



International Journal of
Modern Education Research

Keywords

Vietnamese Students,
Learning Experiences,
Learning in Australia,
Culture of learning

Received: February 12, 2015

Revised: March 26, 2015

Accepted: March 27, 2015

Cross-Learning Experiences of Vietnamese Students at Australian Universities

Nguyen Cao Thanh, Nguyen Ba Duc, Nguyen Khai Hoan,
Tran Xuan Bo

Department of Science Management and International Relations, Tan Trao University, Tan Trao University, Vietnam

Email address

Thanh.tantraouniversity@gmail.com (N. C. Thanh), thanhthu7580@yahoo.com (N. B. Duc)

Citation

Nguyen Cao Thanh, Nguyen Ba Duc, Nguyen Khai Hoan, Tran Xuan Bo. Cross-Learning Experiences of Vietnamese Students at Australian Universities. *International Journal of Modern Education Research*. Vol. 2, No. 1, 2015, pp. 1-7.

Abstract

This paper will investigate the perceptions of Vietnamese students toward the teaching and learning styles in Australian institutions. The purpose of this study is an attempt to bring to Australian teachers, local students and international students the perceptions that are reflected on experiences of Vietnamese students when they are required to study overseas. Moreover, an overview of the different teaching and learning contexts between Vietnam and Australia will be delivered to the readers. The author expects from the readers an empathy and sympathy to the obstacles and difficulties which international students in general and Vietnamese students in particular are coping with during their studies abroad.

1. Introduction

“During my study here, I found that teachers often apply new teaching methods which are very useful for us. One of the good points of the teachers here is the fact that they are very creative and always updating us with new knowledge, which is different from the teachers like us in Vietnam. They are also good at encouraging activeness of students. When a good teacher observing a group, finds some students participating passively, he/she will immediately ask these students some questions about the the topic being discussed, and thus indirectly making these students participate actively in the group”(A student who doing masters in Science Technology Education at La Trobe University) .

The above revelation would partly reflect an overview of teaching and learning in Western universities in general and Australian universities in particular. International students, who come from different social, cultural and educational backgrounds, might have an adequate and comprehensive appraisal about the quality of teaching approach and learning environment in Australian institutions.

International students in general and Vietnamese students in particular usually find it difficult to adapt with teaching and learning environment in Australia at the beginning. Coming from a country, where the education system is very traditional, the initial obstacles are unavoidable toward Vietnamese students. Ho, Holmes & Cooper (2004) show that, most international students experienced the initial shock when they were imagined to be and what was actually required.

This paper will investigate the perceptions of Vietnamese students toward the teaching

and learning styles in Australian institutions. The purpose of this study is an attempt to bring to Australian teachers, local students and international students the perceptions of

Vietnamese students when they are required to study overseas. Moreover, an overview of the different teaching and learning contexts between Vietnam and Australia will be delivered to the readers. This paper also expects from the readers an empathy and sympathy to the obstacles and difficulties which international students in general and Vietnamese students in particular are coping with during their studies in Australia.

2. What is Going on: A Review of the Literature

2.1. Vietnamese Context

In the past, Vietnam was dominated by China for thousands of years, and parallel with the influences on culture, language or political, education is also still impacted by Confucianism. In certain degree, Confucianism is a progressive ideology which heightens the values of morals, humanity and tolerance among humans. Furthermore, Confucian ideology praises peace and condemns inhuman wars. These ideas are valuable and true in any circumstances and in any society. However, in the educational field, some instructions of Confucianism are not suitable and not appropriate in current societies, especially in Vietnam – one of the countries which is on the way to integrate with the world. The Confucian influence in education has been quite apparent until now when the distance between students and teacher is changing. Especially, Confucianism has deeply impacted on teaching and learning, which are indispensable features of education system.

Importantly, Phuoc (1975 cited in Ellis, 1995) indicated that “the Confucian model is teacher-centered, closed, suspicious of creativity, and predicated on an unquestioning obedience from the students” (p.42). Generally, traditions may contain elements to hinder progress and create inappropriate attitudes towards improvement (Nguyen, 2012; Tong 2000, cited in An, 2001). One aspect of Vietnamese tradition is reflected in the hierarchy of both the society and education systems (An, 2001). This hierarchy makes the traditional Vietnamese teaching-learning style a teacher-centered one-way communication. In recent years, these traditional styles are changing towards student-centered approaches, but the changes are not yet very effective.

Regarding the teacher-centered approach, Elsey (1990, cited in M. Kinnell 1990) expresses the idea that the control role of the teacher is a reflection of the perception that “*teachers know best*” and therefore “*the learners have very little say*”. Hence, the learners in Vietnam from generations are trained to be “*listeners*”. Vu (1995) reports that “In Vietnam, the teacher gives lectures in the forms of reading, speaking about the content of the lesson and writing on the board what is required to be remembered. The students listen

to the teacher’s talk and take notes in silence”(p.9). Contributing to that Duong, Diller & Sutherland (1975) comments “Inside a Vietnamese classroom, the courtesy observed is silence, to allow the teacher to speak without interruption and classmates study without interference” (p.21). In addition, the students are only allowed to speak or ask the questions with the permission from their teachers. Otherwise, questioning the teacher is considered to be rude and unacceptable. The students’ responsibilities are obeying teachers and having good behavior toward their teachers. They are trained to be thankful to the teachers. Hoang Tuy (2000:54) said that owing to the hierarchical system and the notion that “the teachers know the best”, the teaching becomes dictatorial and the learning becomes forced and passive. Consequently, this is the reason why the Vietnamese student “finds it easy to imitate, but difficult to do creative works” (Nguyen, 1998. p.20).

Regarding teacher-student relationship, Nguyen (2000) states that “the relationship between teachers and students is the most important to the classroom environment” (p.21). However, the connection between teacher and student in Vietnam has been ignored. As mentioned above, this flaw comes from Confucian ideology which teaches young generations always have to keep harmony with the elders and teachers. According to Irwin (1996), in Vietnam, the hierarchical structure of society according to Confucian ideology was emphasized in three main relationships: king/subject, teacher/pupil and father/children.

Another factor that makes Vietnamese teacher and learner’s communication more difficult is the notion of “keeping face”. Wei (1977) said that

“the Vietnamese traditionally do not reveal any of their problems to outsiders because such of the revelation is view as sign of the weakness. Problems are solved within the family, and exposure of them to non-family member is considered shameful not only for the individual but also for the family and even for the entire nation” (p.12).

Contributing to the perception of *face*, Sullivan (1994) notices that “Asian cultures like to pay more attention to face in the form of *saving face* or *losing face*” (p.87). In the class, neither the teachers nor the students should be made to *lose face*. On one hand, the students keep quiet in the class without discussing and contributing to the teacher’s lecture to show their respect toward their teacher and to avoid making mistakes and *losing face* in public. As Hwang (1986) points out “he or she must pay attention to preserving other’s face in social encounters, especially the face of the superiors” (248). On the other hand, the teachers rarely give students a chance to question to avoid having to answering the learners’ question by “I do not know” (Teachers are at all times supposed to know everything). As a result, the communicating transactions between the two partners are weak and the students are not really connected to the class and the lessons.

2.2. Australian Context

In Anglo-Australian higher education (Ballard & Clanchy), there is a notion that tertiary education emphasizes the potential for extending the students' knowledge base, and for the creation of "new" knowledge. This notion is rooted in the relationship between teaching and learning strategy and the cultural attitudes to knowledge which inform them. Ballard & Clanchy (1997) believe that higher education in Australia is based on an extending attitude to knowledge; therefore, the teaching strategy directs the students to independent and critical thinking, the development of a capacity for abstraction, and the expansion of knowledge. To have a broader overview of Western higher education, including Australian education, it is useful to look at some theories of holistic education. These conceptions are not exactly the same, but share the progressiveness of teaching and learning approaches.

According to Flake (1998) the purposes of holistic education are to:

- Give young people a vision of the universe in which all animate and inanimate are interconnected and unified.
- Help students synthesize learning and discover the interrelatedness of all disciplines.
- Prepare students for life in the 21st century by emphasizing a global perspective and common human interests.
- Enable the young to develop a sense of harmony and spirituality – which are needed to construct world peace.

The theory shows a more comprehensive purpose of teaching and learning. Following this point, teaching and learning is not only to transmit and to receive the academic knowledge from textbooks, but also assist learners to develop harmoniously. Supplementing this point, Miller & Drake (1998) suppose that the holistic teaching usually focuses on relationships:

1. Relationship between linear thinking and intuition.
2. Relationship between mind and body.
3. Relationships among domains of knowledge.
4. Relationship between self and community.
5. Relationship between self and self.

Western education in general and Australian education in

particular often requires from the teacher a combination of "the theoretical, the personal and the political" (White, 2006). Moreover, White indicates that, teachers not only equip themselves but also know what should be required from students. For example, teachers would "require students to focus on their own educational experiences and identity, and demands the articulation and documentation of beliefs, values and philosophy" (p.16). White (2006) establishes five key elements of learning:

- Creativity derived from risk-taking and daring.
- Support and encouragement for students, especially when working in unfamiliar ways.
- Collaboration and collegiality in dealing with challenges, negotiating and solving problems.
- Encouragement and inclusion of innovative thinking and ideas (including the personal and the political).
- Exploration of ideas and learning through the creation of performance rather than learning about ideas through discussion and reading only.

Taking account from the above statements, one of the important jobs of teachers is to maintain the relationship between mind and body. From this, the student can sense the unity and connection between mind and body. The relationship could be discovered through movement, dance, and centering exercises. Miller & Drake (1998) observe at Simcoe Street School and describe that at this school, almost teachers use role playing, drama, or theater in their programs. Through these movements, students might express their feelings indirectly as well as practice movement skills. Complementing this point, Vasuvat, & Intratat (2010) says that the performance of students will be much more effective if they are all engaged in singing, dancing, and high levels of emotion and drama. Clearly, if coping too much with academic knowledge, students could be stressed, and it might negatively affect their studying outcomes. Therefore, the implementing of some activities such as dance, singing or drama could enhance the mind-body connection of students. Miller (1998) suggests that, to do this, teachers "select a piece of music that evokes strong images for you" (p.11). This idea would seem out of place in Vietnam.

Table 1. Differences in Teacher/Student and Student/Student Interaction Related to the Power Distance Dimension

Small Power Distance Societies	Large Power Distance Societies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stress on impersonal "truth" which can in principle be obtained from any competent person • a teacher should respect the independence of his/her students • student-centred education (premium on initiative) • teacher expects students to initiate communication • teacher expects students to find their own paths • students may speak up spontaneously in class • student allowed to contradict or criticise teacher • effectiveness of learning related to amount of two-way communication in class • outside class, teachers are treated as equals • in teacher/student conflicts, parents are expected to side with the student • younger teachers are more liked than older teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stress on personal "wisdom" which is transferred in the relationship with a particular teacher (guru) • a teacher merits the respect of his/her students • teacher-centred education (premium on older) • students expect teacher to initiate communication • students expect teacher to outline paths to follow • students speak up in class only when invited by the teacher • teacher is never contradicted nor publicly criticised • effectiveness of learning related to excellence of the teacher • respect for teachers is also shown outside class • in teacher/student conflicts, parents are expected to side with the teacher • older teachers are more respected than younger teachers

Re-printed from: Hofstede, G. (1986). Cultural Differences in Teaching and Learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 10, pp. 301-320.

The studies reveal that, in Australia, along with most other Western societies, education is designated as having small power-distance relationships. Hofstede (1986) indicated that the power-distance flexibility impacts the nature of the teacher-student relationship (see Table 1).

Hofstede (1980) found that most traditional societies in Western society, including Australia, are individualistic, while in South East Asian areas are collectivist. In individualist society, a person looks primarily after his or her own self interest and the interest of his or her immediate family. In contrast, a collectivist culture consists of a tightly knit collection of clannish groups, all uniformly labeled and arranged hierarchically according to social standing.

The teacher-student communication in Australia can be viewed as following the requirements of holistic education. Miller (1998) suggests that the teacher-student relationship should be open and dynamic in holistic settings, instead of following bureaucratic and conservative rules. In fact, the effective and efficient teaching-learning activities do not totally depend on rigid models in classroom. In contrast, it mostly comes from the mutual sympathy and understanding between teachers and learners. And the most important thing is to set up an open communication between teachers and learners. In factual lives, it is challenging to work effectively without cooperation with others, especially in education. According to Miller (1998) teachers should not work in isolation. He recommends that they should work together with students to seek the suitable ways of instructional and classroom management strategies. Contributing to this, Miller (2000) states one of the principle of holistic educators is:

“we must respond to the learner with an open, inquisitive mind and a loving heart, and a sensitive understanding of the world he or she is growing into (...) A holistic teacher is acutely sensitive to the student’s needs and, at the same time, acutely aware of the challenges and possibilities the world offers this person at this moment and in this place” (p.25).

Apparently, these ideas are still so strange within Vietnamese context and thus creating a barrier between teachers and students.

3. Methodology

To carry out this paper, a qualitative approach was chosen, and semi-structured interview was adopted as a means to collect data. The rationale for the qualitative approach relates to the nature of the essay and the availability of data. This paper is placed in a particular situation, the teaching and learning approach at one Australian University. In this case, the information will be perceived differently by different participants according to their values, backgrounds and experiences. Thus, the qualitative approach generally examines people’s words and actions in different ways more closely in representing the situation as experienced by the

participants (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994)

There are four students who were chosen to be participants of the paper research. They all have experienced their tertiary educations in both Vietnam and Australia. In addition, my own educational experiences are also considered as key source to the data.

4. Results

4.1. Learning in Vietnam

All of the participants reported that when they were learners in Vietnam, they were not aware that the education system was very traditional and conventional, because they did not have any chances to approach another educational system. Student A goes on to express that “I believed that all of the knowledge from textbooks and all the talk from teachers were the best. I always thought that I had to follow, copy and imitate them whatever the reasons were. In my mind, there was no room for argument or discussion. The absolute obedience to teachers was the target which I was trying to reach. I could not be aware that the way I thought and the way teachers performed were following the teacher-centered approach”.

The view I am putting forward here is largely in agreement with that of the participants. From elementary school to high school, I had to learn every academic subject except music, art and dance. The classroom was usually divided into two, with a few rows on each side, and an aisle between the two sides. Students had to sit in the same place until the end of the school year. When going to class, we always had to bring the textbooks which were published by the government, and open them when the lecture started. During the lectures, we tried to copy all the content which teachers wrote on the board. Almost all the content written down in class would be used for tests and exams.

In each grade, we had to do oral, written and fitness tests. There was an oral test (*kiem tra mieng*) everyday, and usually at the beginning of the lecture. In this kind of test, we repeated exactly what we had written in the notebook, and if we repeated it fluently and exactly, we would get a high score. For example, in Vietnamese literature, teachers often asked me to repeat a short paragraph of a lecture note or a poem, and the more fluently I recited the higher score I got. In the written tests, in some subjects, which required creativeness and imagination such as literature, we still had to follow the ideas from teachers when we analyzed and evaluated a poem or short story. If we had something different from the lecture note, we would not get high scores. It could be said that the teachers’ understanding was also our understanding, and everything they said was the best. The physical fitness tests were applied mechanically. This is the reason why students who were not good at physical fitness were afraid of physical exam. And if students did not pass the physical test, they could not attend the final exam and graduation.

Another aspect of the classroom environment was that there was no time for entertainment or relaxation in class, even when students were tired. Usually, at the end of a teaching period, we felt less interested in the lecture, as we were tired and hungry. However, teachers still did the same work, and imposed on us a bulk of boring knowledge to digest. As a result, the last teaching period of every day became a pressure for each student.

To sum up, my personal experience suggested that the educational system in Vietnam was quite outdated and conventional. Teaching had become authoritarian, learning had become passive and enforced. Currently, things have changed, but not a lot.

4.2. Learning in Australia

All of the participants assumed that there is a huge difference in terms of both teaching-learning approaches and teacher-student communication between Vietnam and Australia.

Student B acknowledged that when he first came to Australia, he felt not confident, as he had to use English, which is not his first language, to communicate. The student revealed that "In the first days, when I spoke English, teachers at La Trobe Language Center understood nothing, but they still kept their patience to listen to me. In class, when I pronounced wrongly new words, the teachers corrected thoughtfully for me and showed me how to pronounce correctly". It could be asserted that, without the studying time at language center (LC), Vietnamese students are likely impossible to approach the master course at La Trobe University. At the LC, we had been equipped with comprehensive skills of presentation, especially academic writing. Furthermore, that is a useful time to initially adapt with Australian teaching and learning environment.

Noticeably, there is a big change from the LC to university. At the LC, all students are international students, and we were quite similar at English language level, so we often felt quite confident when speaking English, even when pronounced wrongly. In contrary, at Educational Faculty, there are a lot of local students, and some of them are undergraduates. They spoke very fast and using a lot of schoolboy slangs, and the lecturers also spoke quickly. It really made us puzzled and unconfident. Sometimes, during the lectures, lecturer and local students laughed and smiled when they found something interesting or funny. Interestingly, we did not understand what's going on? Why did they laugh and smile? What things made them to be interested? And we still laughed and smiled following them, even though we understood nothing. However, step by step, we got used to the teaching and learning environment in classroom. Another thing, which cannot be ignored, is that Vietnamese students have received huge encouragement and assistance from the lecturers and local students. They have assisted us to overcome our initial difficulties not only in study, but also help us to integrate quickly with our new studying environment.

It is said "the more you travel, the more information and

experiences you have". The English saying appears to be unbelievably true to my culture learning and language learning experience in Australia. Last year, I enrolled in the subject "Intercultural Communication & Education" of which I was passionately curious about considering its extraordinary name. We were divided to work in groups with other three Australian friends who were incredibly helpful, lovely and enthusiastic. While they eagerly discussed and disputed together in a loud voice and engaged in heated argument and debate, I just stayed silent and listened to them attentively and cautiously. On being constantly asked why I had not participated in the argument with them, I only smiled and answered in a soft voice that I preferred listening to them than speaking out my opinions. Frankly, my culture has taught me that avoiding conflicts, and disharmony in class is indispensable and more importantly. In addition, face-saving is considered greatly significant and important to me, as believed and taught since I was a young boy. I only answer and respond when the teacher called my name instead of actively participating in the activity. Importantly, I am obliged to avoid showing off my knowledge in front of my classmates as well as the teacher and dispute them, which is assumed as a taboo. In my culture, the students are expected to modestly learn from the teacher who is considered "to stand head and shoulders above learners".

Gradually, I have discovered that the Western learning culture expects students to engage in the debate so that the problem can be patently solved and speaking in a loud voice so as to be obviously heard by all the members of the class. Another surprise for me is, Australian students address their teacher as a friend or as a "more experienced colleague" with his/her first name when they need help, which has never taken place in my culture but in Australia, this may be their manner of having a close *informal rapport* with their teachers. Like many other international Vietnamese students, I feel to a certain extent uncomfortable to call Australian teachers by their first name instead of "*thua thay/co*" or adding professional or academic titles before their names. The form of addressing between the teacher and Australian students gives me the impression that they seem not to show sufficient reverence to the teacher. What is more, in my culture, students must not eat and drink in class when the teacher is explaining or teaching and if they have some puzzles, they are expected to raise their hands as a sign of questioning and only speak on any matter with the teacher's permission instead of interrupting the teacher to query when they feel like Australian students.

In addition, Vietnamese teachers appear *not to* habitually employ compliments as a positive technique to encourage their students' studies, which is unbelievably different from Australian teachers. In my culture, the teacher appears to give compliments to only students who richly deserve to be justifiably praised. For this reason, Vietnamese students frequently take great pride in the teacher's rare compliments which are implied as an affirmation of their genuine success in studies. Due to the influence of Vietnamese culture, like many other international Vietnamese students, I am

occasionally suspicious of sincerity of complimentary comments that Australian teachers usually employ in class. I wonder whether their praise is a bit hackneyed and whether my work is actually excellent or not so as to further endeavor in the future. I do believe that the transition from the learning culture of an expected “large power distance” society like Vietnam to the Australian learning culture with the motto “when you are in Rome, do as the Romans do” requires international Vietnamese learners to achieve an entirely unbelievable adaptation which may be “easier said than done”. Take for an example, writing 4,000-5,000 argument essays seem to be a tremendously challenging issue to Vietnamese students in terms of critically written communication. Coming from a hierarchical society with the “large power distance” is greatly anticipated, they seem to be inevitably influenced by their uncritical writing as an upshot of conventionally cultural factors.

5. Suggestions and Recommendations

5.1. Suggestions for Vietnamese Students in Australian Universities

It is impossible to immediately adapt with new teaching and learning approaches in a new educational environment. So, one of the initial things which Vietnamese students should do is how to integrate and adapt with a multicultural environment at classroom. Blyton (2001) asserts that through cultural exchanges, students can recognize and discover the commonalities between themselves and others and the differences in a positive way. Furthermore, this is one of the most important steps in learning and preparing for life in a diverse and global society. Clearly, these activities have brought the mutual understanding and learning to Vietnamese students in particular and international students in general.

Moreover, in the way to adapt with other cultures, Vietnamese students should always be proud of their culture and language, and transmit them to others. Phillips, (1999) stated that “Each student brings to school a wealth of information that reflects the student’s life, experience and cultural background” (p.29). It is also important to note that to adapt and integrate quickly in a multicultural environment, people should understand more about each other. In fact, many international students may have never known or heard about Vietnam. Their knowledge about Vietnam may be zero. Because of that, Vietnamese students should introduce and tell them about Vietnamese culture and history. For example, Vietnamese students can tell their colleagues about the ways of communication in Vietnamese context in the classroom. In my own experience, during my studying time at La Trobe University Language Centre, I made friends with an Indian and told him how Vietnamese people defeated the American empire and French colonialism. He was very surprised and he expressed admiration for Vietnamese people. This is important noting that the cross- cultural understanding is one of the fundamental factors to shorten the cultural gap among people.

5.2. Recommendation for Vietnamese Students Who are Going Back to Vietnam

It can be asserted that, so far, almost all Vietnamese students, who are studying in Australia, could understand and appreciate the nature and positiveness of a new teaching and learning approaches in terms of holistic education. However, I suppose that they would not be sure that holistic education could apply immediately in Vietnamese context. There is a meaningful proverb in Vietnamese that “Chuoí dao bang vang khong the lap vao mot luoi dao bang sat” (A golden knife handle cannot fit in a metal knife). In other words, we cannot bring whole holistic contents in education within Vietnamese context. Furthermore, Vietnamese students, who are going back to Vietnam from Australia are small in number, so should be wary about changing the educational system in Vietnam overnight, as it is impractical and infeasible. We should try our best to do the best we can in some ways.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, the research paper has discussed and analyzed experiences of Vietnamese students in approaching the teaching and learning styles in Australian universities. The essay has given an overview of Vietnamese and Australian contexts regarding education in general and teaching and learning approaches in particular. My personal educational experiences in Vietnam and Australia have been examined also. The paper has shown the implications and recommendations for Vietnamese students, Vietnamese higher education and Australian teachers.

Concisely at the micro level, the above discussions may have not brought sufficient and adequate view of the issue., however, the paper has attempted to highlight what Vietnamese students learn and understand from teaching and learning approaches in Australia. The evaluations have indicated and illustrated that moving from one studying environment to another environment could be extremely challenging. Vietnamese students coming to Australia for study face such challenge. The processes that help them meet such challenge and process to become independent learners include: assisting them to improve their English; encouraging them to express their own thoughts and opinions; giving them more opportunities to express their experiences; guiding them to engage more in group discussions; and interacting with group of local students. Importantly, beside the above supports, Vietnamese students themselves should and must endeavor to overcome these challenges. Without their attempt and cooperation, all the support from others may be useless.

There may never be a good educational system until Vietnam changes the authoritarian traditions in schools, the restricted rules, traditional teaching and learning methods, and especially the sacrosanct’s role of teacher in pedagogical environment. To be more progressive, Vietnamese educators

should appreciate the nature of holistic education and apply it to Vietnamese education, better late than never.

References

- [1] An, T. H (2001) *Viec day hoc o bacdai hoc Vietnam* [The Teaching at University in Vietnam] Hanoi Education University Publisher
- [2] Blytan, J. (2001), *Cultural Industry: Some New Titles and Some Old Favorites*.
- [3] www.slav.schools.net.au/fyi_back/winter_2001_2.htm
- [4] Ballard, B. &Clanchy, J. (1997). *Teaching international students_ A brief Guide for Lecturers and Supervisors*. Australia: IDP Education Australia
- [5] Duong, B. T. & Diller, A-M. & Sutherland, K. (1975). *A handbook for teacher of Vietnamese students: Hints for dealing with cultural differences in schools*. US: Center for applied Linguistics
- [6] Do, D. (2000). *Mathematics Teaching and Learning in Vietnam*. Center for Curriculum Development and Teaching Methodology. *National Institute for Educational Sciences, Vietnam*
- [7] Ellis, G. (1995). *Teaching and learning styles in Vietnam: Lessons for Australian Educators*. *Journal of Vietnamese studies*, (8), 9-16
- [8] Flake, C. (1998) *Holistic Education: Principles, Perspectives and Practices*. Holistic Education Press
- [9] Hofstede, G. (1986). *Cultural differences in Teaching and Learning*. *International journal of intercultural relations*, 10, pp 301-320.
- [10] Ho, E., Holmes, P., Cooper, J. (2004). *Review and evaluation of international literature on managing cultural diversity in the classroom*. University of Waikato
- [11] Hoang, T. (2000). *Reform and modernize education*. (<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/diendan>)
- [12] Hwang, K. K. (1986) *The Psychology of the Chinese People*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press
- [13] Kinnell, M. (1990). *The learning experiences of oversea students*. The society for research into higher education and Open University Press
- [14] Miller, R. (Ed) (1998) *The Renewal of Meaning in Education: Responses to the Cultural and Ecological Crisis of our Times*. Holistic Education Press
- [15] Miller, R. (2000) *Caring for New Life: Essays on Holistic Education*. Volume One of the Foundation of Holistic Education Series
- [16] Maykut, P. & Morehouse, R. (1994) *Beginning Qualitative Research – A Philosophic and Practical Guide*. London & Washington, D.C.: The Falmer Press.
- [17] Nguyen, T. N. (2000). *Vietnamese teaching styles in EFL classroom at tertiary level*. Latrobe University: submitted for MALC
- [18] Nguyen, T. H. (1998). *Understanding Vietnamese Students: A focus on their passive attitude*. *Journal of Vietnamese studies*, (1), 19-25.
- [19] Nguyen, C. T. (2012) *The Roles of Teachers in Fostering Autonomous Learning at the University Level*. Paper published in the proceeding of Cyprus International Conference on Educational Research (CY-ICER-2012) North Cyprus. Vol. 47, Pp 605-609. Link: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812024391#>
- [20] Phillips, D. (1999), *Windows to the World: A Celebration of Picture Books to Culture*. *Librarians News*. Vol. 16, No. 3.
- [21] Sullivan, K. (1994). *Understanding ways*. London: Hale & Ironmo
- [22] Tacey, D. (2003) *Educating the Heart: spirituality and interiority*. Australia, School of Arts and Critical Enquiry, La Trobe University
- [23] Tiedt, L. and Tiedt, M. (2005), *Multicultural Teaching. A Handbook of Activities, Information and Resources*. America
- [24] Vu, V. T. (1995). *Some cultural features of Vietnamese life and teacher education*. In Barthel & Ho, V. (Eds.) & Alex & Dinh, Q. T.(trans). *Intercultural interaction and development: converging perspectives conferences proceedings*. Sydney: University of technology.
- [25] Vasuvat, S., & Intrat, C. (2010). *Learner Training for Autonomous Learning: A Voluntary Use of One-to-One Language Counselling Service at KMUTT Self-Access Learning Centre, Thailand*. Paper presented at the LSCAC, Thailand.
- [26] White, J. (2006) *Arias of Learning: creativity and performativity in Australian teacher education*. Australia, University of Melbourne.