here the WYSIWYG principle applies - and there is no additional information we can obtain by asking participants any questions.

On the other hand, an interpretivist epistemological position will require a researcher to go beyond settling for what is out there, discernible to the eye, observable and measurable. Instead of distancing themselves, they will get involved in constructing meaning by engaging with participants through, say, interviews. For the interpretivist, there is more than meets the eye, and this can only be brought to our understanding if we engage with participants and enquire about how they construct their worldviews. We could say that such research is based on how reality is *interpreted* by researcher and participants, and it accepts that there are multiple ways of doing this.

This means that even if two researchers are working on the same topic, have the same research questions and apply the same methodology, they can have two very different data sets and can arrive at different conclusions depending on their epistemological position.

Another related philosophical term that we need to consider is **axiology**, especially in relation to qualitative studies. This concept entails the inherent, often assumed values, and the moral and ethical positions that dictate how we conduct our research. Put differently, the bases on which we decide what is meaningful or not, relevant or irrelevant, as well as the value of the outcome of our research – these are all axiological considerations. For example, we assume and accept that climate change is bad, cure for cancer is good, or learning English enhances our employability, and these dictate how we conduct our research on these two topics.

Axiology is also about considering whether our research is neutral (but not objective) or whether and how our personal, ideological, ethical and religious values shape the way we conduct research (think, for example, conspiracy theorists who believe climate change is a hoax, or that the cure for cancer is halted because of commercial interests of medical companies – and how they are likely to approach their research). Axiology, then, is also an evaluation of the purpose of our research – are we conducting research to merely understand a particular phenomenon (such as why students are reluctant in speaking English in the classroom), or to change our conditions based on the new knowledge created from research? And if so, what do we consider as valuable and meaningful?

To sum up, whereas ontology is about *being* and epistemology is about *knowledge*, axiology is about *values*. Readers will see how axiology is connected to epistemology and how it will most certainly also affect our methodological choices.

Table 1. A comparison of ontologies and epistemologies

Ontology	**Objectivism**	**Constructivism**
Epistemology	**Positivism**	**Interpretivism**
Reality	external, stable, ordered, patterned, pre-existing	internal, fluid, socially constructed, multiple, emerging
Knowledge	objective, measurable, value-free, universal, decontextualised	subjective, indeterminate, value-rich, particular, contextualised
Aim	explanation, prediction, control	description, understanding, empathy
Researcher	disinterested scientist	participant-interpreter

In addition to positivism and interpretivism, Mackenzie and Knipe (2005) use the term 'transformative paradigm', which in fact is still a constructivist-interpretivist approach. While sociologists prefer this term, the educational researcher can adopt this term if the study is about, say, power relations, social justice and equity, educational reform, or the empowerment of marginalised groups in education. Indeed, Mackenzie and Knipe also talk about the 'pragmatic paradigm' where the research problem determines the choice of ontology and epistemology, and the researcher has the liberty of adopting any combination of tools provided for investigation.

6. Methodology and methods: Ways of doing

Now that we have discussed ontology and epistemology, the next aspect of academic research for us to consider is methodology. The beginning researcher often wants to know the difference between methodology and method. However, a discussion on the 'differences' between these two yields little useful knowledge. What is more important is to understand how one *relates* to the other, and in the same line of argument as above, to understand which *leads on* to the other.

A **methodology** is the overall design of a study or a research project. It is the *systematic* planning of how research will be conducted - from participant recruitment, to data collection[2], analysis and reporting.

[2] Not all research requires collection of primary data from participants (empirical research). Non-empirical research may involve a critical review of existing theories and previous studies. However, in both cases a methodology is essential and within it specific methods need to be identified.

For example, quantitative methodologies include experiments, observations, structured interviews and surveys; while qualitative methodologies include case study, ethnography, grounded theory, action research, discourse analysis, narrative inquiry, historical research and feminist research, among others. We could say a methodology is the 'theory' of how inquiry should proceed, which would include the assumptions and givens about reality, and the principles and procedures in producing knowledge.

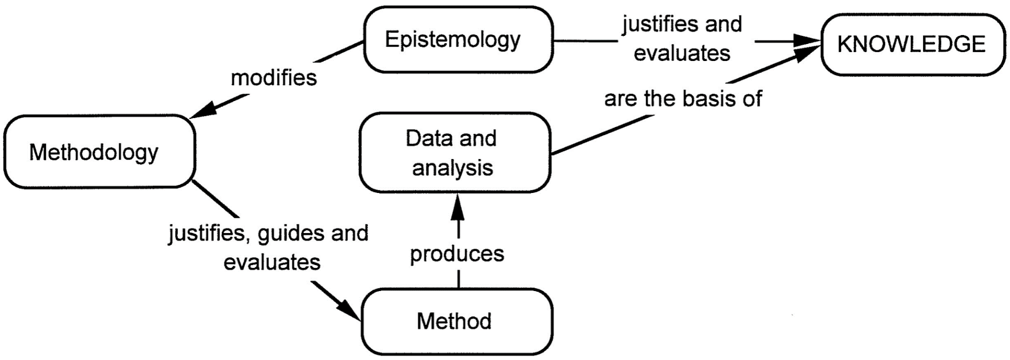
Methods, on the other hand, are the specific tools or instruments for collecting data. Quantitative methods include sampling, questionnaire (which close-ended questions only), structured observation, structured interview, document analysis (content counts), secondary data analysis (official statistics) etc. On the other hand, qualitative methods include participant observation (un- or semi-structured), interview (unstructured or semi-structured), focus group (or group interviews), document analysis/archival data (language/discourse), as well as journaling, essaying, blogging and artefact analysis. In education and especially in teacher education, methods such as (non-participant) observation, journaling and blogging have gained a lot of popularity in recent years, thanks to the omnipresence of social media and hand-held audio and video recording devices, which provide valuable anecdotal evidence that are often elusive in interviews and surveys. It is clear that these methods are tools of inquiry, or instruments that help us collect data.

It is also quite clear then, that a method is part of methodology, not the other way round. A methodology of course will have other components in addition to methods. A specific and justified plan for participant recruitment, sequencing of the methods used for data collection, the data collection process itself, transcription and data analysis, interpretation of the findings, accounting for the validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility of data, accounting for ethical issues such as power relations and conflicts of interest – all these constitute the methodology of a study. It is in this sense that we could say that a methodology is the 'design' of a particular study, the 'plan of action' for research.

7. Ontology, epistemology and methodology: The order of things

So practically speaking, when a researcher commences research, which comes first? Does a researcher begin with choosing a methodology (how to conduct research) before deciding what his or her epistemology or ontology should be? Or, do they have to decide on their worldviews first before deciding on the study design? Because ontology and epistemology are philosophical positions, and although it might sound impractical and counter-intuitive, logically these are decided well before one chooses their methodology. In fact, as we will see below, the first two shape a study's methodology and therefore it is quite illogical to choose methodology first. If one chooses the methodology first, I remind them of the dangers of relying on common sense and intuition that I have explained above.

One's ontological position determines what is (and what is not) knowable (and therefore, researchable) and in turn, this will affect the manner in which one approaches research (epistemology) and undertakes or conducts research (methodology). Only when we understand and acknowledge our ontological position can we discuss *what* we might come to know about social reality and begin to think about *how* we may come to know it. As Hay (2002, p. 63) puts it: “ontology logically precedes epistemology, which logically precedes methodology (that is, how we go about acquiring the knowledge which exists)”. In fact, our epistemological choice, between positivism and interpretivism, is crucial because it will influence *how* we conduct our research (our methodology), since some “epistemologies and methodologies are incommensurable, and different variants of individual methodologies are linked to specific epistemic positions, mostly via those methodologies’ theoretical and disciplinary roots” (Carter & Little, 2007, p. 1325).



(Carter & Little, 2007, p. 1317)

Figure 1. The relationship between ontology, epistemology and methodology

Carter and Little add that the choice of epistemology will also “constrain research practice (method)” which means that certain methods can only be chosen if we have adopted a particular epistemology. For example, if an education researcher is looking into, say, participants’ views on the feasibility of the flipped classroom model and chooses to adopt a constructivist position by exploring participants’ views, he or she cannot choose to employ surveys with close-ended questions *alone* - such as multiple choice, Likert scale or any other kind of quantifiable response that can be reduced to numbers for statistical analysis. The researcher will need to choose methods that will allow participants to engage in discussion where they can subjectively construct their views on reality (in this case, how the flipped classroom works). Each of their answers will be unique and therefore non-quantifiable. Choosing one’s epistemology will of course also determine researcher-participant relationship and how the findings are reported.

8. Choosing between qualitative and quantitative approach

In Vietnam, as in many other developing countries, statistics-based large-scale quantitative studies dominate academic research in the social sciences, especially in Education. Such choice is understandable, where vested interest groups, donors as well as the government and other stakeholders will take reports seriously when they are founded on strong, evidence-based hard facts, and specific numbers and quantification. For researchers too, it is easier to demonstrate results of a study when there are numbers to support a case. However, there are limitations of quantitative studies, regardless of how large they are. An obvious example would be a national census. Based on closed-ended questions that are then reduced to numbers, percentages and measurable units, census data can tell us about the demographic composition of a nation, but the numbers tell us nothing about *why*, say, the infant mortality rate of a country is decreasing. Similarly, it can tell us *how many* people from a particular town have received higher education, but it does not tell us anything about *why* the numbers are exceptionally higher than in neighbouring towns.

In this section, we will draw a quick comparison of these two approaches, using the two ontological and epistemological positions discussed earlier. We will then look at some of the limitations of quantitative research and build up a case for qualitative research in education and the social sciences.

It is now becoming clear that just as the binary between the two ontological positions (objectivism and constructivism) align with the binary of the two epistemological positions (positivism and interpretivism), in the same manner these two binaries somewhat align with the choice between quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. As I explained elsewhere (see Chowdhury, 2018b), in the natural sciences (such as the aforementioned STEM disciplines), reality is viewed objectively and in a positivistic manner - in the sense of being out there in itself, with no meaning and interpretation required to understand it - such as viewing through the lens of a microscope. This is based on the objectivist ontology, where the so-called "disinterested" and objective scientist's logic and reasoning are sufficient in explaining natural phenomena. In this case, reality to the scientist is static and exists in itself independently of human thought and interpretation.

On the other hand, reality in the social sciences (such as in Education) is understood based on the premise of a constructivist ontology. This position relies on the subjective-interpretive construction of reality, where the researcher is not distanced or disinterested, but takes on an active role in interpreting and constructing *their* version of reality. In such interpretivist tradition, reality is fluid, and very much a construct without fixed characteristics, which means individuals will all have their unique views of reality.

However, the human mind is fraught with errors of judgement, prejudices, fallacies, narrowness and ideological constraints, which inevitably have an impact on how we perceive reality. How then can we ensure our subjective, constructivist and interpretivist views of reality are based on informed and well rationalised judgements? This can only happen through a training of the mind that eliminates or at least minimises our biases and help us arrive at logical, accountable and informed conclusions about social reality. This can be done through the 'systematic' approach that research offers - a qualitative research approach that has a well-designed methodology and includes methods that are also well designed and well considered.

Table 2. A comparison between quantitative and qualitative research approaches

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Numerical, measurable data	Generally non-numerical data
Large Samples	Smaller samples
Breadth	Depth
Positivist approach	Constructivist approach
Statistical analyses	Meaning interpretation
Decontextualised	Contextualised
Value-Free/Detached	Value-laden/Involved
Deductive (top-down)	Inductive (bottom up)
Theory testing	Theory building
Experimental	Naturalistic
Generalisability	Particularity
Statistical correlation	Themes generation

Such binary division of research approaches into qualitative and quantitative, however, is too simplistic and naïve. Practitioners will know that there is a grey area where these attributes 'flow over' and even converge. For example, a qualitative case study is not always devoid of numbers and quantification; and quantitative studies almost always have some descriptive results. It is important to realise that while these two approaches are not mutually exclusive, the 'mixed-methods' approach which combines both systematically, is increasingly becoming popular in the social sciences, especially where multidisciplinary research is involved. Readers are encouraged to watch the brief video story where Creswell discusses some of the limitations of quantitative studies and why mixed methods studies are becoming increasingly important (SAGE, 2013).

The benefit of a mixed-methods research is the versatility of methods it allows us to employ. For example, a predominantly qualitative study on, say, code-switching practices of teachers in English classes in Vietnamese secondary schools, could use interviews with teachers and students to find out how they perceive the benefits of such practice. However, a preceding survey involving a larger number of students could help give the researcher an idea of how the general school population perceives the benefits of such, and then frame questions against such finding for the interviews. In such way, one approach of research complements the other, and in such cases, research can be predominantly qualitative with, however, some quantitative input.

9. Criticisms of quantitative research

Because it is built on a positivistic and 'static' view of reality, and because of the objective, 'disinterested' position of the researcher, quantitative studies fail to distinguish people and social institutions from the 'world of nature'. They have no room for conscious actions, meaning-construction, self-awareness, reflection and retrospection, a sense of past and future; nor do they account for participants' motives/ reasons behind their actions in a descriptive, 'thick' manner. Whether it is through Likert-scale type questions, yes/no or multiple-choice questions, quantitative studies ask questions that can be *reduced* to numbers or fixed responses. Consider if, for example, in a typical quantitative survey involving such close-ended, fixed-response questions, we throw in just one open-ended "why" question and administer it to 300 people, we will all of a sudden get 300 *unique* responses. At this point, it becomes impractical and virtually impossible to quantify the responses anymore.

With its insistence on a spurious sense of accuracy and precision, quantitative research also relies on instruments and procedures that obscure or ignore the nexus between the social realities of the research context and the realities of everyday life – human beings and occurrences are reduced to statistical figures (which may be fine for STEM disciplines). In analysing the relationships between variables, it therefore merely produces a static view of social life. In education research, it ignores language as a social construction, identity as a fluid concept, teaching and learning as a mutually negotiated experience where multiple internal and external forces are at play. In the interface of such complexity, a quantitative study can only report what the naked eye can see through tick-box/check-list observations, frequencies of occurrences, and quantification of responses to close-ended questions. Because of such 'closed' nature of investigations, quantitative research is insufficient in creating grand theories (Hoa, personal communication, October 27, 2018), such as Said's Orientalism, post-colonial theories by Foucault and Said, or the works of or Marx, Freud, and Chomsky.

One might recall Labov's (1972) concept of the "observer's paradox". Labov explained that although the aim of linguistic research is to "find out how people talk when they are not being systematically observed… we can only obtain this data by systematic observation" (1972, p. 209). This means that the unconscious ways in which the observed is influenced by the presence of the observer or investigator (or indeed any recording equipment), makes them behave in ways that are not 'natural' or spontaneous. Therefore, paradoxically, we can never quite 'view' reality through observations alone when it comes to human interaction. This necessitates a qualitative-interpretivist approach, which also considers the observed participants' personal accounts (for example through interviews) and gives a fuller picture of the story, which is otherwise elusive to the observer's eye.

An important note of caution here. The above discussion is not to suggest that quantitative research is inadequate, insufficient or of inferior position compared to qualitative research. If we return to our earlier discussion about how these decisions are interrelated, we will remember that our ontological and epistemological positions are determined *first*, depending on what our research questions and the aims of our study are. These then determine what methods to use and how to collect, analyse and interpret data.

This means the suitability of a qualitative or quantitative approach depends on what we want to do, and how we consider social reality or social phenomena. The prudent researcher will know that being aware of the limitations of each of the approaches is essential in determining what is best for one to choose.

10. Conclusion: The power of research and making informed decisions

Unlike in STEM disciplines, in social sciences theories are created or formulated through deliberate and purposeful research - they are not discovered. Research in our disciplines facilitates the process through which we can question the obvious, the taken-for-granted, the social realities that our common sense perceives as trivial, blasé and 'normal'. This means research helps us uncover truths that are otherwise unknowable. A systematic approach to investigation helps us keep in check our personal biases and prejudices and account for our social, political and ideological lenses that may discolour or distort our views of reality.

It is through a conscious, deliberate and thoughtful consideration of our ontological, epistemological and methodological choices that we can be certain our research meets the rigour of the high standards of scholarly work, and makes a solid contribution to the body of knowledge - a commitment we pledge to as academics and educators. Research humbles us in knowing how little we know; it opens our minds, and makes us better teachers and educators through continuous professional development.

I mentioned above Penrose's explanation of how the reality of the mathematical/scientific world is a discovery, rather than an invention. In social sciences, then, research goes beyond discoveries. When we conduct a qualitative study, we cannot possibly be satisfied with what is *already* out there, since we accept that there are multiple views through which reality is constructed and interpreted. We construct reality through interpreting the worldviews of our participants and connecting them to existing theories of what is known. In Penrose's positivistic world of atoms and molecules, stars and constellations, precision marks the scientist's epistemological stance; in our social scientists' world, the messiness, discontinuities, inconsistencies and uniqueness of individual experiences mark our interpretivist epistemological stance. In this world, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Beethoven's *Fur Elise*, or Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* are unique creations that did not pre-exist to be merely discovered, just as our educational practices such as what we do in our classrooms everyday are not already out there with fixed meanings attached to our behaviours, but for us to construct through interpreting and constructing meaning.

Educators who are research-active are involved in continuous professional development and have a clearer view and an enhanced understanding of the complexities of the teaching and learning conditions, and this enables them to be capable of making informed decisions about their everyday teaching and practice. They are also confident in taking risks, experimenting and making mistakes. Readers might want to read Chowdhury's (2018a) article on how university academics and school teachers can collaborate, for mutual benefit, on research initiatives that are a lot more challenging to conduct on their own.

A cultural change in the mindset of educators, teacher trainers and trainees and in-service teaching professionals, so that they are 'provokers of curiosity rather than the holders of knowledge' (Alam, 2016, p. 252), will facilitate the path towards research-active teachers in today's fast moving educational landscape, where qualitative studies can throw light upon phenomena that statistical figures and numbers are only capable of giving us a partial picture of.

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BƯỚC ĐẦU NGHIÊN CỨU KHOA HỌC XÃ HỘI: TÌM HIỂU KHÁI NIỆM NỀN TẢNG

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Tóm tắt: Bài viết trình bày một số khái niệm nền tảng mà các nhà nghiên cứu trẻ, mới bước vào sự nghiệp khoa học cũng như học viên sau đại học và nghiên cứu sinh nào cũng phải nắm bắt khi lần đầu tiến hành nghiên cứu. Việc tìm hiểu những khái niệm quan trọng nhưng trừu tượng và rất hay nhầm lẫn như bản thể học, nhận thức luận và hệ hình là một trở ngại đối với nhà nghiên cứu trẻ, nhưng có lẽ chẳng có con đường nào khác nếu muốn thiết kế, hoạch định và triển khai nghiên cứu một cách bài bản, nghiêm túc. Thông qua những ví dụ cụ thể, bài báo thảo luận về phương thức tiếp cận và thiết kế nghiên cứu cũng như nền tảng của những phương thức và thiết kế đó xem chúng gắn kết với cách thức tư duy và nhận thức về thế giới của nhà nghiên cứu như thế nào – nói cách khác, quan điểm bản thể học và nhận thức luận của họ quyết định như thế nào đến phương pháp nghiên cứu mà họ lựa chọn. Ngoài những khái niệm đó, bài báo còn so sánh nghiên cứu định tính và định lượng với những bình luận, phê phán, qua đó cho thấy về nhiều mặt, nghiên cứu định tính có thể đem lại nhiều kết quả phong phú, đa dạng hơn trong các ngành khoa học xã hội, trong đó có Giáo dục.

Từ khóa: nghiên cứu, nghiên cứu giáo dục, bản thể học, nhận thức luận, giá trị học, hệ hình, khách quan luận, thực chứng luận, kiến tạo luận, diễn giải luận, phương pháp luận, phương pháp

ELEVENTH GRADERS' ACTUAL USE OF ENGLISH LISTENING LEARNING STRATEGIES AT DUONG VAN DUONG HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract: It is undeniable that listening comprehension is a fundamental skill in the process of acquiring a language and plays a crucial part in communication although it is not an easy task which requires both background knowledge and linguistic understanding. Therefore, language learners are supposed to employ listening learning strategies to facilitate the process of decoding oral input. This study aimed at examining if the eleventh graders at Duong Van Duong high school used English listening learning strategies and then exploring the frequency of the students' use of these strategies. The present study is a mixed-methods research project in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through closed-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview with the participation of 425 respondents and 20 interviewees. The results of the study indicated that a vast number of the participants employed listening learning strategies at different levels of frequency which were classified into three main groups, namely high use (e.g. cognitive and affective strategies), moderate use (e.g. metacognitive and social strategies) and low use (e.g. compensation and memory strategies).

Keywords: EFL listening comprehension, eleventh graders, listening learning strategies, Vietnamese EFL context

1. Introduction

It is universally acknowledged that listening is one of the four basic skills of language acquisition (Ellis, 1997; Harmer, 2007). However, it may cause confusion and misunderstanding to EFL/ESL learners if they cannot comprehend what people say in terms of sound, intonation and stress, colloquial vocabulary, and each may use a different accent, etc. (Ur, 1984, Wilson, 2008). In reality, listening skill has not been considerably emphasized in English language education at most Vietnamese high schools; as a consequence, teaching and learning this receptive skill is not as effective as expected (Nguyen, 2013).

Moreover, Vietnamese students in high school are not equipped with appropriate strategies to develop their listening

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comprehension independently (Do, 2007; Nguyen & Tran, 2015). That is why there is a need to provide the students with tactics facilitating their listening skill as Brown (2006, p.6) pinpoints, "strategies are clearly a way to ease the burden of listening and should be taught."

According to Vandergrift (2007), listening learning strategies refer to "strategies that listeners consciously or unconsciously use in order to understand, analyze, and interpret a text" (p.101). It has been further stated that effective use of appropriate listening strategies facilitates understanding listening texts especially in the early stages of learning a language. Evidently, good language learners typically employ their cognitive and metacognitive strategies, whereas less proficient listeners tend to work at a word-level and try to translate what they hear into their first language without relating it to their personal knowledge (Berne, 2004).

Meanwhile, Wenden and Rubin (1987) describe language learning strategies as "any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information" (p.19). In the same line, learning strategies are defined as "special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p.1). This means that when language learners encounter language learning tasks such as reading or listening, they can use different strategies to complete the tasks.

In terms of categories, listening skill consists of an array of strategies which are divided into distinguished categories. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) affirm that in the process of listening comprehension, there are three different types of strategies, that is, (1) metacognitive strategies, (2) cognitive strategies, and (3) socio-affective strategies. In particular, metacognitive strategies involve planning, monitoring and evaluating comprehension, whilst cognitive strategies are used to manipulate information, and socio-affective strategies are related to the ways that learners decide to interact with others.

More specifically, Oxford (1990) classifies listening learning strategies into two main groups: direct and indirect strategies, based upon the extent to which they relate to language. Remarkably, these two strategies are not separate or contradictory, but closely interdependent. Direct strategies, as the name implies, are directly related to the intellectual processing of language such as memorization of vocabulary, or form recognition. They are used to deal with new information and work with language in different tasks and situations. On the other hand, indirect strategies have no direct relevance to language as direct strategies. It simply solves problems about language learning like planning and making schedules for learning and enhancing listeners' positive emotions.

In general, it has been suggested that in order to overcome listening comprehension problems, learners need to develop listening strategies. Based on the significance of listening strategies in developing individuals' listening proficiency, the objectives of this study were (1) to examine whether or not the 11th graders at a high school in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam used listening strategies in their listening comprehension and (2) to investigate the frequency of their use of listening learning strategies. In order to achieve these objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Do the 11th graders use listening strategies to facilitate their listening comprehension?

2. To what extent do they employ these listening learning strategies?

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

The participants of the present study consisted of 425 students who were in grade 11 in a high school located in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam. Overall, the participants were generally at pre-intermediate level, as determined by entrance and class examinations.

2.2. Instruments

The instruments employed in this study included closed-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview. First, the questionnaire was designed in a multiple-choice format with five points ranging from 1 to 5 (*1= never, 2= rarely, 3= occasionally, 4= frequently, 5= always)*. Based on calculated interval coefficient for four intervals in five points (5-1=4), intervals with the range of 0.80 (4/5) were arranged. Hence, the following criteria in the Likert type scale were used to interpret the data: Never (1.00 - 1.80); rarely (1.81 - 2.60); occasionally (2.61 - 3.40); frequently (3.41 - 4.20); always (4.21 - 5.00). The questionnaire was divided into two parts with the total number of 20 items: personal information (2 items) and the students' actual utilization of listening learning strategies (17 items). To avoid the language barrier, the questionnaire was designed in Vietnamese. Furthermore, the reliability of a questionnaire was tested through Cronbach's Alpha with the coefficient of .75 which proved that the questionnaire was acceptably reliable.

Second, semi-structured interview was used to gain an insight into the actual use of listening learning strategies by the eleventh graders. Only 20 interviewees were selected for the separate interviews which were carried out in Vietnamese to ensure the accuracy of the interviewed data. The interviewees were labeled from the first (SI1) to the twentieth (SI20).

2.3. Data collection and analysis

Concerning data collection procedure, one of the researchers who was teaching at this high school came to the participants' classes to introduce the purpose and significance of the study. Then, the questionnaires were delivered to the students in class and an instruction how to fill the questionnaires was clarified and explained carefully to them. The students were asked to complete the questionnaires and return them in the following week. After collecting the questionnaires, the researcher and her co-researcher conducted 20 interview sessions. Each interview which was tape-recorded for later transcription lasted almost 20 minutes.

Regarding data analysis, to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire, it was necessary to employ SPSS 20.0 in which descriptive statistics including Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), Frequencies (F), and Percentages (P) were processed, whereas content analysis was employed to deal with qualitative data.

3. Results and discussion

Concerning the research question which investigated if listening learning strategies were employed by the high school students, it can be seen in Figure 1 that 368 out of 425 (86.5%) respondents showed their preference for using these strategies while dealing with listening texts. Surprisingly, a small number of the students surveyed (9.9%) did not use any listening strategies, and very few participants (3.6%) were undecided about the use of listening strategies during the process of their listening comprehension. It can be inferred that most of the students realized that they benefited from these listening learning strategies.

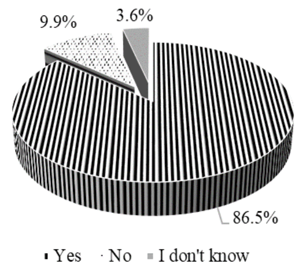

Figure 1. Students' opinions on whether or not they used listening learning strategies

With the aim to explore to what extent listening learning strategies were used by the eleventh graders, both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed and discussed below. Based on the average mean scores of the strategy groups, overall, these strategies employed with varying frequencies were categorized into three main groups: high use (e.g. cognitive and affective strategies), moderate use (e.g. metacognitive and social strategies) and low use (e.g. compensation and memory strategies).

3.1. Memory strategies

Table 1 demonstrated the frequency rate of using memory strategies among the eleventh graders. As can be seen in Table 1, the students were unlikely to link their background knowledge with what they had just heard or group the heard information to restore them (M= 2.14, SD= .97). Likewise, most of the participants did not often use semantic mapping to learn word school or word order (M= 2.46, SD= 1.14).

Table 1. The memory strategies used

Item	Memory strategies	n=368	
		M	SD
1	I link my background knowledge with what being heard or group the information to restore.	**2.14**	**.97**
2	I use semantic mapping to learn the word school, word order.	**2.46**	**1.14**
Average		**2.30**	**1.06**

Qualitatively, twelve out of all the twenty participating interviewees (60%) reported that they often used memory strategies for their listening. In particular, twelve students stated that they grouped information while listening to restore and it enabled them to comprehend and remember the listening text content more effectively.

However, the other eight students (40%) pointed out their infrequent use of this strategy. These eleven-grade students' unwillingness to employ memory strategies in listening learning was explained by two main reasons. The first reason was that a few students did not know how to group the heard information. The second reason was acknowledged by a few participants that they found it difficult to activate their background knowledge associated with what they heard. For instance, SI10 shared, "memory strategies are really effective to keep, restore, remember and comprehend the heard information, but it is extremely challenging for me to utilize it."

Memory strategies significantly contribute to listeners' good listening comprehension ability as they help restore and retrieve the heard information (Kassem, 2015). However, the quantitative findings in this study showed that a great part of the participants did not often use memory strategies such as activating their background knowledge to store the auditory information, and semantic mapping to learn word order. Consistently, the qualitative results obtained from the interview highlighted that eight out of twenty student interviewees were unready to employ this memory strategy group. This result is completely contrary to Le's (2015) finding that memory strategy group was the most preferred compared to the other strategy groups.

Their ignorance may be explained by two causal factors that they did not know how to group information and found it arduous to activate their background knowledge with what they had listened. For this dilemma, most of the eleventh graders lacked a considerable amount of prior knowledge, which was found in the previous section. In reality, background knowledge can help the listeners survive when being exposed to difficult listening texts with the limited size of their lexicon.

3.2. Cognitive strategies

As Table 2 illustrated, many participants focused on grammar and structures to understand the listening texts better and repeated the information several times to facilitate their retention (item 3: M= 3.72, SD= 1.25).

Remarkably, most of the participants revealed that they tried to grasp the main ideas of the listening texts before focusing on other details or supporting ideas. This statement was clarified by the very high mean value (item 4: M= 4.19, SD= .98).

Table 2. The cognitive strategies used

Item	**Cognitive strategies**	**n=368**	
		M	**SD**
3	While listening, I focus on grammar, structures to understand the text better and repeat several times to facilitate my retention.	**3.72**	**1.25**
4	I try to grasp the main ideas before focusing on other details	**4.19**	**.98**
5	I translate or make the contrast between English and Vietnamese words to understand the language.	**4.10**	**1.07**
6	I write down what I hear and summarize to understand texts better.	**3.68**	**1.24**
Average		**3.87**	**1.16**

Furthermore, some other strategies such as translating and contrasting (item 5) and note-taking (item 6) were also practically favored by the questionnaire respondents. First, almost all the eleventh graders understood the language in the listening texts by translating or making contrast between English or Vietnamese words or expressions (M= 4.10, SD= 1.07). Also, many studied eleventh graders stated that they wrote down what they had heard and then summarized their notes to understand the listening texts better, shown by the high mean value (item 6: M= 3.68, SD= 1.24).

From the results gained from the interviews, all the students interviewed contended that they often favored using cognitive strategies in their listening learning. Most of the interviewees (75%) focused on grammar and structures to understand the listening texts better, whereas two-thirds of them intentionally grasped the main idea before focusing on supporting ideas or details. While listening, eight interviewed participants (40%) often wrote down what they heard and summarized their notes to understand listening texts better while exactly a half reported that they translated English to Vietnamese to understand what they heard better. In addition, repeating several times what they heard to increase their retention was practically preferred by three informants (15%). In general, all the interviewees highly appreciated cognitive strategies which facilitated their comprehension of the listening texts, as SI7 said:

> During my listening, I frequently guess the main idea first since it makes me to know what the listening is about. Furthermore, analyzing language structures in the listening texts and translating English into Vietnamese in my mind can facilitate my understanding. Actually, these strategies help me become more strategic in listening. (SI7)

Contrary to the memory strategies, a big proportion of the participants utilized cognitive strategies more frequently during their listening process. Theoretically, cognitive strategies are perceptions that listeners use to solve listening tasks, involving analyzing, synthesizing and transforming information or input they receive (Ellis, 1997). It is acknowledged that cognitive strategies play an integral part in improving learners' knowledge and their understanding of linguistic system (e.g. grammar, structures), helping students to develop the thinking skills that make them strategic and flexible (O'Malley et al., 1989). Indeed, if the learners focus on grammatical patterns in the listening texts and repeat the heard information several times, they are able to make connection between the newly-absorbed information and their existing schema to retrieve appropriate data from long-term memory, and can easily predict what speakers are talking about.

Overall, it is a positive indication that the target high school students practically preferred cognitive strategy group to the other ones during their listening process. This result is quite similar to Bao's (2017) finding that cognitive strategies were more preferable than metacognitive and affective strategies. It is noteworthy that some previous studies (e.g. Kassem, 2015; Shahrokhi et al., 2015; Zhang, 2012) evidently showed the positive correlation between the frequency of the students' using cognitive strategies and listening comprehension. It should be noted that the more the listeners manipulate cognitive strategies, the more they are able to comprehend the listening texts.

3.3. Compensation strategies

Table 3 indicated that compensation strategies were unlikely preferred by many students with quite low mean score (item 7: M= 2.81, SD= 1.28). Secondly, when encountering strange words in the listening texts, many eleven-grade students did not often use situational context (e.g. noise or speaker's tone of voice) to enhance their listening comprehension, which was statistically clarified by the low mean (item 8: M= 2.40, SD= 1.18).

Table 3. The compensation strategies used

Item	Compensation strategies	n=368	
		M	SD
7	To understand unfamiliar words I hear, I make guesses by using linguistic clue such as word order.	**2.81**	**1.28**
8	To understand unfamiliar words I hear, I make guesses by using situational context such as speaker's tone of voice.	**2.40**	**1.18**
Average		**2.64**	**1.21**

For the qualitative data, only three out of twenty interviewees (15%) proclaimed that they often exploited compensation strategies while listening. Specifically, these students revealed that they frequently guessed the meaning of unfamiliar words they had heard by using linguistic clues (e.g. word order, word stress). For example, SI10 emphasized the necessity of this strategy that "I always confront many strange words in the listening texts. Thus, linguistic clues like word order or stress can help me much to treat this problem."

Contrariwise, the interview results showed that most of the interviewees (85%) did not frequently employ any compensation strategies. The hesitance to use compensation strategies among these seventeen students was clarified by the primary reason that they found it tough to use compensation strategies.

According to Oxford (1990), compensation strategies facilitate learners to use the new language for either comprehension [listening] or production [speaking] despite limitations in knowledge. Specific to listening process, compensation strategies could help listeners make up for missing knowledge when they do not hear something clearly. Therefore, they could use clues to guess meaning of words or pieces of information.

However, as emerged from the questionnaire and interview findings, a great number of the participants did not make use of this strategy group and frankly revealed that they found it extremely tough to use compensation strategies and they actually scanted their confidence to this strategy group although Hardan (2013) pinpoints that compensation strategies are interaction techniques that are utilized by listeners to compensate for restrictions in their language when listeners cannot understand clearly what they heard due to the dearth of either linguistic input or topical knowledge.

3.4. Metacognitive strategies

As can be seen from Table 4, the overwhelming majority of the eleven-grade students often set up their clear goals such as listening for main ideas, listening for detail ideas or listening for identifying speakers' attitudes, which was supported by the very high mean (item 10: M= 4.25, SD= 1.02). Likewise, many high school students reported that they also often decided whether they focus on listening to the whole texts or just some parts (item 9: M= 3.81, SD= 1.25). However, self-monitoring listening strategy was not practically favored by the eleventh graders (item 11: M= 2.32, SD= 1.11).

Table 4. The metacognitive strategies used

Item	Metacognitive strategies	n=368	
		M	**SD**
9	I decide in advance whether I should be attentive to the whole task or details.	**3.81**	**1.25**
10	When listening, I had clear goals (listen for main ideas, listen for details, listen for speakers' attitudes).	**4.25**	**1.02**
11	I self-monitor the listening process to avoid making mistakes I had before and evaluate how well the task has been done.	**2.32**	**1.11**
Average		**3.46**	**1.13**

The interview results showed that eighteen out of the twenty eleven-grade student interviewees (90%) often employed metacognitive strategies for their listening process. Particularly, all these eighteen usually identified their clear goals before listening such as listening for gist, listening for details, or listening for speaker's attitudes. Moreover, fifteen out of these eighteen students (75%) also reported that they frequently decided to focus on details or the whole listening text. However, in this group, only SI17 (5%) revealed that she usually self-monitored the listening process to avoid making mistakes she had made before and evaluated how well the task had been done. Generally, almost all these interviewees highly applauded the good impacts of metacognitive strategies on their listening comprehension level. For example, SI6 highlighted that metacognitive strategies helped manage listening behaviors.

> I consider that it is important for listeners to set up a clear purpose before listening since the fact that it will support me to manage my listening behaviors. To give a couple of examples, if we want to listen for details, we will try to hear as many small pieces of information as possible. On the contrary, if we listen for gist, we need to hear the whole text. (SI6)

In the same fashion, SI6 and SI8 stressed that these strategies could support the listener monitor listening progress. For this, SI8 said, "I frequently decide to focus on the whole listening text or just some details. […] metacognitive strategies are good tools for listening directions."

In contrast, the interview results also indicated that two interviewees (10%) did not frequently employ metacognitive strategies during their listening. By reason, the two students admitted that they did not know how to apply metacognitive strategies effectively; for example, SI10 stated:

> To be honest, I almost never utilize metacognitive strategies. Actually, I do not know how to self-monitor during my listening and self-evaluate after my listening. I only try to hear what is spoken. To me, I am unable to monitor and evaluate my listening behaviors by myself. (SI10)

Theoretically, this strategy group is believed to play a vital role in facilitating the learners' language learning as it helps them "oversee, regulate, or direct the language learning process" (Vandergrift, 1999, p. 170). It means that metacognitive learning strategies help learners to know what to do when they come across difficulties. As Oxford (1990) asserts, metacognitive strategies are used to plan, monitor, and evaluate learning process, arrange the condition for someone to learn, set long and short term goals and check learners' comprehension during listening task.

In this study, setting up clear listening goal and deciding on what focus or ignore were the frequently practiced metacognitive strategies in many eleventh graders' listening learning. On the contrary, self-monitoring was still unfamiliar to most of the participating students. Obviously, in this study, almost all the participants only used the two first sets including centering and planning but the last one of self-evaluating. Unlike this finding, some previous studies such as Tavakoli et al. (2012), Coşkun (2013), Shahrokhi et al. (2015) discovered that a more proficient listener actively engaged in planning for the task and monitoring incoming input as well as evaluating output.

3.5. Affective strategies

Table 5 illustrated that a much greater part of the participants tried to breathe deeply to keep calm and comfortable before listening (item 12: M= 4.28, SD= .84). Similarly, before listening, many students reminded themselves that they could finish listening tasks, which was elucidated by the high mean value (item 13, M= 4.05, SD= 1.08). However, many students did not often share their feeling with their friends and encouraged themselves to concentrate on listening English even when they could not hear anything (item 14: M= 2.30, SD= 1.06).

Table 5. The affective strategies used

Item	Affective strategies	n=368	
		M	**SD**
12	I try to relax or breathe deeply to keep calm before listening English.	**4.28**	**.84**
13	Before listening, I tell myself that I can finish the task.	**4.05**	**1.08**
14	I share my feeling with my friends and encourage myself to concentrate on listening when I can't hear anything.	**2.30**	**1.06**
Average		**3.62**	**.99**

Based on the interview results, all twenty student interviewees (100%) reported that they often breathed deeply, self-relaxed and self-encouraged before listening. These students revealed that this affective strategy could help them reduce pressure and enhance their more concentration level for their coming listening process. For example, SI4 said that being comfortable and relaxed could make him concentrate more on listening texts.

> To speak frankly, I claim that comfort plays an important role in speeding up listening comprehension ability. Therefore, I frequently breathe so deeply to make me relax before listening. It facilitates my concentration on listening. (SI4)

In a similar vein, SI13 emphasized that this affective strategy could reduce his anxiety and reinforce his concentration level before actual listening and "until I feel relaxed, I can hear something."

These strategies are directly associated with learners' positive emotional enhancement such as confidence and perseverance which helps learners to involve themselves actively in language learning, and lowering anxiety levels by laughing at their own mistakes as a typical example (Alhaysony, 2017). Hence, it is vital for students to remove their anxiety and energize their motivation in their listening learning.

Interestingly, the majority of respondents reported that they frequently breathed deeply to make themselves comfortable as well as reminded themselves to complete the listening tasks. Therefore, it is suggested that high school teachers should help generate positive feeling in class by increasing the amount of natural communication among their students.

3.6. Social strategies

It can be seen in Table 6 that a big number of the participants applauded the first social strategy in which they asked teachers or friends to clarify what they did not understand during their listening (item 15: M= 4.17, SD= 1.01). Furthermore, more than a half of the eleventh graders reported that they frequently exchanged information to check comprehension and answered questions with friends after listening (item 16: M= 3.46, SD= 1.30).

Table 6. The social strategies used

Item	Social strategies	n=368	
		M	**SD**
15	I ask the teacher or my friends to clarify what I am not clear.	**4.17**	**1.01**
16	After listening, I exchange the information with friends and cooperate to check comprehension and answer questions.	**3.46**	**1.30**
Average		**3.32**	**1.08**

Similarly, all the interviewed students (100%) revealed that they often employed social strategies for their listening learning. In particular, all these interviewed participants usually exchanged information with their classmates. Besides, when being unclear about what they were listening, 60% of the informants usually asked their teachers or classmates for clarification. Overall, all the twenty interviewees highly agreed that these social strategies were one of the most effective strategies in listening learning. In fact, SI14 indicated that some high-level students could assist lower-level students.

> Indeed, it is sure that some of my classmates are good enough to comprehend the listening texts and get the right answers. In other words, working together with them, I can enhance my comprehension ability on what is heard. (SI14)

Similarly, SI15 affirmed that comparing the listening answers helped accomplish listening tasks better later.

> Social strategies assist me so much to comprehend what I have heard. In my case, I try to listen and then I usually have my answers compared with my friends'. As a result, I can know where I was wrong, and then I listen better. (SI15)

Social strategies include two sets of asking for question and cooperating with one another (Oxford, 1990). Particularly, asking for help from teachers or friends could enable listeners to clarify what they were not clear, and working with peers helped listeners check their comprehension and solve questions because it was believed that some high-level students could support their lower-level classmates. This strategy was considered one of the most direct and effective ways to accomplish the listening tasks and enhance listening comprehension at any rate since according to Oxford (1990), these strategies can help listeners work together and understand the target language. It is implied that the eleventh graders in this study cannot improve their existing listening ability considerably unless they work more frequently with their classmates.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

In general, almost all participants used the listening strategies to facilitate their listening comprehension, and there was a considerable difference in the frequency of using the listening strategies. Specifically, a significant proportion of the participants utilized cognitive strategies (e.g. focusing on grammar and structures of the listening texts, repeating the heard information, getting the main ideas before concentrating on supporting ideas, translating and taking notes for summary) more frequently while listening. The students considered that cognitive strategies played an integral part in improving learners' knowledge and their understanding of linguistic system, helping students to develop the thinking skills that make them strategic and flexible.

Likewise, metacognitive strategies were favorably used by many students. Evidently, they frequently set up clear listening goals and decided on what to focus or ignore. By reason, these strategies actually supported them to manage the listening process, and direct their listening behaviors.

A large number of the participants also favorably utilized social strategies in which they asked teachers or friends to clarify what they did not understand during their listening. And, after listening, they exchanged information with friends and cooperated to check comprehension and answered questions. These social strategies were in favor as some high-level students could support their lower-level classmates, while comparing answers among listeners could help them do the listening tasks better.

Interestingly, most of the respondents highly appreciated the effects of affective strategies by frequently breathing deeply to keep calm as well as reminding themselves to complete the listening tasks. This strong favor derived from the fact that these strategies could help them reduce pressure and enhance their concentration and confidence level for their coming listening process.

Contrary to the aforementioned strategies, a great part of the participants did not often use memory strategies such as activating their background knowledge to store the just-heard information, and semantic mapping to learn word order. This low preference was stemmed from the two causal factors that they did not know how to group information and found it difficult to activate knowledge related to what they had listened.

In a similar vein, a great part of the respondents did not take advantage of compensation strategies such as guessing from linguistic or contextual clues to understand unfamiliar words during their listening. Admittedly, they found it extremely tough to use such compensation strategies.

To enhance the high school students' listening comprehension with the use of listening learning strategies, some suggestions for students, teachers and future research are offered as follows.

4.1. For students

Firstly, the eleventh graders faced phonological and lexical difficulties in listening. Positively, many of them favored cognitive strategies such as focusing on grammar and vocabulary of the listening texts. This is an effective listening strategy group which can help them control the input or use a certain skill to complete a particular task, and enable them to understand and produce new language in many different ways. In fact, however, there always exist too many unfamiliar words in a listening text. It is suggested that the listeners should exploit memory strategies including grouping the heard information in their mind to store as well as activating their background knowledge. As a result, these listeners can grasp the meaning of the listening texts better. That is the reason why the eleventh graders in this study need to employ memory strategies more frequently.

Secondly, almost all the high school students confronted semantic problems in their listening. The causal factors for this inconvenience were that the students encountered unfamiliar topics and they also lacked their background knowledge. In contrast, they did not prefer using compensation strategies such as guessing from linguistic and contextual clues. It is recommended that compensation strategies need to be utilized to rescue the students from knowledge limitations in listening skill. This could be supported by what Oxford (1990) claims, "[f]or beginning and intermediate language learners, these strategies may be among the most important" (p. 90). In short, a successful listener needs to use both bottom-up processing (like textual cues) and top-down processing (like prior knowledge and experience). In other words, good listening comprehension ability also requires students to actively equip themselves with a wide range of lexical resources and topic-based knowledge.

Thirdly, both the questionnaire and interview results showed that most of the students had severe problems with their recognition of the overall structure of listening texts including main ideas, details, etc. Thus, the high school students should use metacognitive learning strategies for planning before listening such as listening for gist, listening for details, etc. and for monitoring their listening behaviors such as note-taking and summarizing, linguistically concentrating (cognitive strategies), information grouping (memory strategies) or contextual-based guessing (compensation strategies), and so on. Consequently, the listeners can get the overall picture of listening texts from specific information to general idea. It is suggested that both planning strategy and reflective strategy should be employed to assist students to create good listening habits and to be strategic in their listening learning.

Fourthly, a striking finding emerged from the study is that the majority of these high school students were in favor of social and affective strategies in their listening learning. For instance, they used to learn listening skill by interacting with their classmates and answering the teacher's questions for clarity or trying to lower their anxiety. It is highly recommended that the high school students should use social and affective strategies to collaborate with others, to verify understanding or to lower anxiety, which are ranked as the most effective strategies in terms of enhancing listening comprehension among students.

Succinctly stated, almost all the student participants faced several listening challenges, which negatively affected their listening comprehension. In order to improve their listening comprehension, apart from equipping with both language and background knowledge for listening, it is necessary that high school students should raise their awareness of different listening strategies and employ them sufficiently.

4.2. For teachers

In an attempt to improve EFL students' listening outcomes, teachers' roles should be taken into account. Therefore, the present study gives some pedagogical implications for EFL teachers in general and Duong Van Duong high school teachers in particular.

First of all, high school teachers have to make sure that students fully understand listening learning strategy groups, so they can apply these strategies in their listening appropriately and flexibly. To this end, teachers should provide their students with various listening strategy groups consciously according to each stage of listening (pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening). More specifically, based on Oxford's (1990) strategy classification system, the authors would like to make the following suggestions. Direct strategies which consist of (1) cognitive strategies (getting ideas quickly, note-taking, summarizing, translating, recognizing and using patterns, repeating, transferring, and analyzing contrastively), (2) compensation strategies (using other clues and using linguistics) and (3) memory strategies (grouping and associating/elaborating ideas) should be predominantly applied for while-listening stage. Meanwhile, indirect strategies including (1) metacognitive strategies (setting goals and objectives, self-monitoring, and self-evaluating), (2) affective strategies (using progressive relaxation, listening to your body, and discussing your feelings with someone else), and (3) social strategies (asking for clarification and cooperating with peers) are likely to be appropriate for pre-listening and post-listening stages.

Second, teachers need to modify listening tasks in the textbooks so that high school students vary their use of listening learning strategies. Especially, at the end of the listening sections, high school teachers need to reinforce their students' understanding and experience of the listening strategies during these listening tasks. As a result, students can self-regulate and moderate their listening performance in the future. In this case, it is suggested that teachers should use metacognitive strategies to promote their students' autonomous learning and social ones to cross-check students' listening comprehension.

Third, high school teachers should encourage their students to practice listening comprehension at home and participate in group work or pair work activities in class to reduce students' psychological issues. To deal with this issue, affective strategies are highly recommended.

Last but not least, to support students' English listening comprehension, listening subskills involving summarizing, note-taking, listening for gist, listening for specific information, inferring, listening extensively, deducing meaning from context, guessing, dealing with connected speech, etc. should be taught to students prior to listening texts (Spratt & Williams, 2011). To this end, metacognitive, memory and compensation strategies are necessarily included.

4.3. For further research

It is undeniable that the findings of this study offer theoretical and practical contributions to language teaching and research. Due to time limit, nevertheless, limited research instruments (e.g. questionnaire and interview) were employed, and only the frequency of used listening learning strategies was investigated. Hence, it is recommended that further research should extend the time for exploiting more research instruments like test or classroom observation to assure the triangulation of the data collection instruments. Furthermore, the relationship between students' academic achievement and listening learning strategies should be taken into account.

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TÌM HIỂU VIỆC SỬ DỤNG CHIẾN LƯỢC HỌC NGHE TIẾNG ANH CỦA HỌC SINH LỚP 11 TẠI TRƯỜNG THPT DƯƠNG VĂN DƯƠNG

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Tóm tắt: Nghe hiểu là một trong bốn kỹ năng quan trọng nhất khi học bất kì ngôn ngữ nào. Nó đòi hỏi người học thông thạo cả kiến thức cơ bản và kiến thức ngôn ngữ học. Nhiều nghiên cứu đã chỉ ra rằng các chiến lược nghe có thể giúp người học ngôn ngữ xử lý được các thông tin khi giao tiếp. Vì thế, nghiên cứu này nhằm tìm hiểu xem học sinh lớp 11 tại Trường THPT Dương Văn Dương có sử dụng các chiến lược nghe trong quá trình học nghe tiếng Anh hay không và sau đó tìm hiểu sâu hơn về mức độ sử dụng các chiến lược nghe. Nghiên cứu sử dụng cả dữ liệu định lượng và định tính. Cụ thể, có 425 học sinh trả lời bảng câu hỏi và sau đó, 20 trong số họ được đề nghị tham gia phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy các đối tượng nghiên cứu sử dụng các nhóm chiến lược nghe tiếng Anh với mức độ khác nhau và được chia thành 03 nhóm chính: nhóm sử dụng nhiều (gồm chiến lược nhận thức và cảm xúc), nhóm sử dụng vừa phải (gồm chiến lược siêu nhận thức và xã hội) và nhóm sử dụng ít (gồm chiến lược bù đắp và trí nhớ).

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APPENDIX A

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire belongs to a study named "**Eleventh Graders' Actual Use of Listening Learning Strategies at Duong Van Duong High School**". We highly appreciate it if you could spend your time answering following questions. Your responses will greatly contribute to the success of this paper. Your replies will be only used for survey purposes. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I. Personal information

Please provide your own information by putting a cross (X) in the box or write down your information.

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. How long have you learnt English? – About ________________ years.

II. Actual use of listening learning strategies

1. Did you employ listening learning strategies in the English class?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

(If yes, please continue to answer the rest of the questionnaire)

2. How often do you employ listening learning strategies?

Please put a cross (X) and rate yourself based on the given statements using the following scale:

1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = frequently, 5 = always						
1. MEMORY STRATEGIES						
1	I link my background knowledge with what being heard or group the information to restore them.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I use semantic mapping to learn the word school and word order.	1	2	3	4	5
2. COGNITIVE STRATEGIES						
3	While listening, I focus on grammar and structures to understand the text better and repeat information several times to facilitate my retention.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I try to grasp the main ideas before focusing on other small details.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I translate, transfer or make the contrast between English and Vietnamese words or expressions to understand the target language.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I write down what I hear and summarize my notes to understand listening texts better.	1	2	3	4	5
3. COMPENSATION STRATEGIES						
7	To understand unfamiliar words I hear, I make guesses by using linguistic clue such as word order and word stress.	1	2	3	4	5
8	To understand unfamiliar words I hear, I make guesses by using situational context such as noise and speaker's tone of voice.	1	2	3	4	5
4. METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES						
9	I decide in advance whether I should be attentive to the whole task or particular details.	1	2	3	4	5
10	When listening, I had clear goals (listen for main ideas, listen for detail ideas or listen for identifying speakers' attitudes)	1	2	3	4	5
11	I self – monitor the listening process to avoid making mistakes I had before and evaluate how well the task has been done.	1	2	3	4	5
5. AFFECTIVE STRATEGIES						
12	I try to relax or breathe deeply to keep calm before listening English.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Before listening, I tell myself that I can finish the task.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I share my feeling with my friends and encourage myself to concentrate on listening English even when I can't hear anything.	1	2	3	4	5
6. SOCIAL STRATEGIES						
15	I ask the teacher or my friends to clarify what I am not clear.	1	2	3	4	5
16	After listening, I exchange the information with friends and cooperate to check comprehension and answer questions.	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

APPENDIX B

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

The frequency of employing listening learning strategies

1. How often do you use Memory Strategies for your listening learning? If yes, how are these strategies useful for your learning? If no, why aren't they employed to improve your listening skill?

2. Do you frequently use Cognitive Strategies for your listening learning process? Which of the following techniques are often utilized for your listening?

3. Do you often exploit Compensation Strategy (guessing intelligently based on linguistics and other clues) to facilitate your listening learning? If yes, can you give some examples how is the strategy helpful for you? If not, what are your obstacles?

4. Have you employed Metacognitive Strategies with high frequency? If yes, specify your situations? If no, why?

5. How frequently do you use relaxation, deep breathing, or mediation to reduce your pressure before or while listening? If yes, what benefits do you get from these techniques? If no, why do you pay no or little attention to them?

6. Do you often ask for clarification or Cooperate with peers to accomplish listening tasks? In your opinion, are these techniques useful for your learning? Why or why not?

PRIMARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' ENGAGEMENT IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: Teachers' professional development (PD) is viewed as the center of educational reforms in many countries, and this topic has been widely researched by scholars such as Avalos (2011), Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (2011), Le (2002), and Whitehouse (2011). However, primary English language teachers (PELTers)' PD has been under-researched in Vietnamese contexts. This paper outlines a project researching PELTers' PD in a period of ongoing educational transformation, initiated by the National Foreign Languages Project. The authors highlight a 'mixed methods' research design with data collected from 68 surveys and five individual semi-structured interviews in a province in North Vietnam. Both the impact of language policy on Vietnamese PELTers' PD and their responses to top-down PD requirements and provision are under investigation. Some initial findings are (i) PELTers' rationales for PD; (ii) their engagement in PD forms and topics; (iii) benefits of PD; (iv)their PD need areas; and (v) factors affecting PD engagement. PELTers' suggestions for improving PD in their contexts are also discussed. This paper offers significant insights for EFL researchers, policy-makers, EFL teacher training institutions and other educators.

Keywords: professional development, EFL teachers, primary English language teaching

1. Introduction

Education reform in Vietnam officially started some years after the introduction of the "Doi Moi" or Open Door/Renovation Policy in 1986. In the new context of globalisation, English serves as an important communication tool for economic and social development, and a leading foreign language subject in the school system. Furthermore, general education renovation and EFL in particular, have been one of the goals of the Open Door Policy, therefore in 2006 the Government renewed the Law of Education, and on 30 September 2008, Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) introduced Project 2020 under Decision 1400 of the Prime Minister which aimed to renovate thoroughly the tasks of teaching and learning foreign languages within the national educational system in the period 2008–2020 (Government of Vietnam, 2008). Project 2020 was revised and adapted to be more suitable for the new period 2017-2025 on 22 December 2017. Some specific objectives of the project (hereby referred to as the NFL Project) are the implementation of a new ten-year general English program (from English 3 through to English 12), with 100% of grade 3, 70% of grade 6, 60% of grade 10 students who will be learning this

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new program by the school year 2020-2021, and 100% of the graduates from English teacher training programs to be well qualified in both their teaching profession and English proficiency level by 2025 (Government of Vietnam, 2017).

To achieve these goals and objectives, there has been an urgent need for new training and retraining of many teachers in both methodology and English proficiency. Currently, over 86,000 Vietnamese EFL teachers work at all school levels in the national education system, but a majority of the teaching staff have not met the standard requirements of their professional teaching roles (Nguyen, forthcoming). For example, statistics from a reliable media agency indicated that in a large city, only 31.7% primary school teachers, 36.5% mid-school teachers and 25.83% high school teachers passed the competence test in English proficiency and ELT methodology (Tuệ Nguyễn, 2015).

Various methods and activities have been utilized to train these in-service low-quality teachers, for example: face-to-face training, online training or blended training, different professional development (PD) activities: reflective teaching, keeping and sharing journals, peer mentoring and coaching, forming and/or joining a teacher support group or network, forming or joining local and national teachers' associations, etc. (Murray, 2010). Teachers of different levels of proficiency, and from different places will choose to take part in the most suitable PD activities to improve their English proficiency and teaching skills.

For the primary English language teachers (PELTers), they most often choose to attend the blended training programs during summer in order to achieve the acquired certificates from MoET. This model seems to be more effective than others because it is direct training (i.e. they get hands-on experience) with more practice.

Calling on data from a large-scaled project researching Vietnamese EFL teachers' PD under the context of the NFL Project, this paper highlights PELTers' experiences and perceptions via analysis of 68 survey responses and five interview transcripts, collected during a summer PD course in a province in North Vietnam. The paper is therefore organised into the following parts: (1) Introduction; (2) Conceptualisation of PD for teachers/PELTers; (3) Description of the study; (4) Data collection and analysis; (5) Preliminary findings; and (6) Conclusion. In particular, the findings address five major themes that lead to further discussions and implications for future related studies.

2. Conceptualisation of teachers' professional development

In their daily life and work, teachers experience various activities and interactions that may facilitate their knowledge and skills, their teaching practice and improvement from personal, social and emotional perspectives. These activities, whether formally such as structured topic-specific seminars or informally, namely hallway discussions and everyday conversations (Desimone, 2009), whether partly or primarily intended for improved performance namely workshops, local and national conferences, college courses, special institutes and centres can be counted in a complex development process (Little, 1993). The process can empower teachers' competence in terms of instructional skills, curriculum development, implementation and evaluation skills throughout their lifelong teaching career, and act as leverage for teacher development.

The conceptualisation of teachers' PD has also attracted scholars from a vast range of broader views over the past decades (Desimone, 2009, p. 182), specifically the application of situated and cognitive views of learning as interactive and social based in discourse and community practice. PD can also facilitate teachers to encounter challenges of the teaching job, since teachers themselves are fully aware of the fact that they need to learn and adapt to the multiple contexts, taking into account both the individual teacher-learners, the PD programs, the systems and context in which they are participants (Borko, 2004).

On the basis of teacher needs, the effectiveness of a PD activity can also be ensured through (i) topics that emerge from teacher interests; (ii) long-term commitments from the participants and related parties; and (iii) engagement in clear measurement and evaluation of goals and teaching targets (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011). In a broader context, continuing PD can be driven by such major characteristics as identified learning needs, sustainability, subject specific, classroom-based, collaboration, external expertise utilisation; and by other supporting factors, including funding and policy platform (Whitehouse, 2011).

3. The study

Recently the PD of teachers in general has been well acknowledged in research (Desimone, 2009) and international studies cover conceptualisation of PD, features of a quality PD activity, models and stages of teachers' on-going development, factors affecting teacher development, impact of PD engagement on teachers, etc. in different contexts (Broad & Evans, 2006; Caena, 2011; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Day & Sachs, 2005; Fraser, Kennedy, Reid, & Mckinney, 2007; Kennedy, 2005; Offices of Development Effectiveness, 2015; Villegas-Reimers, 2003). However, the studies of PELTers' PD in Vietnamese contexts have not received sufficient attention. Grounded on the above general world-view of PD for teachers and the authors' experiences in working with Vietnamese PELTers in a range of PD programs under the NFL Project, this study investigated the current contexts that Vietnamese PELTers have been undertaking PD and that have shaped their PD engagement, with particular regards to their rationales for PD and provision for their PD. The study also examined PELTers' experiences of certain PD forms and topics provided by MoET and/or local training departments. The study further explored how PD engagement places impact on PELTers and what factors affect their undertaking PD, as well as offering PELTers' opportunities to raise their voice about how to empower their PD engagement, considering their PD needs and contexts.

4. Data collection and analysis

In this descriptive study, we employed a mixed-methods approach to provide an insight into the research problem (Creswell, 2015) and minimise the disadvantages of a single research method (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected between July and August 2017. The data focused on PELTers' experiences of PD regarding (i) their PD context; (ii) their engagement in specific PD programs and/or activities; (iii) factors affecting PELTers' PD engagement; (iv) impacts of PD engagement on PELTers; and (v) PELTers' own suggestions for improving their on-going PD.

The designed surveys were piloted by five language teachers in an education provider in Hanoi. The vetting process helped identify possible vagueness in the survey questions and involved several adaptations in terms of both the language and format. The final surveys were then distributed to PELTers in a northern province, about 80 kilometres far from the capital. These PELTers, currently working within the geographical location, were assigned to attend an official PD program co-organised by their provincial Department of Education and Training (DoET) and an authorised EFL teacher education institution under the NFL Project. The program consisted of 400-hour blended training, of which there were 100 hour-face-to-face training and 200 hour-online learning. PELTers also did micro teaching during training and at real primary schools as part of the program, and completed other required assessment tasks before being granted with a program certificate.

Sixty-eight PELTers agreed to become the researched participants. They responded to a pen-and-paper survey in Vietnamese, consisting of two sections. Section 1 covered 10 content questions regarding PELTers' PD experiences. Quetions 1-3 addressed PELTers' frequency of PD engagement, rationales for PD and PD providers. Questions 4-5 focused on participants' evaluation of the effectiveness of their engagement in specific PD forms and topics, using a four-scale rating from 'not effective' to 'very effective'. Questions 6-7 examined participants' PD needs, based on their reflection on one most effective PD program or activity they had attended over the past five years. Questions 8-9 aimed to investigate participants' perceptions of factors affecting their PD engagement as well as impact of their PD engagement. Question 10 addressed participants' opinions on how to improve their PD engagement. Section 2 covered six close-ended demographic questions, namely participants' gender, work location, employment status, qualification, mode of training and work experience.

Most of the surveyed participants are female (N = 62; 91.18%), which is not phenomenal in overall Vietnamese teaching personnel contexts as well as in PELT. They were teaching at various schools in rural areas in the selected province. It was worth noticing that only over a quarter of participants secured their employment status with tenure conditions while 61.71% of their colleagues were in less-than-one-year contracts. Nearly two-thirds of the participants previously attended full-time teacher training courses, and a great number of them held a bachelor's degree in English language teaching from teacher education colleges and universities (N = 55; 80.88%). Participants' experience in PELT varied from below three years to twenty years, with over half of them having been teaching for three to ten years, and 27.94% belonging to the 10 – 20 years group (See Table 1).

Table 1. Participants' demographic information

Information	**Details**	**Number (N = 68)**	**Percent**
School geographical location	*Metropolitan areas*	2	2.94%
	Rural areas	58	85.29%
	Missing information	8	
Employment status	*Tenure*	19	27.94%
	Long-term contract (>1 year)	4	5.88%
	Short-term contract (<1 year)	42	61.76%
	Missing information	3	

Information	Details	Number (N = 68)	Percent
Highest qualification	*Bachelor's degree (from junior colleges)*	9	13.23%
	Bachelor's degree (from colleges and universities)	55	80.88%
	Master's degree	1	1.47%
	Missing information	3	
Training mode	*Full-time*	44	64.71%
	In-service	18	26.47%
	Missing information	6	
Years of PELT experience	*<3 years*	5	7.35%
	3 – 10 years	40	58.82%
	10 – 20 years	19	27.94%
	>20 years	0	0%
	Missing information	4	

After completing the survey, 15 participants consented to taking a follow-up semi-structured interview in the second phase of data collection. Finally, five participants were selected to become the interviewees on ground of their willingness, their teaching experience and their understanding of PD in PELT contexts. These participants were provided with further explanations of the research, and they had opportunities to ask questions related to the interview protocol. When they were ready, their responses were audio-recorded. They reflected on their PD, addressing (i) their engagement frequency and effectiveness of specific PD programs and/or activities; (ii) benefits and constraints on PD engagement; (iii) their PD needs; and (iv) their suggestions for improving PD. The interview recordings lasted approximately 20 minutes on average. All the interviewees' information was kept confidential and secure for the research purposes, with no anticipated risks to their participation in the whole course of the study.

In this study, we conducted an iterative and recursive process for both the quantitative and qualitative analysis. For the survey data, we coded the responses from R01 to R68, counted frequency on percentage terms and noticed typical patterns. In several open-ended questions, for example, questions 6, 7 and 16, we categorised participants' answers into related themes and then quantified these themes for preliminary findings. For the interviews, the data were transcribed, coded (Teachers A, B, C, D, and E) and analysed qualitatively, with attention to sub-themes emerged as well as the development of final theme clusters to support the findings. Both the data sources were then weaved for triangulation and further discussion. In the following part of this article, we discuss major themes that reflect PELTers' perceptions and experiences of PD engagement.

5. Findings and discussion

The analysis of the collected data revealed five major themes: (i) rationales and provision for PELTer's PD engagement; (ii) PELTers' engagement in different forms and topics of PD; (iii) impacts of PD engagement on PELTers; (iv) factors affecting PELTer's PD engagement; and (v) empowering PELTer's PD. The following sections discuss these major themes in detail.

5.1. Rationales and provision for primary English language teachers' engagement in professional development

Over the past five years, participants have actually had a relatively high frequency of PD engagement, at least on an annual basis. In particular, almost one third of them (N = 23) responded that they attended PD programs as many as twice or three times per year while 16 of their colleagues even participated in more than three PD programs annually. These ratios tended to imply that their rural working contexts did not hinder their PD involvement. The provision for PELters' PD was aligned with the NFL Project and the requirements of teachers' qualifications across all levels. Participants were deemed to undertake PD organised by the mainstream Education and Training units at various levels, ranging from their schools (N = 10) to local district departments, provincial department and MOET (N = 60), as well as by other PD providers in non-public sectors (N = 3).

It is worth noticing that while policy requirements were major rationales for most PELTers' PD engagement, personal needs also drove approximately 40% of the participants to actively engage in PD activities both inside and outside their school contexts. The findings correlated with one response in the follow-up interview. This teacher stated:

> Actually, I enjoy PD very much. I don't think it [PD] is just the requirements from the ministry [MOET] and the department [DOET]. As a teacher, I want to have on-going development, better my teaching and become updated in my field. It is my personal needs and interest. (Teacher A)

5.2. Primary English language teachers' engagement in forms and topics of professional development

Participants evaluated their engagement in both PD forms from positive perspectives. Of all seven PD forms listed in the survey, 100% of the researched PELTers believed that they were most familiar with *Peer observation* and *Workshops/ training courses*. They ranked these two forms at highest levels of effectiveness at 69.11% (N = 4) and 48.53% (N = 33), respectively. Participants also expressed their favour for *Online/ blended training* and *Qualification programs* at relatively high effectiveness level. Yet there was likelihood that these two forms placed medium impacts rather than high impacts on the attendees. Interestingly, while nearly half of participants never engaged in *Observation visits to other schools* (N = 30), those who had opportunities to undertake this PD form believed that they benefited greatly from visiting and learning from their colleagues in other teaching contexts. The participants did not express their engagement in *Action research/ education conference*. This was because normally PELTers were keen on practical PD rather than on dealing with theories and academic issues. They perceived that this form was more relevant to teachers at higher education levels and that they had never been trained or required to do research and/or attend conference as presenters. They seemed not to be aware of this activity as a necessary PD form.

With regards to PD topics, participants evaluated *PELT pedagogy* courses to be most effective (39.34% for medium level of effectiveness and 60.66% for high level), then *Using technology in ELT* and *Textbook and material adaptation*, both at approximately 56% for high level of effectiveness. However, when asked to describe ONE most effective program that PELTers had attended, as many as 87.72% participants cited their engagement in the latest training course on the new textbooks (in 2017, at the time of the current study) to be most beneficial. This PD program was delivered by a prestigious PD provider, also a well-recognised EFL teacher education institution in Hanoi and sponsored by the NFL Project.

The reasons why the majority of participants in this study found the new textbook training course most beneficial were expressed in their answers to the survey question number 6. The most mentioned reason was their achievement in the objectives of the course. Nearly two-thirds of the surveyed teachers (70.59%) said that they became aware of the teaching approaches and methods in the new textbooks, and they could apply pretty effectively many techniques of classroom management, and useful ways of teaching phonics, grammar, vocabulary and the four language skills. Moreover, 22 participants agreed that another objective they could achieve was to be able to teach songs and chants in the new text books. This was confirmed by all the interviewed teachers. They said that prior to this workshop, they only chose easy or familiar songs and chants to teach and skipped the rest. However, they got to be fully aware of the importance of using songs and chants in a language class, and had learnt how to adapt or create the new ones to teach, just right during the short course.

Participants also shared other objectives of the course they could get, though at different percentages, such as being able to design progress and achievements tests or assess students via projects, effectively use and adapt textbooks, teacher's books, supplementary materials, and tasks and activities suggested in these teaching materials. The survey results also revealed that 75% of the participants felt pretty contented or very contented with the length of the course, the different forms of learning and assessment that this blended training course provided. Actually, the PELTers were asked to attend ten days' direct training by trainers (i.e. 100-hour face-to-face learning in class, plus twice the time (200 hours) learning online with the help of online trainers, and 50 hours' practice of micro-teaching at training location, and 50 hours doing observation and teaching for assessment at local primary schools. During the interview, one teacher reflected:

> This training course [about using the new textbooks] is the most effective for me. It is practical in the way that we did not have to go to the training location for a longer time, as my house is 40 km away. I can choose the time suitable for me to learn online. When I learn online, some problems arise, but I can contact the teacher in charge or email to the trainers to ask for help. And I know the answers to the quizzes online immediately, which gives me motivation. (Teacher B)

Her sharing coincided with what another teacher further commented below:

> The teaching and observation task at a primary school is challenging, but we can learn from each other, listen to useful comments from the trainer and other observers to reshape our teaching, and can apply what we learn into reality. (Teacher E)

Regarding English language competence (e.g. B1 and B2 – CEFR), more participants found this PD content at medium level of effectiveness than high level of effectiveness (49.23% versus 40.00). Only a few participants indicated that these language courses were much less beneficial than expected (N = 5). They further explained that the assessment tasks were somewhat difficult for them and some knowledge was not practical in their teaching context.

5.3. Impact of professional development on primary English language teachers

Participants addressed levels of impact that PD engagement placed on them as

PELTers. A major finding is that participants' high PD frequency and positive perceptions on the effectiveness of PD topics resulted in their positive change in professional skills and professional knowledge. In particular, a striking high number of PELTers stated that they improved significantly in their PELT pedagogy (91.04%) and English language competence (76.12%), the two key components in all PD programs for EFL teachers. Likewise, there was a remarkable improvement in their awareness of professional teaching role requirements and standardisation (76.00%). PELTers understood that they took responsibility for degree accreditation and qualifications to align with MOET's policy requirements. Positive impacts could also be viewed in such aspects as *Opportunities for networking with colleagues and experts* (65.15%) and *Motivation for further PD* (56.92%).

Another finding is that the majority of researched PELTers hardly realised any difference in their opportunities for increased incomes, i.e. salary and/or payment (53.13% and 32.81% for 'no impact' and 'little impact', respectively). This is understandable in a way that PD engagement is part of professional role requirements for Vietnamese teachers across all levels, and salary/ payment schemes are on a regular tenure basis, standardised by state laws. Likewise, nearly two-thirds of the participants (N = 41) claimed that their PD engagement did not facilitate their employment opportunities, namely official tenure. However, a slightly lower number of participants (N = 36) perceived that they gained positive change in their employment status. Engaging in PD programs, particularly qualification and/or language competence courses, was one of key requirements for employment recruitment. Two interviewees – Teachers B and C both echoed that this was a prerequisite for their tenure or long-term contracts.

5.4. Factors affecting primary English language teachers' professional development

Although PD programs brought countless benefits to as well as great impacts on these PELTers' career, the survey also unveiled a number of factors that affected the researched PELTers' participation in these PD programs.

Four factors that were totally or quite agreed by most of the teachers to have great effects on their decision whether to take part in PD activities included: equal opportunities for PD (N = 68), relevance of PD programs to their PD needs (N = 68), opportunities for active learning (N = 67), and financial support (N = 66). Other factors also counted by these PELTers were: logistical support (N = 64), quality of PD programs (N = 64), time when PD programs take place (N = 63), and personal issues (N = 56).

When asked to clarify their ideas on these factors, several of participants gave further explanations. There were not always equal opportunities for all teachers to attend a PD event due to the inadequate provision of PD programs and the lack of teachers doing their teaching tasks at school, especially when the PD programs were held during school year. In this case, some teachers would not have chance to attend these programs. In other cases, the teachers who had been chosen could not participate the PD programs either, just because the time of the program was inconvenient for them. One teacher explained when being interviewed:

> In my school, there are only two teachers. Each of us has to teach 24 periods [35 minutes each] per week. So when one goes to a PD course during working days, the other cannot do the colleague' work. If the PD course is held at

> weekend, other problems might arise too, such as their family responsibilities, personal plans, or personal health. And the contents of some PD programs we attended did not meet our needs; the materials were not good enough; or more problematically, the trainers were not well-qualified or well-trained as we expected, etc. (Teacher D)

5.5. Empowering primary English language teachers' professional development

To solve the ineffectiveness and inconvenience of the current PD programs, and to help PELTers overcome their difficulties in attending PD programs, we need to understand the teachers' needs for PD, and listen to their suggestions for improving their PD engagement. After that we will design PD courses that meet the PELTers' needs in both contents and forms, and at suitable time, in order to maximize/ empower their engagement.

In the survey, we asked the PELTers about their needs for PD (question 7). We received responses from 51 teachers for this open-ended question, of which 29.41% preferred to be trained in teaching methods, 13.73% liked courses which focused on using IT in teaching or giving demo teaching of each lesson. Other teachers needed more training in using interactive boards (9.80%), teaching phonics and pronunciation (7.84%). A small number of teachers liked improving both their English language and teaching skills (N = 3), teaching listening (N = 2), and PD about managing classroom (N = 1).

When asked what they would suggest for improving PD programs and ensuring more of their engagement, not only 25 surveyed but all the interviewed PELTers were willing to share their thoughts. More than half of them (52%) shared the idea of shortening the training time during the week, just two or three days at most, or they just want to be trained in the mornings or afternoons. They would like to spend the rest of the day on their school work or house work. Some of them suggested being able to schedule their time of training themselves.

The surveyed and interviewed teachers also talked about the content and methods of training. Three out of the five interviewees (Teacher A, C, D) said that training contents should be practical. Some training contents were still rather theoretical, i.e. trainers focused more on the principles or theories of teaching, such as *"Why should we use this method/ this song/ this game to teach children?", or "How can we teach language skills?" "What activities should be used in pre- or post-stages?"* so on and so forth. However, there was little time for demonstration or practice of those theories. Two teachers suggested:

> Trainers should give demo teaching or examples using the lessons taken from English textbooks being used by us. For example, when trainers teach us how to teach phonics, they can use Unit 6, Lesson 3, Part 1, in Tieng Anh 3 [This session focuses on teaching 2 sounds: /k/, /d/]. When they teach songs and chants, they can use many of them in the textbooks. This is the kind of hands-on training, and we prefer this way. (Teachers C and D)

Teacher A added: "Trainer should provide us techniques applicable in our teaching. Activities focusing on theories should be limited".

Other suggestions by the majority of the surveyed PEFTers (N= 18 out of 25) for improving their PD engagement include: more seminars and workshops delivered by foreign specialists or native teachers, and held in or outside local regions; and more financial supports, more convenient teaching and training conditions given by the NFL Project, local DoET and their schools. A teacher added:

> We need to be allowed to teach fewer lessons or some replacement staff who teach for us during the time we attend training sessions; and more importantly, we need some money to cover our travel and accommodation expenses because our schools do not pay for the lessons/ the time we do not teach at schools, but at training locations. (Teacher E)

One more suggestion for PD programs is about course assessment. Some PELTers (36%) thought that there should be considerations about assignments and assessments for intensive PD courses within a short timeframe. They cited the training course on using new English textbooks that they had attended the previous year as a typical example. The course was so demanding with many assignments and assessment tools, namely participation, online and classroom quizzes, final test, micro teaching, observation, school visits and teaching practice. They had to cope with time management while still having to deal with their heavy workload at primary school. For these reasons, a few teachers suggested replacing micro teaching at training venue and/ or teaching practice at school with their filmed real teaching at primary school. An experienced teacher further explained:

> In this way, we do not have to act as false students during micro teaching, and save us much time, money, and efforts on practice teaching at different schools. On your part [trainers' part], you do not have to travel a long way to the provincial schools to watch and assess us. (Teacher B)

We – researchers – feel this suggested alternative assessment a feasible one.

As many as 20 out of 25 teachers who answered the surveyed question 16, and many more of PELTers attended the training course recommended that it was high time the training rooms were better equipped; and learning and training conditions were improved. They opined to the fact that the rooms need properly-operated projectors and good internet access so that trainees could watch demo video lessons. Besides, it would be much better if they could learn in air-conditioned training rooms, especially during such terribly hot weather.

6. Conclusion

We have provided an insight of the education transformation in Vietnamese contexts, addressing the call for English language education, English language teacher education under the implementation of the NFL Project. In particular, we have presented part of our large-scaled research project on EFL teachers' PD.

Within the scope of this paper, we focus on PELTer's experiences and perceptions of PD engagement. Albeit preliminary, our findings and discussions reveal that PELTers frequently participate in PD programs provided by MoET and DoET. They are even active in undertaking PD programs because they can see positive impacts of PD engagement on their professional improvements and because they have strong personal needs for development. With regard to the provision, it seems that they benefit much from PD providers who do not neglect PELTers' 'remote' work locations. The provision aligns with the NFL Project's objectives and from a positive perspective; we argue that PD engagement helps raise PELTer's awareness of the current foreign language policy and the entailed innovation in English language teaching. Despite a range of challenges, namely financial and logistical support as well as work and time conflicts, PELTers express their willingness to further undertake PD if they have opportunities. They wish to attend PD of high quality, practicality and relevance. They also mention need-based programs that consider their teaching contexts and teaching time schedule. The topics of their greatest interest are teaching pedagogy with real-timed micro-teaching and more demonstration delivered by qualified master trainers and their peers.

As we can only provide our initial data collection and analysis in a PD program in one province, this research tends to have limitations regarding restricted time and generalisability. In stages that follow, we are going to analyse data sources collected from varied geographical locations and across a range of education levels. This paper; therefore, contributes our understanding of PD for Vietnamese teachers in general and PELTers in particular. Inquiries of our large-scaled research go beyond a mere description of PD contexts, aiming to redefine the way EFL teachers' PD in Vietnam has been interpreted to date and seek to inform its future trajectories. These inquiries, under the goals of the NFL Project, address PD alignment at different policy levels and PD stakeholders' perspectives, especially teachers' voice in EFL education and teacher education.

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GIÁO VIÊN TIẾNG ANH TIỂU HỌC VỚI VẤN ĐỀ THAM GIA PHÁT TRIỂN CHUYÊN MÔN

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Tóm tắt: Phát triển chuyên môn (PTCM) cho giáo viên là một trong những nhiệm vụ trọng tâm để cải cách giáo dục ở nhiều quốc gia. Chủ đề này thu hút sự quan tâm của nhiều học giả như Avalos (2011), Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (2011), Le (2002) và Whitehouse (2011). Tuy vậy, trong bối cảnh triển khai Đề án Ngoại ngữ Quốc gia, việc giáo viên tiếng Anh ở Việt Nam, đặc biệt ở bậc tiểu học, tham gia PTCM chưa được nghiên cứu đầy đủ. Chúng tôi sử dụng nghiên cứu phương pháp kết hợp tìm hiểu quan điểm và kinh nghiệm tham gia PTCM của giáo viên tiếng Anh tiểu học (GVTATH). Chúng tôi tiến hành khảo sát 68 giáo viên và phỏng vấn 05 giáo viên tại một tỉnh miền bắc Việt Nam. Dữ liệu thu thập được chúng tôi phân tích theo 5 mảng chính: (i) lý do GVTATH tham gia PTCM; (ii) các hình thức và chủ đề PTCM của họ; (iii) lợi ích của việc PTCM; (iv) các lĩnh vực PTCM GVTATH muốn tham gia; và (v) các yếu tố tác động đến việc PTCM của họ. Chúng tôi cũng tìm hiểu một số cách thức PTCM hiệu quả mà GVTATH gợi ý. Hy vọng bài viết này sẽ giúp ích cho các nhà nghiên cứu ngoại ngữ, nhà hoạch định chính sách, các trường sư phạm và giáo viên tiếng Anh bậc tiểu học.

Từ khóa: phát triển chuyên môn, giáo viên tiếng Anh, giảng dạy tiếng Anh bậc tiểu học

A REVIEW ON VALIDATING LANGUAGE TESTS

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Abstract: Validity in language testing and assessment has its long fundamental role in research along with reliability (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). This paper analyses basic theories and empirical research on language test validity in order to provide the notion, the classification of language test validity, the validation working frames and the trends of empirical research. Four key findings come out from the analysis. Firstly, language test validity refers to an evaluative judgment of the language test quality on the ground of evidence of the integrated components of test content, criterion and consequences through the interpretation of the meaning and utility of test scores. Secondly, construct validity is a dominating term in modern validity classification. The chronic division of construct validity into prior and post ones can help researchers have a clearer validation option. Plus, test validation can be grounded in light of Messick (1989), Bachman (1996) and Weir (2005). Finally, almost all empirical research on test validity the researcher has addressed concerns international and national high-stakes proficiency tests. The research results open gaps in test validation research for the future.

Keywords: language assessment, test usefulness, construct validity, validation

1. Introduction

Testing and assessment, shortened as assessment, has become a mainstream in global language education for several decades (Bachman, 2000). Bachman & Palmer's (1996) framework of test usefulness has functioned as a fundamental basis for professional English language test development, implementation and evaluation all over the world. It is a combination of six components, namely reliability, validity, authenticity, interactiveness, practicality and impact. Amongst this integration, validity is argued to be the dominating factor to ensure that a test will measure what it claims to measure (Messick, 1989; Bachman, 1995; Hughes, 2003; Borsboom, Mellenbergh, & Van Heerden, 2004). Language test validity and validation has been investigated in the world largely in light of the validation theories proposed by Messick (1989), Bachman & Palmer (1996) and Weir (2005). They require test developers articulate their test validity. Albeith to its significance, the matter has merely become Vietnamese assessment researchers' and practictioners' concern recently (Trần, 2011; Nguyễn, 2017; Bùi, 2016; Vũ, 2016; Nguyễn, 2018; Nguyễn, 2018). This paper expects to raise Vietnamese English language teachers' awareness of language test validity, which can impact their testing practice positively.

Four research questions are raised:

1. What is the concept of language test validity?

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2. What are the types of language test validity?

3. How can a language test be validated?

4. What has previous empirical research on test validation revealed?

The research is initiated with the theoretical backgrounds of testing and assessment. Later on, through content analysis and practical experience, the author would present the concept, the classification, the validation framework and the results of research on validity.

2. Methodology

This secondary research is conducted analytically when the researcher bases on the available sources of information to evaluate the interested research problem critically (Kothari, 2004, p. 3). In order to reach the unified definition and classification of validity, the researcher browses the prevailing relevant documentation. Findings from test validation framework and empirical studies undergo the same method. The data in this study comes from both objective and subjective reflective sources.

3. Theoretical background

3.1. Language testing and assessment

Testing and assessment are two terms which are currently in common parlance. While tests are defined as "a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge or performance in a given domain" (Brown, 2003, p.3), assessment is referred to as an "ongoing process" (Cizek, 1997) or "an ongoing strategy" (Brown, 2004). Cizek's (1997) definition of assessment is selected herein for its relative wholeness:

1. the planned process of gathering and synthesizing information relevant to the purposes of (a) discovering and documenting students' strengths and weaknesses, (b) planning and enhancing instruction, or (c) evaluating progress and making decisions about students;

2. the process, instrument or method used to gather the information. (p.10)

Assessment is an umbrella term including tests with diverse educational practices (Brown, 2003). Popham (2002, p. 4) adds that "Educational assessment is a formal attempt to determine students' status with respect to educational variables of interest." The process is "formal" because it takes place professionally and systematically in the classroom context. The phrase "educational variables of interests" suggests the acceptance of variations in degrees of knowledge, learning styles, and attitudes. Therefore, assessing learners' abilities demands teachers'open-mindedness to accept diversities but keep inclusion of learning goals as well as equity among learners. Echoing the view, McTighe's (2014, p. 2) claims that assessment should (1) serve learning, (2) use diverse measurement tools, (3) align with goals, (4) measure with matters, and (5) be fair. In order to reach the goals, there should be test quality harness.

3.2. The quality of a good language test

Bachman and Palmer (1996, p.18) released a framework of test usefulness or test qualities. It is a combination of six components as presented below:

Usefulness = Reliability + Construct validity + Authenticity + Interactiveness + Impact + Practicality

To put it simply, reliability is the consistency in test results across testing times. Prior to defining construct validity, the notion of construct should be presented first. Construct is the specific ability definition used as the basis for designing a test task and interpreting scores gained from the task. Construct validity is the degree for a test score to be interpreted and generalised accurately to indicate the ability in measurement. Authenticity refers to the correlation between the test tasks and the target language use. Interactiveness pertains to the engagement of test takers when performing the test. Impact means the test effect on stakeholders like learners, teachers, authorities and parents. Lastly, a test is practical when resources for developing, implementing and conducting the test are available and applicable.

To reach the target of usefulness, the test developer must identify a certain test purpose, a certain test taker, and a target language use domain. These qualities are integrative although the degree can vary across the contexts. A high-stake test puts more emphasis on reliability and validity while a classroom test can have more elements of authenticity, interactiveness and impact. Reliability and validity are core measurement qualities of a test because they are closely reflected by the score interpretation, while the remaining components concern more the societal aspects of a test.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Concepts of validity

It is undeniable that validity is a key concept in the field of testing and assessment (Messick, 1989; Lado, 1961; Fulcher & Davidson, 2007; Bachman, 1995; Hughes, 1989; Borsboom, Mellenbergh, & Van Heerden, 2004; Shepard, 1993). Cronbach & Meehl (1955) who are credited fathers of construct validity define validity as *the consistence* between test score interpretations and a nomological network involving theoretical and observational terms. Validity in a language test was first mentioned by Lado (1961). He claims that if a test measures what it purports to measure, it is valid. This claim sounds general and hard to be evaluated. The American Psychological Association (1995, p.9) makes it clearer that validity is "the *appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the specific inferences made from the test scores"* (cited in Bachman, 1995, p. 243). Here we see the role of the test score to evaluate the validity of the test. In 1989, Hughes considers validity *the test ability* to announce a test to be valid by measuring "accurately what it is intended to measure" (p. 22). Concurrently, Messick (1989, p. 245) designates validity "an overall *evaluative judgment* of the degree to which empirical and theoretical rationales support the **adequacy** and **appropriateness** of **interpretations** and **actions** based on test scores and other modes of assessment". He regards construct validity as social consequences of testing, which can impose positive or negative washback on the users because it can determine the meaningfulness, appropriateness and usefulness of the test through the interpretation of the test score. Another approach to test validity is to label it the *test property* being evaluated rather than the judgment of the test (Borsboom et al., 2004).

All in all, as a majority of language testing and assessment experts state it, validity in a language test refers to an evaluative judgment of the language test quality on the ground of evidence of the integrated components of test content, criterion and consequences through the interpretation of the meaning and utility of test scores. Test scores are usually rendered to provide evidence for validity (American Psychological Association, 1995; Cronbach & Meehl, 1955; Lado, 1961; Messick, 1989). Nonetheless, even in Messick (1998)'s definition, validity can be examined with other means except for test scores. This new light will be elaborated in the coming part.

4.2. A combined framework of validity

Validity standards made its debut in 1954 by the American Psychological Association in four forms namely *predictive validity*, *concurrent validity*, *content validity* and *construct validity* (Shepard, 1993). *Predictive validity* can be observed after test administration to predict the future performance while *concurrent validity* refers to the concurrency of the test score and the criterion of an already-accepted test. *Content validity* concerns the comparison between test specifications and test contents. Among types of validity, *construct validity* is the most complicated, which gets its evidence from the comparison between the need-to-be-proved-valid item and the supposed-valid item. Herein, it is important to clarify one key concept as "construct" in the field of testing and assessment. It is the definition of a *specific ability* used as the basis for designing a test task and interpreting scores gained from the task (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Hence, *construct validity* denotes the degree for a test score to be interpreted and generalised accurately to indicate the construct or ability in measurement (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Construct validity is qualified both qualitatively and quantitatively (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Messick, 1998; Weir, 2005).

In 1966, the Association revised the validity structures to make it a "Trinitarian doctrine", including *construct validity, concurrent validity* and *criterion-related validity* (combined by *predictive validity* and *concurrent validity*) (Shepard, 1993). Lado (1961) and Davies (1968) add the element of *face validity*, which is decided by the look at the test appearance, to the *content validity*. From another aspect, Campbell and Standley (1966) introduce *internal validity* and *external validity*. The former is a vital quality, shown through the analysis of the test content, whilst the latter finds out the test generability for a test to be applied to different contexts based on the test score. External validity is stated to belong to criterion validity. Alderson, Clapham and Wall (1995) echo the classification of validity into internal and external classes and label external validity as criterion-oriented validity. D'Este (2012) reviews Messick (1989)'s new contribution to the validity framework on the ground of the test score. The new unified framework is composed of two facets, one being the source of test justification from "either evidence or consequence", and another one concerning the function of the test outcome through "interpretation or use" (Messick, 1989, p. 20).

	Test interpretation	**Test use**
Evidential basis	Construct validity	Construct validity + Relevance/ utility
Consequential basis	Value implications	Social consequences

Figure 1. Facets of validity (Messick, 1989, p. 20)

In 1996, Messick went further to discuss consequential validity along with the term *washback*. He argues that "washback is a consequence of testing that bears on validity only if it can be evidentially shown to be an effect of the test and not of other forces operative on the educational scene" (p.2). In this way, it is not easy to measure the washback of the test. To make it possible, in case test specifications are widely known to the test developers, test users and test takers, it can be said that content validity leads to washback on test preparation through making test takers familiar with the test and reduce their anxiety (Messick, 1996, p. 6). Positive washback can be enhanced by a valid test (Morrow, 1986; Anderson & Wall, 1993; Frederiksen & Collins, 1989; cited in Messick, 1996). That is why it is important to find out the evidence of validity in a test. Through Messick's (1989) lenses, general validity consists of six aspects: *the content aspect*, *the substantial aspect, the structural aspect, the generalizability aspect, the external aspect* and *the consequential aspect*. Except for the content and structural aspects, the four remaining criteria pertain to the interpretation of the test score. The content aspect is shown the relationship between the content relevance and representativeness of technical quality like the appropriate reading level. The substantive aspect includes both the theoretical ground and empirical evidence

The consequential validity of the test refers to the evaluation of both intended and unintended consequences of score interpretation and use concurrently and in the future, with evidence of bias in scoring and interpretation, the positive or negative influence on class instructions and knowledge acquisition (Messick, 1996, p. 13). It is interesting when Messick (1996, p.14) claims that validity of a test should be investigated as an assumed basis for washback.

According to Bachman (1995, p. 244-256), a framework of validity comprises *content validity* (actualized by the content relevance and content coverage), *criterion validity* (shown through concurrent validity and predictive validity), *construct validity* (revealed by the meaningfulness of construct). The consequential basis of validity is discussed in Bachman (1995) in that a test is not designed for the sake of the test but for a proposed consequence. The consequential validity signals the shift from technical, empirical and logical focus to the test use or policy focus (Bachman, 1995).

Weir (2005), one more significant theorist of validity, categories validity as construct validity in accordance with the temporal consequence; therefore two major types of validity are *priori validity* and *posterior validity*. The former can be investigated before the test event, embracing *theory-based validity* and *context validity*. By comparison, the latter accumulates evidence during and after the test event and is divided into *scoring validity, criterion-related validity* and *consequential validity.* Theory-based validity emphasizes the test developers' knowledge of theories pertaining to the underlying language processes for real life application (Weir, 2005, p.18). Context validity is traditionally referred to as content validity but Weir uses this modern term with an intention to cover both the test contents and the test administrative setting (Weir, 2005, p.19). Scoring validity measures the stability of the test results over time "in terms of the content sampling and free from bias" (Weir, 2005, p.23). In this sense, scoring validity is popularly known as reliability. The two sub-types namely criterion-related validity and consequential validity echo Bachman (1990) and Messick (1989).

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that validity is a very complicated concept and labels of validity types can be overlapped from different authors' perspectives. Nonetheless, the term "construct validity" plays the key role from the beginning of the classification of validity and continues taking its prioritized place (Messick, 1989; 1996; Shepard, 1993; Weir, 2005; Bachman, 1995). So far, the framework of validity can be visualized as follows:

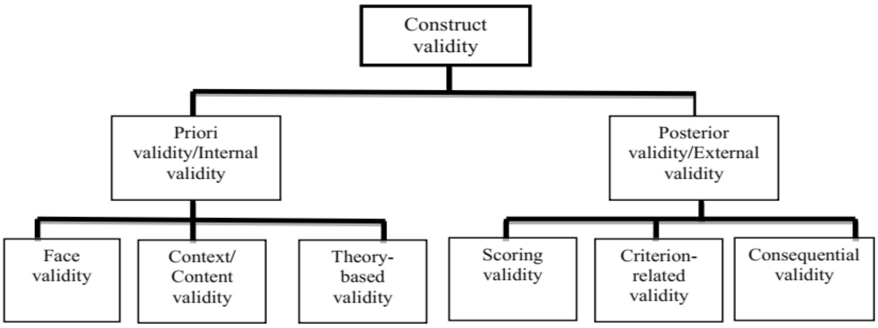

Figure 2. Classification of validity aspects

In accordance with the latest views on validity, construct validity even functions as a superordinate term (Messick, 1989; Messick, 1996; Alderson, Clapham, Wall, 1995; Weir, 2005), containing content validity and consequential validity which will be investigated further in the main parts of this study to find out the link between them in the priori test event. It is important to note that although Messick (1989, 1995) views washback as an integral part of validity, Bachman (1990) still puts washback as an equal independent unit besides validity in his framework of test usefulness. Two radical threats to validity as stated by Messick (1989) include "construct-under-representation" and "construct irrelevance". If these take place in the test, class instructions will be alleviated, causing negative washback. Messick (1996, p.16) claims that a test can be validated by reducing evidence of "construct underrepresentation and construct irrelevancies", from which the potentially positive washback can be intensified and good educational practices can be enhanced.

4.3. Language test validation

In order to figure out the validity of a test, the procedures of validation are conducted. Test validation is defined as "the process of generating evidence to support the well-foundedness of inferences concerning traits from test scores" (Weir, 2005, p.1). It is a form of evaluation accumulating evidence both quantitatively and qualitatively (Messick, 1989; Messick, 1996; Weir, 2005; Bachman, 2000). "Test validation is the empirical evaluation of the meaning and consequences of measurement, taking into account extraneous factors in the applied setting that might erode or promote the validity of local score interpretation and use" (Messick 1996, p. 246).

Messick's (1989) unitary framework of validity which merges both construct validation and consequential validity has been widely used as a model in a large volume of educational and psychological research (Bachman, 2000). Evidence of validity, according to him, can be generated in unlimited methods, for example, an investigation of the correlation between the test content and the content of the domain identified as sources of inferences, a study of the correspondence among internal factors of the test, or an examination of the connection between the test scores and the test external structures like the background variables. Another famous validation framework is proposed by Bachman and Palmer (1996). They suggest accumulating evidence of language knowledge, metacognitive strategies and topical knowledge by answering nine questions:

1. Is the language ability construct for the test clearly and unambiguously defined?

2. Is the language ability construct for test relevant to the purpose of the tests?

3. To what extent does the test task reflect the construct definition?

4. To what extent do the scoring procedures reflect the construct definition?

5. Will the scores obtained from the test help make the desire interpretations about test takers' language ability?

6. What characteristics of the SETTING are likely to cause different test takers to perform differently?

7. What characteristics of the test RUBRIC are likely to cause different test takers to perform differently?

8. What characteristics of the TEST INPUT are likely to cause different test takers to perform differently?

9. What characteristics of the EXPETED RESPONSE are likely to cause different test takers to perform differently?

10. What characteristics of the RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INPUT AND RESPONSE are likely to cause different test takers to perform differently?

(pp. 140-142)

As required in the questions, the test construct is the primary concern in its relevance to its obvious clarification, test purpose, test tasks and score interpretation. Regarding the test performance, the test setting, test rubrics, test input, oriented response, as well as the correspondence between the test input and test response are also worth consideration. The variations of these factors are likely to swing the test results, which will make it hard to reach the appropriate conclusion of test takers' language ability. Test takers are likely to perform a listening test better if they are in a sufficiently small room with sufficiently loud recording, for example. These theories sound reasonable and can be applied for validating tests of various educational areas. However, the details need more discussions. Or else, a language test will require a more specific set of questions to be answered.

Weir (2005) proposes four socio-cognitive validation frameworks corresponding to four language skills at two phases before and after the test event. As previously mentioned, Weir's (2005) classification of validity embraces five types as content validity, theory-based validity, scoring validity, criterion-related validity and consequential validity. The same structure of validating the assessment of each skill is depicted, initiating from *test taker characteristics* to the two first types of *context validity* and *theory-based validity*. From theory-based validity, *responses* are collected for *scoring validity* which bases on the score of the test, then followed by *consequential validity* and *criterion-related validity.*

Four language skills are operated in the same validation procedure as follows:

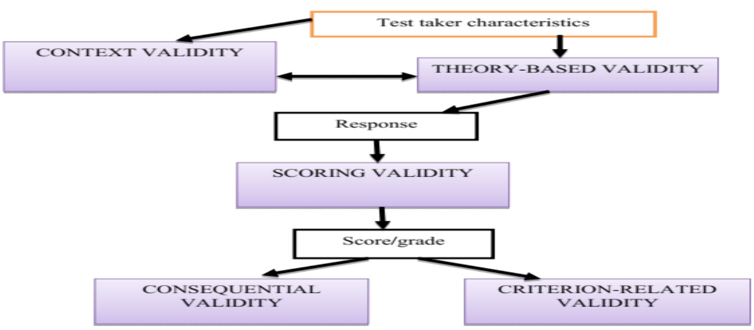

Figure 3. A socio-cognitive validation framework of language skills (adapted from Weir, 2005)

In all the above validation suggestions, the quality of test construct, test input and test characteristics are studied first. The correlation between the test input, response and scoring is investigated to validate the test. Messick (1975; cited in Sheparrd, 1993, p.414-415) did not consider the role of content validity because of the traditional thought of validity coming from the test score. Nonetheless, this view has been changed (Yalow & Popam, 1983; Messick, 1989, 1996; Shepard, 1993; Bachman, 1990; Weir, 2005) on the ground that content validity functions as a precursor to reach appropriate score interpretations. Therefore, content validity deserves a serious investigation prior to the implementation of the test.

As presented, concerning language tests, while validity is largely discussed in terms of its definitions and aspects, validation has its limited procedures, despite its complicateness.

4.4. A review of large-scale test validation studies

High-stake language tests have been validated by international and local researchers, exploiting both qualitative and quantitative approaches. High-stakes tests like entrance/ placement university tests or IELTS, TOEFL are widely investigated (Fulcher, 1997; Tran et al., 2010; Ito, 2001; Bui, 2016; Zahedkazemi, 2015), besides the tests measuring tertiary students' achievement or proficiency language tests at individual universities (Rethinasamy & Nong, n.d.; Choi, 1993; Zahedkazemi, 2015; Hiser & Ho, 2016; Graves, 1999; Sims, 2015; Choi, 1999; Zahedkazemi, 2015; Trần, 2011). Both positive and negative findings have been found from the research. Bachman's (1990) and Messick's (1989) validation frameworks are popularly exploited.

Take a look at the first stream of validating entrance tests. According to Hitotuzi (2002), the entrance examination of the Federal University of Amazonas lacks both face and content validity. Spelling and grammar mistakes are found. The test is blamed to have complex syntax and lexis regardless of normal language education at high school. Bui (2016) investigated the test usefulness of the Vietnam's College English Entrance Exams (VCEEE) between two tests in 2014 and 2015. She also uses Bachman and Palmer (1996)'s model of language knowledge to validate the test. It is reported that validity is supported by the test methods of gap filling and closes, but multiple item test methods, error detection and synonym/antonym selection cause problems of interpreting correct test takers' ability. In addition, multiple choice questions is the sole test method in the old version, which is mended by the subjective writing parts of sentence rewriting and paragraph rewriting. Zahedkazemi (2015) conducts construct validation of two global sub-tests IELTS and TOEFL basing on the test scores. The results show that both tests share differences and similarities in gauging test takers' language proficiency. In 2010, Tran et al. (2010) built up the conceptual framework and the methodology for the validation of the interpretation and use of the 2008 University Entrance Examination English test scores, exploiting Messick (1989)'s unified validation framework. Content analysis, Rasch modelling and path analysis contribute to the methodology in details.

The second stream also records interesting cases of validation. Choi (1994) measures the content and construct validation of a criterion-referenced English proficiency test in order to come to a valid standardized test labelled Seoul National University Criterion-Referenced English Proficiency Test (SNUCREPT). Bachman's (1990) framework of communicative language ability is exploited. The qualitative and quantitative approaches with native speakers and computable tools respectively are mixed. He claims that systematic development of the test can satisfy the validity and reliability of the test. Choi (1999) validates the Test of English Proficiency (TEPS), developed and utilized in Seoul National University by collecting both qualitative and quantitative feedback from the test takers on the pilot test and the first administrative test to see the validity of the test and the test fairness. He makes the comparison between the test in study TEPS and the valid test TOP (Test of Oral Proficiency). The analysis of the test score is made, along with an interview of respondents who got higher TEPS scores and available TOEIC scores and who are teachers of English. In terms of the test score analysis, high correlation is found between the data from the two tests, illustrated by the correlation coefficients of over .63. Regarding the interview result, 42.7 of respondents strongly agree on the test method/ fairness of the test. Ito (2001) validates the Join First Achievement Test (JFSAT) – Japanese nationwide university entrance examination by investigating the reliability, concurrent validity, criterion validity and construct validity of the test which is divided into five components, including pronunciation, grammar, spoken English, written English and reading comprehension. The finding reveals that instead of the low reliability coefficient of the paper-pencil pronunciation test ($r = .208$), other figures proves JFSAT a relatively valid test of English ability. In terms of the construct validity of the test, low correlation coefficients remain in the pronunciation ($r = .238$, n.s) and spoken English ($r = .600$, compared to the demanded criterion of $r > .7$). The pronunciation score has very little contribution to the overall score.

In Vietnam, Trần (2011) finds out the evidence of the content validity of an English achievement test for second year non-English major university students by using survey questionnaires for both teachers and students to see the degree of unsatisfactory level in some parts of the test due to the insufficient preparation in designing test specifications and writing part instruction. Hoang (2009) also supplies the same results in terms of test specifications. Rethinasamy & Nong (n.d) study the validity of the Advanced Educational Program English Test (AEPET) at a university in Vietnam on three aspects, including concurrent validity, predictive validity and content validity. IELTS scores are exploited to validate concurrent validity. Scores of AEPET in four components: listening, reading, speaking and writing are used to validate the test content, revealing high validity degree in the speaking and reading tests and moderate degree in the two remaining tests. The overall mean scores is also moderate at 3.35. Test preparation is included into the content validation, which shows an insufficient amount of instructions. Although the problem identified in the paper is interesting, the authors have not provided details in the validation method. Consequently, the result discussion is merely on the surface. In 2017, Nguyễn studies the cut-score validity of the VSTEP.3-5 listening test using Kane's (2006) current argument-based validation approach focusing on test tasks, accuracy and precision and cut scores. Findings show that the test tasks follow the test specification strictly, the language input relatively meets the demand. In terms of precision and accuracy, on the whole, the test can discriminate test takers to a reasonable extent. The Angoff method and Bookmark method are used to gauge the cut scores. By comparison with the expected reliability of at least 0.88, VSTEP listening test reliability index is 0.815, which is rather low.

All in all, an insight into the experimental research of language test validity points out three pivotal matters. Firstly, in terms of methodology, both quantitative and qualitative approaches are exploited. Scoring validity, for example, suits the former while the latter applies to content validity. Secondly, high-stakes international and national language tests are the subjects in studies. Last but not least, validation mainly occurs to posterior or external validity.

5. Conclusion and pedagogical implication

So far, four research questions have been answered. A language test can claim its validity when it can measure exactly the test taker's language ability actualized by the test construct. In the past, construct validity is distinguished from content validity and criterion validity, but the modern view puts construct validity the umbrella concept and classifies validity into more types. The idea of prior validity and posterior validity proposed by Weir (2005) is worth considering. Weir (2005)'s validation model is also very interesting and specific for a language test, covering four language sub-skills. In Vietnam, test validation also largely pertains to high-stakes tests, especially a newly designed national test VSTEP (Vietnamese Standardised Test of English Proficiency) at the University of Languages of International Studies, Vietnam National University, Hanoi. Testing has never lost its society's concern. However almost all important tests have not been validated. English gate-keeping tests at universities or English entrance university exams in 2017 and 2018, for example, all deserve validation. In addition, there leaves a gap in the documentation of using Weir (2005)'s models to gauge the validity of an overall internally-developed achievement test. More importantly, the result of validity will serve as evidence for washback, as Messick (1996, p.252) claims: "rather than seeking washback as a sign of test validity, seek validity by design as a likely basis for washback". He also adds that all tests are in danger of construct irrelevance and construct under-representation. Compared to the theories in validity, research has not covered all. It is impossible to reach full validation, but recommendations to increase the degree of validity can be (1) making test specifications explicit, (2) maximizing direct testing, (3) closely linking the scoring of response to the test purpose, and (4) ensuring test reliability (Hughes, 1983).

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KHẢO CỨU VỀ XÁC TRỊ BÀI THI NGÔN NGỮ

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Tóm tắt: Song song với độ tin cậy, độ xác trị trong kiểm tra đánh giá ngôn ngữ từ lâu đã giữ vai trò quan trọng trong các nghiên cứu (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Bài báo này phân tích các lý thuyết cơ bản và các nghiên cứu thực nghiệm về độ xác trị để cung cấp khái niệm tính xác trị trong kiểm tra đánh giá ngôn ngữ, các tiểu loại xác trị, các khung lý thuyết đo độ xác trị và các khuynh hướng nghiên cứu thực nghiệm tính xác trị. Có bốn kết quả chính thu được qua phân tích. Thứ nhất, tính xác trị trong bài kiểm tra ngôn ngữ đánh giá chất lượng bài kiểm tra ngôn ngữ dựa trên nội dung bài thi, tiêu chí bài thi, hệ quả bài thi thông qua việc xác định ý nghĩa và việc sử dụng điểm số. Thứ hai, độ xác trị của năng lực ngôn ngữ là một thuật ngữ chủ chốt khi phân loại các độ xác trị. Thêm vào đó, khung phân loại tiền xác trị và hậu xác trị sẽ giúp nhà nghiên cứu lựa chọn hướng xác trị rõ ràng hơn. Thứ ba, khung lý thuyết xác trị dựa trên ba mô hình chính của Messick (1989), Bachman (1996) và Weir (2005). Một kết luận nữa trong nghiên cứu này là phần lớn các nghiên cứu về độ xác trị mà tác giả đã tiếp cận đều dựa trên các bài thi có tầm quan trọng lớn, ở quy mô quốc tế hoặc quốc gia. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy mảnh đất nghiên cứu độ xác trị trong bài thi ngôn ngữ còn rất rộng.

Từ khóa: đánh giá ngôn ngữ, dụng tính của bài thi, độ xác trị về năng lực, việc xác trị

DISCUSSION

USING MIND-MAPPING AS A TRANSITION FROM RECEPTIVE TO PRODUCTIVE SKILLS FOR SECOND-DEGREE LEARNERS

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Abstract: Mindmapping, as a powerful brainstorming tool, is gaining popularity in all fields of science. This article aims at suggesting various activities enclosed with explanations of how this useful utility can be applied for a smooth transition from receptive skills to productive skills while teaching English. As mind maps only date back to 1976, the article initially provides an overview into how to use them and how well they suit the group of grown-up learners. The third part of the article introduces the researcher's own organization of twelve academic themes throughout the learners' course. The most important part of the article involves an analysis of various examples of classroom mind maps as they are combined with various activities in classroom settings of various levels throughout the course, highlighting the shifting from one receptive skill to the corresponding productive skill with groups of learners' contributions to the maps. Last but not least, in the conclusion part, both the summary of the work and some recommendations would be presented about the challenges teachers may encounter and thus should expect during the implementation process.

Keywords: mind-maps, vocabulary, classroom implementation, challenges for teachers

1. Introduction

Receptive skills, also known as passive skills, include listening and reading skills and involve comprehension as the main goal while asserting their role as language input for the productive, or expressive skills they contrast with. With the recent approach on learning, the receptive skills are now being recognized as an integral part within the integrated learning method (Duquette, 1995).

While achieving communicative comprehension in receptive skills of listening and reading, learners acquire both the source language and the information or news on certain themes, and thus build up their language competence on the language as well as their background on those themes. In the corresponding expressive skills a speaker or writer would make use of the knowledge of the language, comprising of pronunciation or spelling, meaning, the use and finally grammar, combining their background knowledge of the topic as well as their understanding of the context and culture.

In the meantime, current curricula are revolving around theme-based course books with integrated skills to support learners since "as the theme focus moves from self and home to community and work, the dramatic play

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area may change from the familiar child and household furnishings (doll, kitchen, etc.) to office, restaurant, or grocery store furnishings and props (cash registers, typewriters, etc.).” (Berry & Mindes, 1993).

For adult learners in general, they are expected to have more background knowledge as well as life experiences than young learners. Nevertheless, the groups of learners conferred here in the research would be more complicated as they belong to the group of adult learners among whom the majority have already acquired a university degree and purposely chose English as the major for their second degree. Furthermore, as they are studying for the second degree while doing their job or continuing another course at another university, it is crucial to maximize the efficiency of the methods of learning to help them achieve the aims and objectives of the course and hence aid them to reach level C1 - the required level of proficiency for their second bachelor degree.

While acquiring adequate competency of advanced level is crucial, the groups of learners faced a lot of difficulties as not only do they have rather limited class time for their English major but they also face rather more limited acquisition of language items due to the mature age, as compared to younger learners. Though as mentioned above, they tend to possess the utmost advantages of life experiences and in-depth background knowledge across different fields of the current news and information, in many cases strong understanding of their previous majors.

Before further discussion, a brief overview of the main concepts in the research would be discussed as follows.

1.1. Receptive and productive skills in language learning

The two sets of skills requires (1) the encoding process in which the speakers or writers use the language to put forward their messages, using language items of their choice, and (2) the decoding process whilst the listeners or readers attempt to comprehend the messages or pieces of information basing on their own language competence and background.

Nevertheless, the reversed order would customarily be applied in language learning process as the decoding process involving receptive skills would come before the encoding process with their corresponding expressive skills, i.e. the order of mentioning when discussing all the four language learning skills should be (1) listening – (2) speaking, then comes the pair (3) reading – (4) writing.

Rather than aiming at readers as learners of the language, this section would aim at the side of the teachers/lecturers and hence focus on the terms and methodological notices during the teaching process.

In order for a set of communicative objectives in a communicative curricula to be accomplished, “the objectives should be experiental in nature, that is, they should make use of students‘ life experiences as the contexts in which to set meaningful communicative efforts,” according to Tremblay et al (1990) and LeBlanc (1990), as cited in Duquette (1995, p.28).

Also in his book, Duquette(1995) suggests a sample model of procedure for vocabulary acquisition, involving brainstorm and classification. The purposes of the set of activities include increasing students’ vocabulary in certain theme areas and during the process, involve students by letting them contribute their own real-life experience to the list of responses.

This report further enhances Duquette’s model by using a mind map in stead of a list of responses for better visual aids and organization of the vocabulary items and ideas.

1.2. What is a mind map?

Before mentioning its use in shifting from receptive skills onto productive ones for second degree learners, it is of relative necessity to introduce the concept and the use of the tool in language learning since the term is quite new, dating back only to 1976 as a creation of the infamous father Buzan.

A mind map, or the tool of mind-mapping can be defined simply as “a visual way of arranging information”, as put up by Buzan (1974) in his popular book *Use Your Head.* From this point onward, the report would like to refer to Buzan as the creator of the useful tool that is gaining popularity in various fields of science including Medicine, Economics, Psychology, Cognition, etc.

Both the construction and the components of a mind map can be seen through the diagram below:

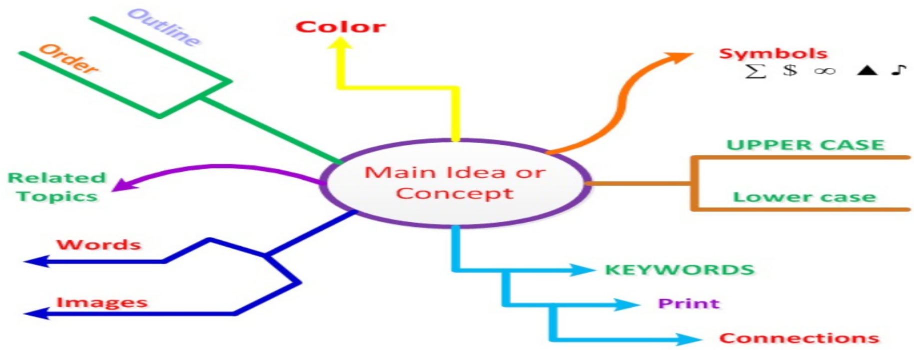


Figure 1. The components of a mind map with different color for each branch[1]

The diagram above clearly shows the concept or the central topic of discussion in the center. Pointed out from the balloon of the concept are numerous main ideas which are presented with different colors for both visual and intellectual purposes. Mind maps can also make use of different highlighting gears like capitalization or a highlighting pen itself. Various special symbols, visual aids of images and hand-drawn for better engagement of the brain would also be encouraged (Buzan, 2018).

A more modern definition of mind-mapping is that of Guerro & Ramos (2015):

> “Mind mapping is a graphical technique for visualizing hierarchical connections between several items of information. Each item of information is written down and then linked by lines to the other pieces thus creating a network of relationships. They are always organized around a single central idea.”

(Guerro & Ramos, 2015: 3)

Then, a mind map can also be simply defined as a diagram created in the mind mapping process. Please have a look at one example of the mind map below (ideas developed by the report writer herself – the main points involves content of the research.

1 Source: http://thepeakperformancecenter.com/educational-learning/thinking/mind-mapping/

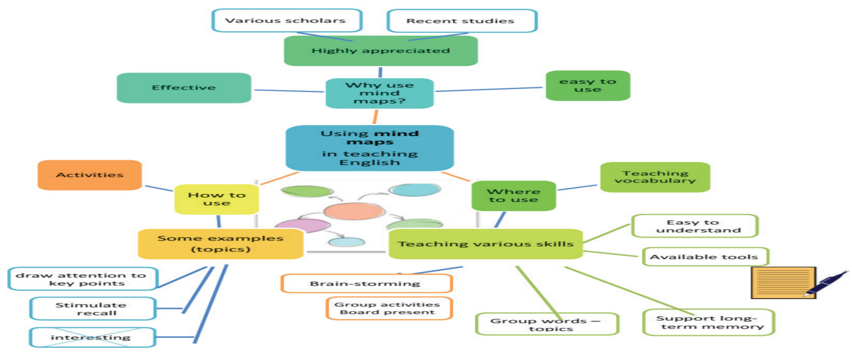


Figure 2. A mind-map of the organization of the whole section - using simple tools in Microsoft Words

1.3. What have mind maps been used for?

There have long been various studies on mind maps and though some of the earliest studies on language learning using mind-maps date back to the 1970s, (as stated above), the current years still see a lot of the term that can seemingly never go outdated.

Biggam (2015: 34) stated in his rather recent book that "it is difficult to find a simpler and more effective communication technique than mind-mapping. Mind-mapping is a superb way to collect and communicate your thoughts and ideas. It is used as a tool to crystallize your own thoughts and as a means of imparting those ideas to your supervisor as you progress through your dissertation." Hence, the writer of this research regards this tool a highly effective ones for students to build up their vocabulary and practice their writing skill at the same time.

In a more detailed sense, a mind map also "draw attention to key points and stimulates recall" (Guerrero & Ramos, 2015: 27).

Compared to the traditional methods of brainstorming, including studious writing and linear note taking, mind mapping is said to be 15%-20% more effective in enhancing memory and improving learning. Task-based learning would become more accessible and problem-solving would be more efficient when mind mapping is used. "This phenomenon could be attributed on how the brain works" (Green, 2015).

1.4. How to create a mind-map

Traditionally mind-map makers only make use of simple tools of a pen and a piece of paper. It is also suggested that those who create mind-maps can use some pen colors for different main ideas.

One can also use more modern yet very simple computer tools in Microsoft Power point or Microsoft Word smart art to create mind maps using a computer, just like presented in Figure 1 (Guerrero & Ramos, 2015).

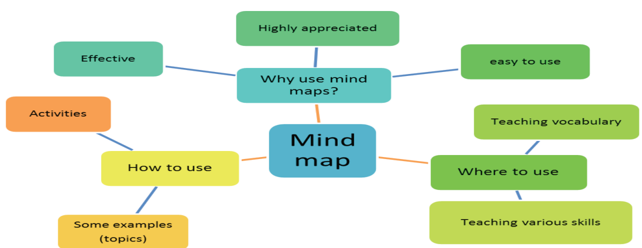


Figure 3. The organization of the introduction part

1.5. Using mind-maps in teaching English

Belleza (as cited in Guerrero & Ramos, 2015) stated that adult learners would learn most effectively “when they can form a connection between newly and previously acquired knowledge.”

Hence, using the tool of mind-mapping comes forward as a proficient tool to organize and elicit the learners and thus encourage them to contribute to the mind maps as they brainstorm various topics of the themes introduced to them.

In all three stages of teaching and learning English; namely, (1) receptive stage, (2) productive stage and (3) revision stage, the tool can prove to critically benefit the learners, as displayed below.

1.6. Using mind-maps to teach productive skills

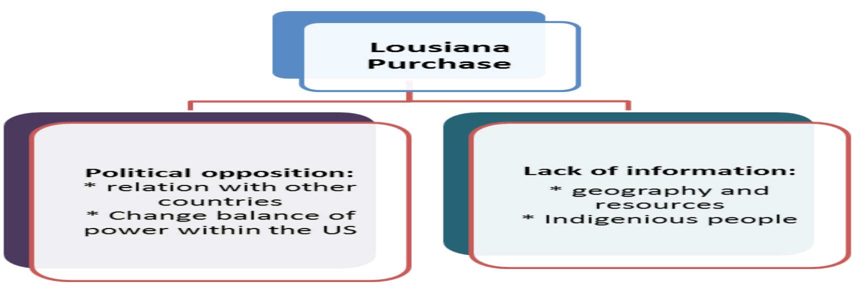
Mind mapping is considered to be a useful strategy to support students during writing tasks (Naqbi, 2011). As in writing, it enables students to make various attempts on ideas spread out on a sheet of paper. This way, it would definitely be much easier to see the equality among the ideas, and thus can adjust accordingly. They can combine, re-arrange them more freely than with an outline in the form of a list of bullets.

For speaking in particular, the vocabulary items which are new to learners can easily come with the corresponding phonetic forms to aid learners with pronunciation aspect of the words or phrases they encounter, whether for the first time or various times, i.e. both for introducing new vocabulary items and for revision purpose.

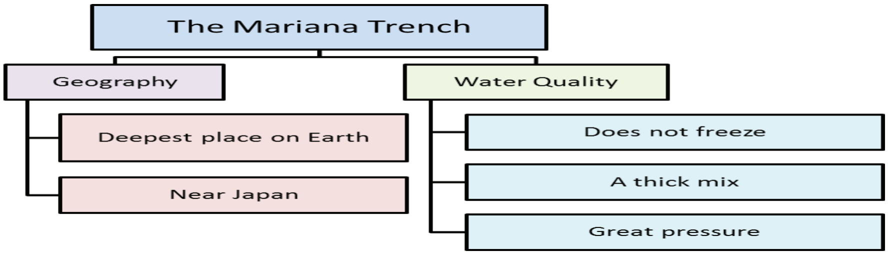
2. Transitioning from receptive to productive skills for second-degree English-major learners

2.1. Mind map has long been proved to be a good organizational tool

To begin with, the reporter would deliberately affirm that the use of Mind maps in organizing ideas and vocabulary items as a connection between receptive skills and productive skills for adult learners studying their second degree majoring English. As an efficient tool for organization, various mind maps has been used as a means of summarizing and hence benefiting learners’ language learning through different themes and topics in books like *“How to master skills for the TOEFL iBT Reading”, Level Basic.*



a. Louisiana Purchase



b. The Mariana Trench

Figure 4. Two examples of mind maps – content taken *from "How to master skills for the TOEFL iBT Reading", Level Basic* (Hall, Milch & McCormack, 2007)

2.2. The nature of the group of learners

General principles of teaching English to adult learning include reference to (1) their prior experience and knowledge, (2) their motivation in learning, and (3) their orientation to learning. (Knowles, Holton III, & Swanson, 1998).

With the language learners who are achieving second degree, though English could be their major and the requirements are high, their motivation can be affected by their personal life, and in learning the language – they have relatively clear purpose of acquiring the degree.

As for the first principle, which affect the choice of the instrument most, the adult learners having got the first undergraduate degree and many of them have been working for some time, it is safe to say that they have certain background knowledge and experience over young university learners or learners at a younger age.

3. Implementing mind-maps in classroom settings for second-degree English-major learners

As discussed in part 2, the use of mind maps can be implemented throughout the process of teaching English to the desired groups of student. This section will be dedicated to elaborate on the implement of mind maps in individual stages of teaching and learning English; namely, (1) receptive stage, (2) productive stage and (3) revision stage, though not as entirely separate parts but rather a section of integrated learning as a whole.

Although in the list of stages of teaching and learning English deliberated in the previous point this stage is put third, this stage is going to be discussed first as, conformably, within the focus of this point the stage would provide the whole table of twelve academic themes generated from various sources of test-preparation materials and thus provide fellow teachers while referring to this report with the whole picture of the themes and desirably help the readers comprehend the organization of the themes and consequently get the general idea of which theme to put a topic. This section emphasizes the important of helping students to build up language items following theme-based organizations. In using themes to help them study, the teacher has grouped all the topics into 12 main themes as follows.

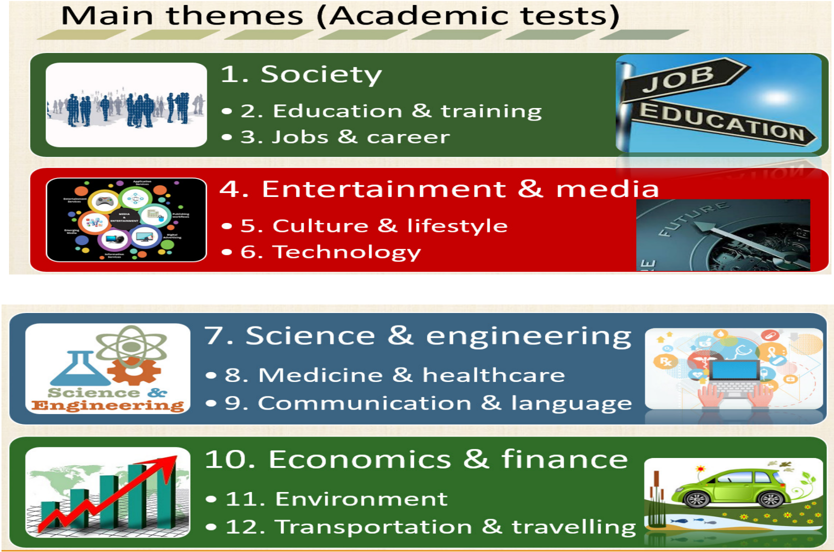


Figure 5. Classroom Microsoft power point slides part 1: The 12 themes in 4 groups in the revision for the VSTEP test, as taken from teacher's power point slides (2 slides)

The groups of themes are divided so that the components within one group and across all the groups can be as balanced as possible while still clearly show the prominent theme in each group. The first group of themes include three themes as follows:

The relationship between the major topic of this group with each of the other two component can be presented as follows.

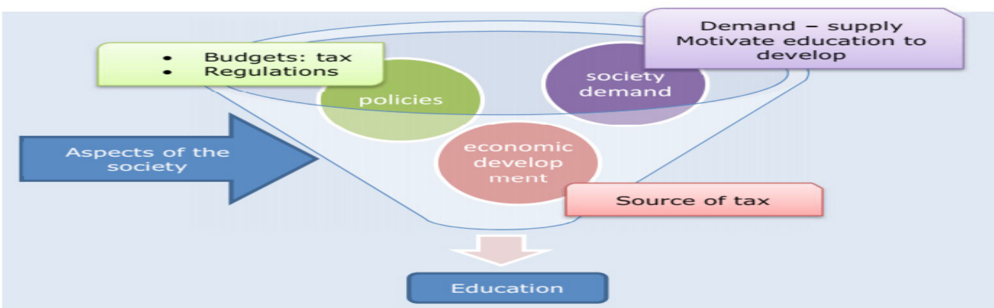


Figure 6. Classroom Microsoft power point slides part 2: The relationship between Society and Education, ideas elicited from students' discussions

This mind map is a relationship representation and while it was being implemented in real class setting, the learners were left time to discuss in groups and allowed to present their ideas in front of other groups. The teacher encourages each group to speak up and compare ideas, analysing the equality of main ideas, while explaining that some ideas can be misleading or a component of one another. It is important to state that the designed mind map the teacher put forward is only a suggestion, and if the class's analysis shows that some individual ideas can be supported logically and adequately, their ideas will be chosen.

As can be seen from the example above, a mind map maker can also make use of smart arts which are already available on simple tools of Microsoft Office like Microsoft Word and Microsoft Power point, thereby it would not be much of a challenge for a lecturer to apply them.

With the relationship of the first two themes explained in details, the groups of learners seemed to get familiar with and this enhanced their motivation onto contributing more to the next relationships and thus the teacher will suggestably play the role of a facilitator rather than a knowledge provider.

The second relationship between the next pair of themes, which would be enlisted as Society and Jobs – career can be synthesized as follows:

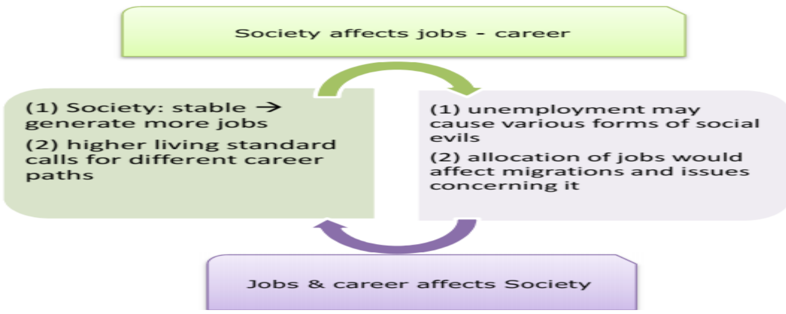


Figure 7. Classroom Microsoft power point slides part 3: The relationship between Society and Jobs - career, ideas elicited from students' contributions to the slides

With the last pair of themes in the first group, the learners can easily recognized as one of the most closely related pairs as they are composed of two interwened themes of Educations and Jobs – career.

The learners immediately recognize the role of education and training with the latter theme as a preparation for the future job, training skills and levels. As this pair of theme can be quite crucial in test preparation (due to its common application in various test items of all the four skills), it is quite significant to note learners of their role in academic topics and facilitate a debate sessions for two big groups of learners.

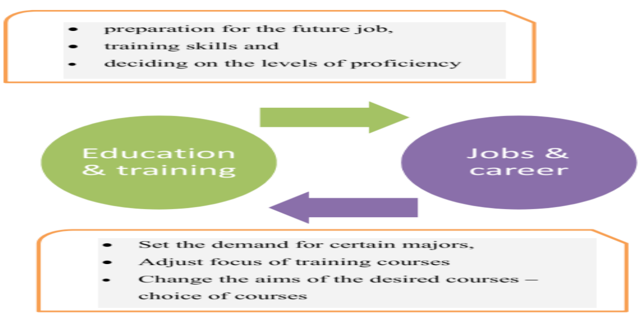


Figure 8. Classroom Microsoft power point slides part 4: The relationship between Education and Jobs - career, ideas elicited from students' debates

The second group of themes are comprised of three following themes:

The first pair of themes include themes number 4 and 5 which would result in various test questions. With this group of four separate topics combined to create two themes, the teacher let learners brainstorm the relationship of more closely related pairs and guess possible test items or recalling related test questions from their memory. Learners could highlight the effects of social media on culture and lifestyle, and when the learners combine entertainment and lifestyle – while mentioning work – and they would have the topic of "work – life balance." Afterwards, the learners are required to make an outline for the test items – this is an integrated activity combining speaking and writing in which learners will choose main ideas together, and after deciding on their own main ideas, try to support the main ideas.

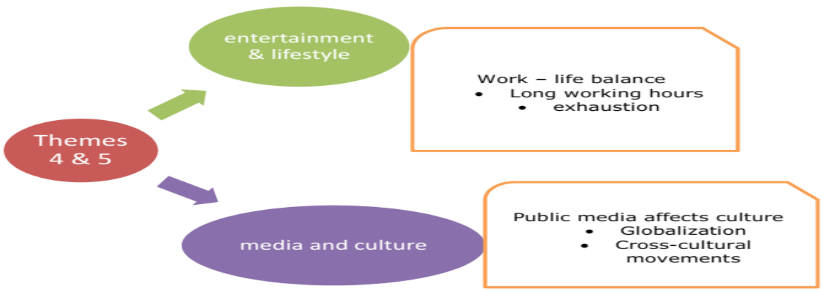


Figure 9. Classroom Microsoft power point slides part 5: The relationship between the fourth and the fifth themes, ideas elicited from students' guesses and discussions

Mind map can serve as both a useful learning tool and a beneficial test preparation instrument. At this point of the course, it is essential for the lecturer to mention the format of the speaking test, especially for the first English proficiency Practice course in which learners are mostly still unfamiliar with the format. In accordance with the changes in the format of VSTEP speaking test, with the mind map in the third part: Topic development, using different mind maps would certainly help learners get familiar to the organization of ideas in each topic and hence get the test done with less effort.

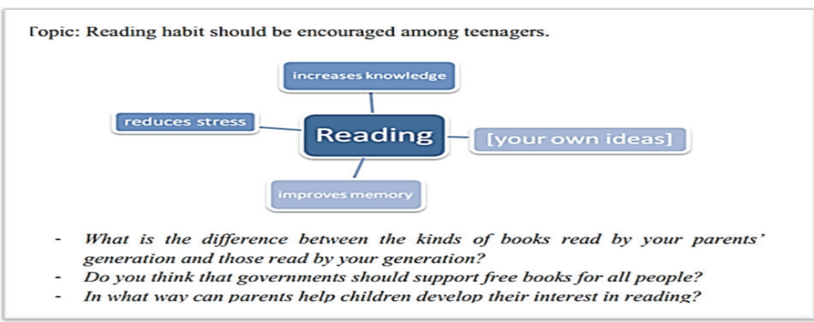


Figure 10. An example of a VSTEP speaking test, part 3; in the form of a mind map

Regarding the pair of themes 4 & 6, it is of great importance to note that technology in this group can be a smaller theme but it can be the influential theme to a lot of the themes following it. It can even be an umbrella term for all the topics of communication, science, environment, and last but not least, economy. After discussing the relationship between the two themes, the lecturer also suggests allowing time for learners to brainstorm the effects of technology on all the themes mentioned above.

With all the mind maps above as illustrations, the researchers would like to move on to some other ways in which mind maps can benefit teachers while teaching English vocabulary within various topics.

Figure 11. Classroom Microsoft power point slides part 6: brainstorming ideas within a big topic – teacher suggests and then elicits from students

Nonetheless, the researcher would like to emphasize that test preparation is also a crucial class time activities for the designed learners. And since it is a good instrument for summaries, revising lessons using a mind map would save time and effort, while still maximizing the results.

4. Using mind-maps to transition from receptive to productive (expressive) skills

As an illustration, this part of the research will present the real mind maps used in the two groups of skills, specifically receptive and productive skills.

Linear notes as a tool to take notes in skills while listening would be applied when necessary.

As the learners are quite sufficient in terms of critical thinking as well as background knowledge, and by applying one's own knowledge and experience in practicing new language items would enable and maximize the recollection of the items in the long term and thus would stimulate long term memory in a most definite way (Haggard, 1986).

Mind maps in the stage of inputting language items would mainly serve as a recap and checking organization tool, and from the organization of the ideas of the input language, learners would aim at the next stage of integrated learning between the communicative skills or non-communicative skills, i.e. they would organize ideas of the listening passage to prepare for their speaking session, recapping vocabulary items, trying to absorb written language expression from reading passages to try and use their main ideas or examples, or vocabulary items in their writing.

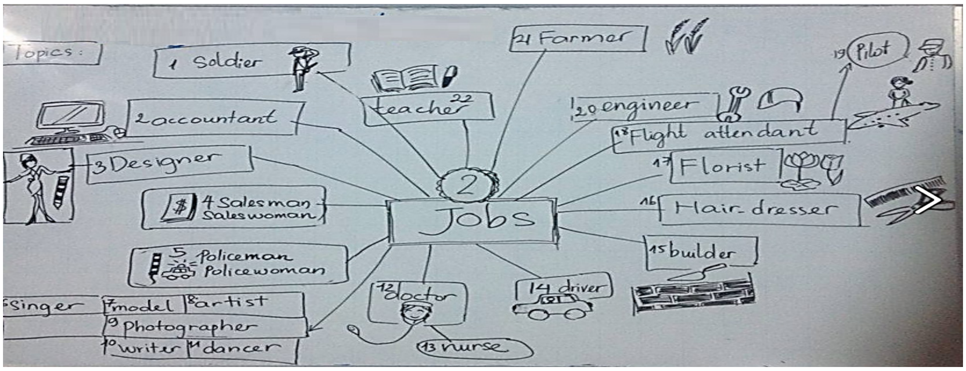


Figure 12. Picture of board mind map 1 – Jobs- elicited from a listening activity for learners of Level A2 – Pre-intermediate

Without a lot of colors provided by the computer tools, surprisingly most second-degree learners find board activities very refreshing and user-friendly, though it may require the teacher to do a lot of drawing work to make up for it.

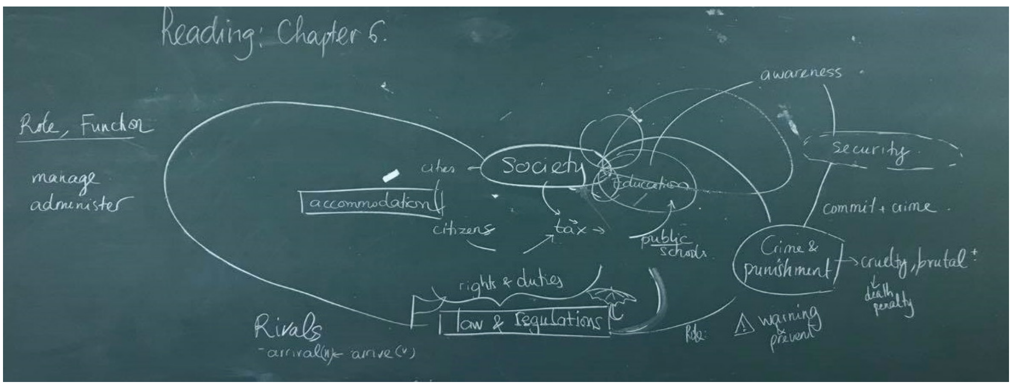


Figure 13. Board mind map 2: Picture of board mind map 1 – Jobs- elicited from a reading activity for learners of Level B2 – Upper-intermediate

Above is an example of a reading activity using the mindmap. Teachers can elicit key words from students and put them on the board, ask them to add more ideas from their memory – recapping the reading materials.

When transitioning from the receptive communicative skill to the productive communicative one or from the receptive non-communicative skill to the productive non-communicative one, mind mapping still seems to be quite new a recapping utensil. According to Wahba, England and Taha (2017), a teacher can construct a mind map combining the most important points of reading passages and instruct learners to add their own words to write in Arabic. This suggests the connection of the receptive skill and the productive counterpart using a mind map. While a mind map can be recycled from a recapping device of written articles to also serve as a framework for an essay.

Carter and McCarthy pointed out in their work in 2014 on the learning of vocabulary for production as only after mastering function words, substitute words and words of negative / confirmative construction can a learner move on to the next stage of productive skills. And the repetition of those language items can be seen through a lot of mind maps with the same kind of organization; for instance, the cause and effect organization with different themes.

In addition to the use of reiteration in the form of repetition for the sake of memorization (as in Halliday, 2014), the researcher would like to focus on the learner's needs and preferences when taking notes on the mind map eliciting. Since the learners could contribute their own ideas to the mind map, it could highlight to them that these are known information already, and they can relate to their real life experience to better memorize the items.

In yet the same work which has been readjusted from a 1984 work with the same title, Carter and McCarthy (2014) introduced the notion of vocabulary as a skill in which each learner is actively involved. That way learners would dynamically absorb the language items, and there would certainly be better chance for them to keep those vocabulary items in their long term memory.

Writing is a good illustration of the lack of organizational vocabulary among Vietnamese students. The skill has never seemed to be the most problematic one for adult learners or it is relatively safe to it is of common belief that Vietnamese students should have more problems with listening and speaking, or communicative skills. Nevertheless, results of various End-of-term test papers in which students left the writing session blank raised a question to the researcher as a teacher of English as what the reasons behind the incident are. As it turned out, the learners all found the amount of time allocated for the End-of-term test quite adequate, yet they have absolutely no clue what to write with the topic whatsoever. Their reading result was adequate for their level, though, which means their vocabulary was not too bad but they are still unclear about how to write, what to write within the quite adequate time they have. This suggest the loose connection of the receptive skills and the productive skills as they cannot make use of the expressions acquired from their reading to organize a writing passage, or even the first step of brainstorming.

In other words, the questions would be put as why with the allocated amount of time they could come up with no or hardly any language produce to mark for; secondly, what could be done about it, and how. Then their usefulness should also be revisited once the method has been implemented.

Furthermore, with the group of participants being second-degree learners, they have some specific traits of adult learners as being

It all comes back to the direct and yet ultimate aim of teaching English which is effectiveness, therefore the lecturer wanted to hear from her students first, what are their reasons for not being able to generate hardly any relevant language product at all, and the answers come down to the following major reasons: (learners can choose more than 1 reasons)

Top reason: Students think too sophistically and find it impossible to express themselves in English. This is especially common for second-degree learners as they have already acquired certain level of background knowledge in various fields.

Reason 2: They are unable to search for language in the topic given in the test. They know the language within the input skill, in this case reading skill, but when they have to face an output skill of writing, their English competence is still inadequate.

Reason 3: Students are obsessed with writing beautifully and in length. This is a matter of thinking to solve, as students insist on using their precious time writing unfinished "perfect drafts."

Reason 4: Their grammar is inadequate and since they are so afraid of writing anything wrong, they do not dare to write anything at all. These students find making incorrect sentences wrong, even sinful so they do not dare to write when they are not certain. This the researcher finds a rather interesting reason when she interview in depth with some of the students.

The reasons are clear and all are primitive, with the number of students confirming the top reasons reaches 95% or above, there should be no question whether or not to take some measures on this, the questions should be what to take and how.

For these matters, the researcher has worked hard to find out a solution to a more effective way of teaching productive skills in her class with the lack of output vocabulary, help students get more active and motivated and help them get used to speak or write with an outline for brainstorming.

Upon researching about various methods to learn vocabulary and to activate learners' writing capability, the teacher has come up with the method of using mind maps to teach her students how to organize vocabulary items in a topic, organize ideas in a piece of writing, as well as being able to visualize their thinking in order to be more critical and concrete. As this special group of learner have very high requirements of ultimately reaching level C1, learning the method would help them build up and add up their vocabulary bank in an utmost natural way and help them build up long term memory.

Since Suyanto (2010) came to the conclusion that "mind-mapping technique is more effective than modeling technique to teach writing for the seventh grade students of junior high school", other modern teachers who share the same opinion includes Amstrong (2003) who states the importance of mind maps in generating ideas and building thinking traits, and Scott, Scott, & Webber (2015) who claimed that the method help students pull together all their ideas (p.70).

With the changes in the syllabus, students have a theme for each week, (Faculty of English, University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, 2015) using mind maps seems to suit the situation better than the listing form as mind maps help learners see the whole picture of the topic under discussion (Amstrong, 2003).

The first example here is about the topic of jobs. Within a short time, the learner has to get used to both the vocabulary items they could think of and some more from their peers, which can be quite difficult for them to memorize. With the particular group of adult learners who may also have a job and a family to take care of, it is best for them to maximize the efficiency and learn the items fast. In the picture above, the lecturer actually drew some fruits and even a coconut tree to help her learner memorize the items better. If other teachers are not as confident in drawing, it's for the best to prepare flash cards to aid with the memorization.

Figure 14. Picture of board mind map 2 – Fruits- elicited from learners learning the course of Level A2 – Pre-intermediate

With the nature of this topic being the names of different kinds of fruit, it is useful to give learners a way to classify fruits, i.e. according to colors (ideas taken from the mind map on the internet, shown in the picture on the next page). The teacher then elicited learners' vocabulary of the kinds of fruit they know and help them note on the board. Images or drawings also serve as motivators to encourage learners to study more efficiently.

It is crucial that the learners get to contribute to the map, since a sense of contribution would also be another motivation. Moreover, when the teacher keeps on giving out the main ideas, and the details as well, the ultimate goal of a mind map of organizing own ideas would be left out. This is why the mind map has to be done on the spot while internet materials are available and ready to be used in the classrooms with projectors, all available in the university.

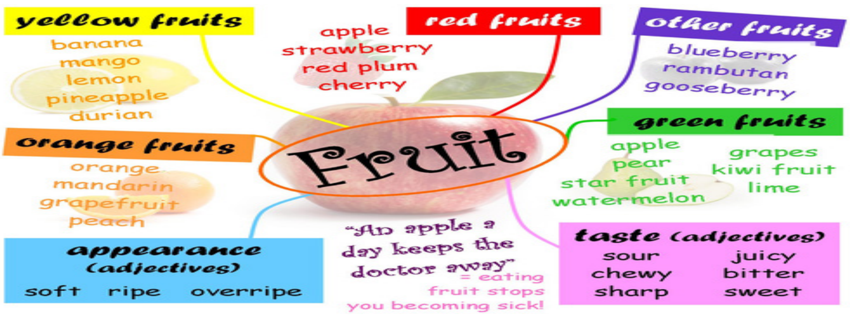


Figure 15. A mind map from the internet to aid teachers while preparing for the lesson[2]

With proper citation, all these mind map can be of excellent use to revise quickly all the vocabulary items the learners already encountered or came up with in the first time, and it is inevitable that they have revision to enhance the introduced expressions for long-term memory build-up (Halliday, 2014).

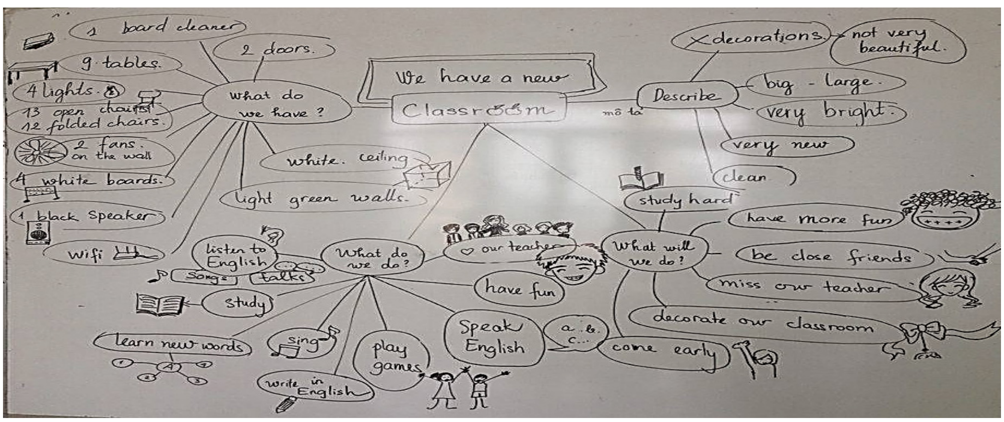


Figure 16. Picture of board mind map 3 - describe my new classroom - a writing activity of Descriptive paragraph

2 Source: https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource /fruit-mind-map-6451788

With this topic, the teacher had to aid learners with the key questions to ask about the topic. For some of the questions that learners could think of themselves, the lecturer instructed them to have a relationship among/between their ideas: chronological order, spatial order, causes – effects, or trying to sequence the ideas in a logical way.

From this instant, it is useful to note that implementing this useful modern tool would mean a lot of hard work to the side of the teacher as not only do they have to prepare for a lot of materials and may have to search for ideas for categorization from other mind maps on the internet, they also have to master eliciting skills, which means dealing with, helping learners organize their random ideas into the map, explaining to them the reason why that particular supporting idea should belong to that idea, and may have to help them order the ideas most definitely immediately.

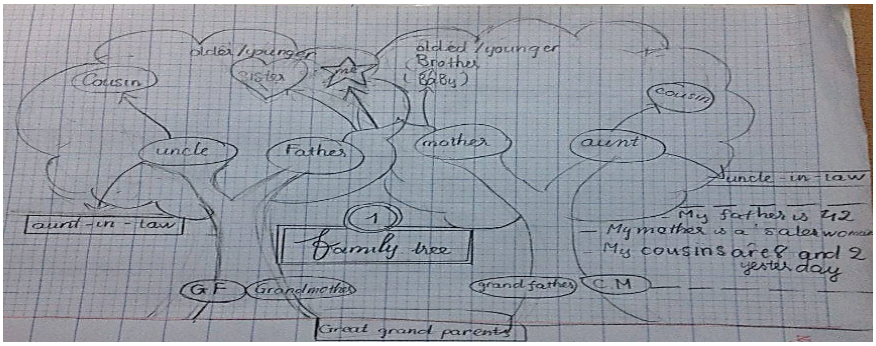


Figure 17. Picture of mind map 5 – Family tree (drawn by a learner) in A1 Level - Elementary

The result can be highly pleasing. The picture above is from a learner. Some of them can follow the instructor and draw very creative map which implies their high motivation in learning the language.

The mind maps are integrated with images to motivate learners to study.

With a normal setting in class, the following mind map can be a good example of a mind map made used of the white chalks and green board in all classrooms, which can be served as a substitute for the slideshows when there are technical problems.

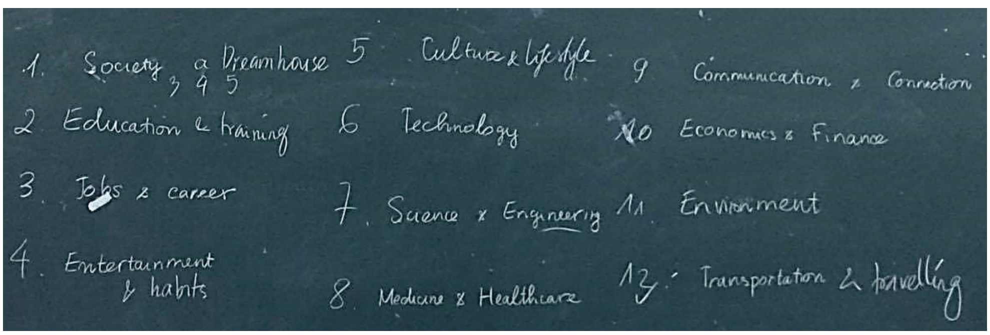


Figure 18. Board photo of activity in class (number 1): Eliciting and suggesting main themes for learners of Level B1 – Intermediate

For instance, with a writing question with the test question: 'What do you think of this statement: "*People nowadays are more dependent on technology*.",' the teacher asked learners to find the key words and work together in small groups of 3 or 4 and discuss how they should develop ideas and add more vocabulary items on to the map. The following is a good example of a group who have done an excellent job.

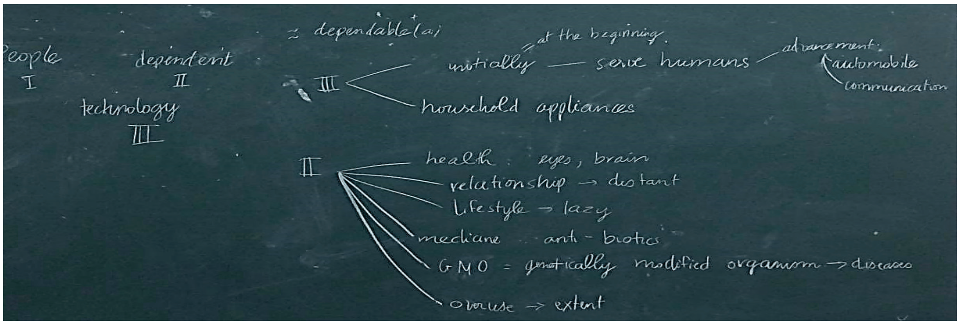


Figure 19. Board photo of activity in class (number 2): Writing skills: Group work for learners of Level B2 – Intermediate

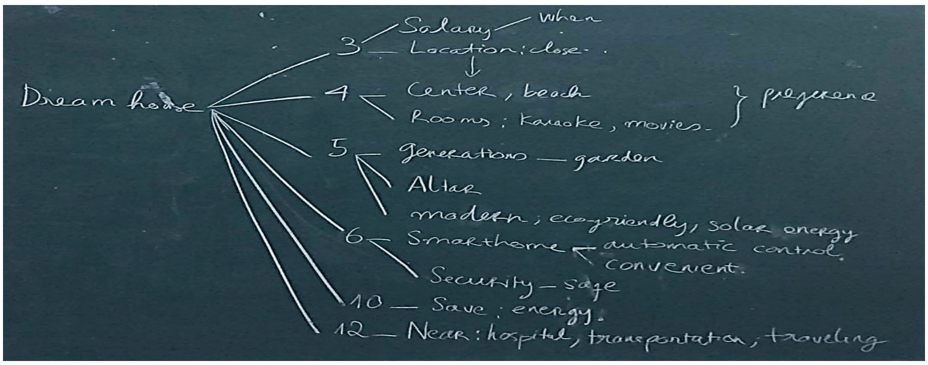


Figure 20. Board photo of a speaking activity in class (number 3): Writing skills: Group work for learners of Level B2 – Upper-intermediate

In this activity, learners have an inquiry of matching their supporting ideas with the big themes the vocabulary items of which can be used in their speeches. The numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12 can actually serve as suggestion for students of lower level: before they can come up with ideas, the teacher can suggest them think about the main themes they have learnt and try to connect the topics of the questions to the main themes.

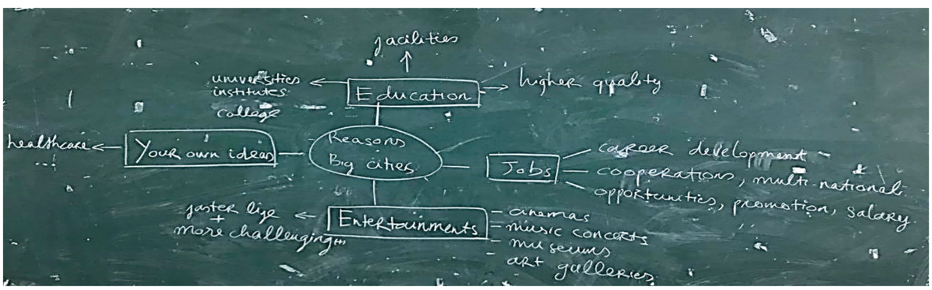


Figure 21. Board photo of a speaking activity in class (number 3): Writing skills: Group work for learners of Level B2 – Upper-intermediate

Within the speaking lesson, this activity can actually be a good example of a test preparation one. The core mind maps are actually from a real speaking test, part 3, with the topic of "there are several reasons why people choose to live in a big cities". This activity is a class activity with a student playing the role of the secretary. Anybody in the class can contribute, and the teacher would correct or make comment when necessary.

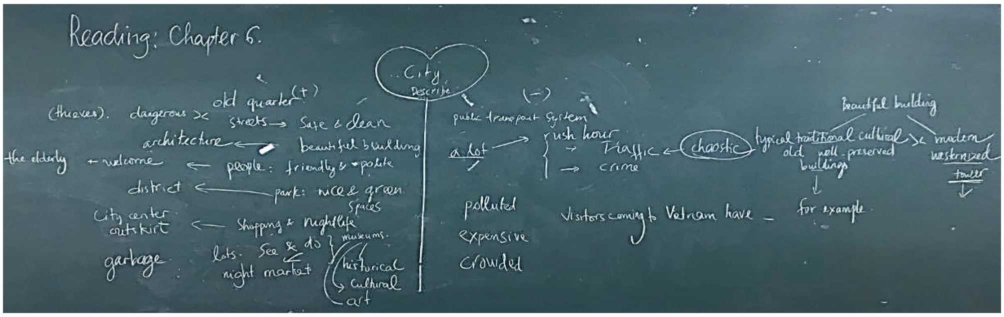


Figure 22. Board photo of activity in class (number 3): Writing skills: Group work for learners of Level B2 – Intermediate

This is an example of a mind map playing the role of the transition from Reading (a receptive skill) to Writing (the corresponding productive skill). Learners can make use of the language items they could remember from the previous activity and contribute to it using their own knowledge and experience. Relating to themselves was highly encouraging as can be observed in the classroom.

With the kind of organization of comparing and contrast, it is beneficial to note the students that they may have to face the same structures in all the four skills and it is safer to brainstorm a mind map so that they can organize their ideas better, as in VSTEP speaking test they also have one minute each to prepare for part 2 and part 3 of the test. As the ideas are so clear, the teacher here can play the role of a participants and allow the learners to have more freedom in deciding their ideas, suggestions and corrections may be provided afterwards as feedback.

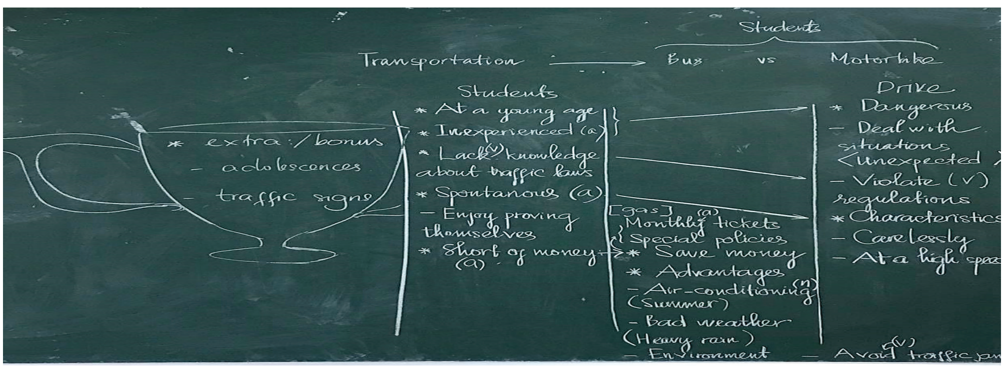


Figure 23. Board photo of activity in class (number 3): Writing skills: Group work for learners of Level B2 – Intermediate

With the type of questions which require learners to compare two kinds of means of transport, the teacher may choose to suggest them focus on the nature of the subject (in this case ‘young people’). It can be seen from the picture that on the top they actually indicate clearly not only the key words but also the relationship among the items, using very good symbols. This table is also a form of mind map but its format was adjusted to fit the requirements of the lesson: choose the appropriate supporting idea for each main idea, indicating the appropriateness with arrows.

5. Conclusion

This part of the article will demonstrate the summary and provide some suggestion for fellow teachers while applying this tool in their teaching.

In applying the method to various groups of students of all the levels from A1 to C1, the question was not whether the teacher should make use of the useful tool; rather, it naturally shifted to the question of how should be applied in specific situations. The fourth part of this article was dedicated to achieve that.

As beneficial as it is, when applying the tool to classroom setting, there are certain challenges for teachers throughout the process. First and foremost, they need to be prepared for all kinds of unexpected responses from their experienced learners and thus searching the internet in advance and constant build-up of background knowledge on various topics would be obligatory.

Secondly, they may have to be ready for all kinds of questions, most of them concerning the reasons why they should put a supporting idea or an example into a branch of main idea. This requires high level of critical thinking and logic.

Another challenge is the required flexibility and quick response from the side of the teachers. There are often more than 20 students in one group and the teacher has to elicit, analyze, select ideas, and organize them into the correct branches, while determining whether or not the learners could come up with proper main ideas, persuading them to use certain supporting details and not others.

Though the tool can be rather challenging, applying them in real classroom setting can be very rewarding as it inspires both teachers and learners to be creative and thus stay motivated throughout the process. The reporter highly recommends the use of this useful tool in a large scale.

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ỨNG DỤNG CÔNG CỤ SƠ ĐỒ TƯ DUY VÀO HỆ THỐNG HÓA CÁC YẾU TỐ TỪ VỰNG THEO CHỦ ĐỀ CHO HỌC VIÊN VĂN BẰNG HAI

Trần Thanh Thư

Khoa Đào tạo và Bồi dưỡng Ngoại ngữ, Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ, ĐHQGHN, Phạm Văn Đồng, Cầu Giấy, Hà Nội, Việt Nam

Tóm tắt: Sơ đồ tư duy, một công cụ hữu ích cho người học, đang ngày càng được ứng dụng rộng rãi trong nhiều ngành khoa học. Chính vì vậy, mục tiêu của bài viết này là chia sẻ các hoạt động áp dụng sơ đồ tư duy vào việc dạy từ vựng tiếng Anh. Trước tiên, bài báo sẽ có những giới thiệu tổng quan cách sử dụng sơ đồ tư duy cũng như cách áp dụng trong các hoạt động gắn với từ vựng. Bài báo sẽ trình bày cách chia nhóm đối với mười hai chủ đề lớn bao trùm nội dung trong chương trình học của học viên. Phần tiếp theo, cũng là phần quan trọng nhất, sẽ đưa ra những phân tích về các sơ đồ tư duy đã được sử dụng trong lớp học cũng như cách kết hợp chúng với các hoạt động cụ thể trong giờ học, qua đó, có những đề xuất để giải quyết các vấn đề mà người dạy có thể gặp phải trong quá trình áp dụng.

Từ khóa: sơ đồ tư duy, từ vựng tiếng Anh, việc áp dụng trên lớp học, thách thức đối với giáo viên

THỂ LỆ GỬI BÀI

1. **Tạp chí Nghiên cứu Nước ngoài** là ấn phẩm khoa học chính thức của Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ, Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội, kế thừa và phát triển *Chuyên san Nghiên cứu Nước ngoài* của Tạp chí Khoa học, Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội. Tạp chí xuất bản định kỳ 06 số/năm (03 số tiếng Việt/năm và 03 số tiếng Anh/năm từ năm 2018 trở đi), công bố các công trình nghiên cứu có nội dung khoa học mới, chưa đăng và chưa được gửi đăng ở bất kỳ tạp chí nào, thuộc các lĩnh vực: *ngôn ngữ học, giáo dục ngoại ngữ/ngôn ngữ, quốc tế học hoặc các ngành khoa học xã hội và nhân văn có liên quan.*

2. Bài gửi đăng cần trích dẫn ÍT NHẤT 01 bài đã đăng trên **Tạp chí Nghiên cứu Nước ngoài**.

3. Bài báo có thể viết bằng tiếng Việt hoặc tiếng Anh (***tối thiểu*** 10 trang/khoảng 4.000 từ đối với bài nghiên cứu và 5 trang/khoảng 2.000 từ đối với bài thông tin-trao đổi) được soạn trên máy vi tính, khổ giấy A4, cách lề trái 2,5cm, lề phải 2,5cm, trên 3,6cm, dưới 4,3cm, font chữ Times New Roman, cỡ chữ 11, cách dòng Single.

4. Tất cả các bài báo phải có tóm tắt (không quá 200 từ) và từ khóa (không quá 5 từ) bằng cả tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt. Tên bài báo bằng chữ hoa in đậm.

5. Bài báo phải được trình bày theo thứ tự sau: Tên bài báo, (Các) Tác giả, Tên cơ quan của (các) tác giả, Tóm tắt, Từ khóa, Nội dung của bài báo, Lời cảm ơn (nếu có), Tài liệu tham khảo, Phụ lục (nếu có). Tác giả liên hệ phải được chỉ rõ cùng với địa chỉ cơ quan, e-mail, số điện thoại trên trang nhất của bản thảo.

6. Tài liệu tham khảo phải được chỉ rõ trong bài báo. Ở cuối bài, tài liệu tham khảo được sắp xếp riêng theo từng ngôn ngữ, trong đó tiếng Việt đầu tiên, ví dụ như Việt, Ả Rập, Trung, Anh, Pháp, Đức, Nhật, Hàn, Nga, Thái, theo thứ tự bảng chữ cái của tên tác giả Việt Nam hoặc của họ tác giả nước ngoài và được trình bày theo APA như sau:

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Saussure, Ferdinand de (1959). *Course in General Linguistics.* Edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye in collaboration with Albert Reidlinger, translated by Wade Baskin. New York: Philosophical Library.

+ Đối với các tài liệu là bài báo, báo cáo hội nghị hội thảo:

Trần Thị Cúc, Đỗ Thị Thanh Hà (2015). Patterns of Code-Mixing of English in Hoa Hoc Tro Magazine in Vietnam. *VNU Journal of Science: Foreign Studies, 31*(4), 11-24.

Lâm Quang Đông (2015). Quá trình tư duy ở người lớn học ngoại ngữ: một trường hợp điển cứu. Kỷ yếu Hội thảo quốc tế *Đổi mới việc dạy-học & nghiên cứu Hàn Quốc học tại Việt Nam.* Hà Nội, ngày 10 tháng 4 năm 2015, tr. 172-191.

+ Đối với các tài liệu truy cập trên mạng:

Baker, Mark C. (1989). Object Sharing and Projection in Serial Verb Constructions, *Linguistic Inquiry*, *20* (4) (Autumn, 1989), pp. 513-553, Cambridge: The MIT Press. Available through <http://www.jstor.org/stable/ 4178644>, Accessed 14/03/2012 06:49

An Ngọc (2013). *Nghề biên-phiên dịch thiếu chuẩn mực nghề nghiệp*, Truy cập lúc 10:30 ngày 29/11/2015 tại http://www.vietnamplus.vn/nghe-bienphien-dich-thieu-chuan-muc-nghe-nghiep/234990.vnp.

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Tác giả chịu hoàn toàn trách nhiệm trước pháp luật về nội dung bài viết và xuất xứ tài liệu trích dẫn.

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Saussure, Ferdinand de (1959). *Course in General Linguistics.* Edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye in collaboration with Albert Reidlinger, translated by Wade Baskin. New York: Philosophical Library.

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+ Online materials:

Baker, Mark C. (1989) ‘Object Sharing and Projection in Serial Verb Constructions’, *Linguistic Inquiry*, *20* (4) (Autumn, 1989), pp. 513-553, Cambridge: The MIT Press. Available through <http://www.jstor.org/stable/ 4178644>, Accessed 14/03/2012 06:49

An Ngọc (2013). *Nghề biên-phiên dịch thiếu chuẩn mực nghề nghiệp*, Truy cập lúc 10:30 ngày 29/11/2015 tại http://www.vietnamplus.vn/nghe-bienphien-dich-thieu-chuan-muc-nghe-nghiep/234990.vnp.

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