THE WORLDWIDE TREND OF BILINGUAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

English is in global existence of World Englishes, as a lingua franca; or an international language. The article aims to make a glimpsed review on the worldwide trend of bilingual development which indicates that there are more second language speakers of English than native speakers and there are as many bilingual children as there are monolingual children. In the light of this trend, a pedagogical paradigm shift in Asia-pacific region (from EFL teaching to ESL teaching) is identified in theory and practice. Particularly, the article gives focus on the description of how teaching English as second language is assigned as national policies and implemented at school levels in some featured Asian countries such as Singapore, Philippines, China and Japan. Hence, some implications are drawn for Vietnamese education context in which the fact that current teaching English as foreign language (EFL) would be gradually replaced by teaching English as second language (ESL) has been taken in the national agenda.

Keywords: Bilingual development; Pedagogical paradigm; Teaching English as foreign language; Teaching English as second language.

1. Introduction

English has been the facto official working language of the group of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for years. This position of English as the official language for globalized communication is more strengthened by the ASEAN Chapter signed in February 2009 by ten governments of The Association of Asian Nations. English becomes more formalized with the signing of the Charter, Article 34 of which reads “The working language of ASEAN shall be English”. From the educational perspective, Kirkpatrict (2012) addresses that the privileged position of English through ASEAN gives implications for two interrelated issues. The first is the implications of the increasing roles of English within ASEAN for the teaching English. The second is the implication of the increased teaching and learning of English for teaching, learning and maintenance of local languages, many of which are classified as endangered ones. In this context, there has been a radical shift in teaching English at pedagogical and administrative levels for English learners to attain the target of executive competence of English in the changing global world. Specifically, in English spoken countries such as the UK and Ireland or Australia, the term English as second language (SL) has been replaced by English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Whereas, in non-English speaking countries, the term English as foreign language has been criticized. By redefining the notion of teaching English as second language, teaching foreign language has been replaced gradually by English as second or international language. In Vietnam, recently, the need for cooperation with and learning from nations which have been successful in teaching English as second language is asserted by the Minister of Education and Training, Phung Xuan Nha. This is seen as a practical solution for helping Vietnamese young generations to gain English competence to be able to integrate themselves into the global economy and society.

This article aims to make a quick review on the worldwide trend of bilingual development. In the light of this trend, the shift from EFL teaching to ESL teaching is identified in theory and practice as a pedagogical paradigm shift in Asia-pacific region. Particularly, the article gives focus on the description of how teaching English as second language is assigned as national policies and implemented at school levels in some featured Asian countries such as Singapore, Philippines, China and Japan. Emphasis that is central to this representation is the language provision for the majority group or additive bilingual education which is investigated in terms of (1) policy, curriculum and ideological; orientations; (2) models and approaches; (3) practices and their underpinning principles. Hence, some implications are drawn for Vietnamese education context in which the fact that teaching English as foreign language (EFL) would be gradually replaced by teaching English as second language (ESL) has been taken in the national agenda.

2. The worldwide trend of bilingual development

According to Paradis et al. (2011), the trend that there are many bilingual children as there are monolingual children has been recognized worldwide. This means that increasingly many children are being raised as bilinguals.

At the policy levels of bilingual education provisions, there has been a clear distinction made between the two parallel conceptions of bilingualism for minority and majority national groups or “two types of language provisions” or two types of bilingual education. These two concepts differ in terms of aims and practices: one aims to transition to the mainstream education system to develop balanced bilinguals who identify with both minority and majority groups and the other is added to students’ knowledge repertoire linguistic competence in a foreign language (Feng, 2005). The term “additive bilingual teaching” is used to refer to language provision for the majority group indicating that there will be no displacement of learners’ mother tongue and culture, and ‘transitional bilingual education” for minority national groups to spell out an educational process that aims for developing ethnic and more importantly national identity (Wang, 2003).

At the individual levels of the bilingual development, the acquisition of two languages can take place in one of two ways. The first way is termed as *simultaneous acquisition* which occurs when a child is raised from birth, or when the second language is introduced before the age of three (Paradis et al., 2011). According Meisel (2004), Genesee (2009) and Genesee and Nicoladis (2006), children learning two languages simultaneously go through the same developmental stages as children learning one language. Although talking of bilingual children may start slightly later than that of monolingual children, their language development begins within the normal range. The second way is termed as *sequential acquisition* which occurs when a second language is introduced after the first language is well-established, generally after the age of three (Paradis et al., 2011). This type of sequential bilingualism may occur in two cases. The first case is when children who use their home language learn a different language spoken in the country to which they migrate. The second case is when children exclusively speaks his heritage language at home until they begin school, where instruction is offered for a different language (Paradis et al., 2011). Despite the fact that they are distinct types of bilingualism, sequential and simultaneous, Fend (2007) posits that behind the differences with regard to terminology, aims and approaches, there are common sociocultural, political and pedagogical factors that characterize all forms of bilingual education. Furthermore, bilinguals share common benefits from acquisition of the two languages. In general, learning languages brings in many social, psychological and lifestyle advantages to bilinguals. It helps increase concentration, listening ability, memory, creativity and critical thinking - all of which are thinking processes and world vision that increase learning in general. It exposes learners to other ways of looking at the world. All these cognitive skills have an impact on the brain's executive control system, which generally takes care of activities like high-level thought, multitasking, and sustained attention. Bilingual and Dual Language programs promote bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement and cross-cultural competence in all students. Students maintain their native language while adding another language, and they develop pride in their own culture while developing an understanding of others. Furthermore, a swathe of health benefits from speaking more than one language, including faster stroke recovery and delayed onset of dementia is found by researchers.

The worldwide trend of bilingualism above is also identified in the development of World Englishes and English as "a lingua franca"; or "an international language" as Wen (2012) asserts to be used along with the development of globalization. In fact, Kingsley (2012), Low and Hashim (2012) posit that there has been a widely shifting trend from the international English to "World Englishes" for three decades. The term "World Englishes" is used to refer to localized forms of English throughout the world, particularly in Caribbean and parts of Africa, and in many societies in Asia. Prior 1980s, there was a worldwide discussion on the distinction between native speakers and non-native speakers, English as foreign and as second language and English as international language. However, the fact that notion of world Englishes is widely recognized indicates English is no longer a possession of the British or American. It becomes an international language with an increasingly large number of different varieties. World Englishes itself subsumes many different approaches to the study of English worldwide: diverse varieties in different societies where English is spoken as a second or foreign language: corpus linguistics, sociology of language, discourse and genre, critical linguistics…Therefore, a recently emergent approach to English as a "lingua franca" is proving popular in the world. With this notion, English is adopted as a common language between speakers whose native languages are different; between native speakers and non-native speakers, but also, more often than not, among non-native speakers such as Koreans and Vietnamese (Lee McKay, 2003).

3. A pedagogical paradigm shift for English language teaching in Asia-pacific region: from EFL teaching to ESL teaching

3.1. From imposition to accommodation of the teaching paradigm of native-speaker norms developed in Western countries

In reference to the spread recognition of 'world Englishes", Wang and Hill's review (2011) indicate a paradigm shift for English language teaching in Asia from imposition to accommodation of the paradigm of teaching developed in Western countries with native-speaker norms. These authors posit that English language teaching (ELT) professionals in Asia have embraced the paradigm of teaching originated in Western countries for decades. However, the notion of a standardized English has been into question due to the fact that the varieties as well as the uses of English differ from place to place. Furthermore, language teaching is seen clearly to be affected by a host of factors ranging from the macro political and cultural environments of a country or region to the micro perceptions and practices of individual learners and teachers which calls for different methodologies for different learners or learning situations. Therefore, Wang and Hill

(2011) assume that Asian countries need to take a more realistic look at "what" is being taught and learned, "where" the teaching and learning is taking place, and "who" is involved in the teaching and learning English. In this argumentation, Wang and Hill develop a common framework for teaching English in Asia where the language increasingly serves as a 'lingua franca' between various countries in domains such as government, education, and business. Within this framework, Wang and Hill note that the norms of the language should be adapted rather than adopted as before. ELT programs in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts have to consider issues concerning the elusive nature of native speaker norms; problems concerning the attainability as well as the desirability of native speaker norm; problems concerning the desirability of the native speaker proficiency; the rising status of the local varieties of English; differences in the use of English, in content of learning; differences in the traditions of teaching and learning and different roles of teachers and learners. They conceive that given the growing importance of Asia in international affairs, such particular use of English merits special attention in curriculum development and teacher preparation because according to Beittel (2006, p.87), "the globalization and differentiation of English are two sides of the same coin" (recite from Wang and Hill, 2011). They believe that once the paradigm shift is made from the English as a native language (ENL) model to the English as a lingua franca (ELF) model, as McKay (2003) articulates, the need for learning the target language culture becomes less important. On the contrary, there is a need to develop learners' competence in communicating local values and traditions to the people of other cultures, whether they are from English or non-English speaking countries (recite from Wang and Hill, 2011). To sum up, by taking a close look at all the local features that affect the choice of the varieties of English to be learned, the content of learning and the approaches to teaching and learning in the Asian context, Wang and Hill (2011) reveal limitations in the established theories responsive not only to indigenous traditions of language learning but also to the increasing use of English as a language of contact between non-native speakers across national boundaries while at the same time continuing to welcome the theories and practices of English language teaching from outside the region.

3.2. From foreign language teaching to second language teaching

In response to Wang and Hill's consideration of the adaptation of Western countries' the notion of a standard English or native speaker norms into teaching English in a particularly cultural context of Asia, by rethinking about the notional distinction between English as second and as foreign language, Longcope (2010) reveals limitations in the established conceptions that are responsive only to outer environment, but not to inner environment such as teaching methodologies for learners or learning situations in particular contexts. In fact, the distinction between Second-Language Acquisition and Foreign-Language Learning has been traditionally seen as a simple recognition of learning environment in which learners live in a predominantly English-speaking places or not and then consciously learn or naturally acquire English within these types of English environment. That is, this is a perceived difference between learning English in second language context and learning English in a foreign language context. Longcope (2010) argues that the term "context" should be understood to refer not simply to the environment in which learners are situated at a given time but also to refer to the learner's relationship to the environment. In other words, there have been two different ways to investigate context in researching its effects on English language teaching: one is to look at the amount of L2 contact or interaction, and the other is to look at conditions available for L2 learning. The core idea here is that there is something along the lines of it being an equal language, and essential as a full means of communication and study, but additional to students' native language. In teaching practice, there is not necessarily any difference whatsoever in how or what pedagogy teachers would go about teaching it, because basically it's teaching the same thing but with a different focus, because the students' needs are different. This is true with any class. Teachers have to figure out what their students need and what's going on with them, and teach accordingly. Therefore, from pedagogical perspective, teaching second language or foreign language is all as teaching 'English for Speakers of Other Languages' - ESOL. From hence, Longcope (2010) suggests that both physical and pedagogical contexts should be considered so that these conditions can be provided more effectively in the so-called EFL classrooms.

Similar to Longcope, Ringbom (1979) asserts that in addition to the consideration of the individual's internal processes of learning English and the degree of consciousness brought to the learning task, more specific situational distinctions are based on a variety of factors. These are the time spent on language learning, the quality and structure of the input, the teacher's role, learners' age and native language background, the learning processes and communicative strategies used.

Moreover, critical review on the word "foreign" in the term 'Teaching English as foreign language has been documented widely. "Foreign" has largely negative connotations, strongly associated with concepts such as "alienness," "unfamiliarity," and "strangeness," with an additional associative meaning of "not belonging". Particularly, a key assumption traditionally underlying the EFL label is the notion that English is "simply" a subject in the school curriculum, but usually not a medium of education. Furthermore, in "EFL" contexts, there is very limited use of English outside the formal classroom setting." (Widdowson 1994, 2003; Deway, 2010).

In regard to teaching English, Jacobs & Farrell (2001) indicate eight changes that fit with the paradigm shift in second language education toward what is most often described as communicative language teaching. These eight changes are: learner autonomy, cooperative learning, curricular integration, focus on meaning, diversity, thinking skills, alternative assessment and teachers as co-learners. The paradigm shift of which these changes are part is put into perspective as an element of larger shifts from positivism to post-positivism and from behaviorism to cognitivism.

3.3. From Language Immersion Education to Content and Language Integrated Learning

A popular model of teaching English is recognized as "language immersion education" which was used firstly in places where the learners' second language as English is the medium of classroom instruction (such as in Canada in 1960), then it has spread to places where the learners' first language is the medium of classroom instruction and English is a foreign language (such as in Japan, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam). Immersion English education is rooted in the human philosophy that being proficient in more than one language is a valuable skill to be cultivated and nurtured in communities. This ideology corresponds to bilingual education as dual language programs in which two languages are used for academic purposes. Therefore, the main purpose of this model is to foster bilingualism, in other words, to develop learners' communicative competence or language proficiency in their first and in addition to second language. Two-way immersion, one type of dual language education, is recognized as an effective approach to developing language proficiency and literacy in English and partner language. It integrates native speakers of English speakers and native speakers of another language for academic content instruction through both English and partner language at the beginning in elementary schools.

Any English teaching model is always affected by a host of factors ranging from the macro level such as educational policies, cultural environments, social expectations or public opinions of a country or region to micro level such as perceptions and practices of individual schools, learners, teachers and parents. Therefore, immersion programs vary from one country or region to another. It can be seen in practice that immersion English programs take on different formats based on:

- class time spent in second language: *complete immersion; partial immersion; content-based foreign languages in elementary schools*; *FLES* (Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools) programs, 5–15% of class time is spent in the foreign language and time is spent learning language itself; and *FLEX* (Foreign Language Experience) programs, class is always in the first language, only one to five percent of class time is spent sampling each of one or more languages and/or learning about language non-continuously.
- participation by native speaking (L1) students: *submersion* and *two-way immersion (*class time is split in half and taught in the major and target languages)
- learner age: early immersion from age 5 or 6, middle immersion from age 9 or 10, late immersion from age 11 or 15 and adult immersion from 17 or older.
- school subjects taught in L2
- the L2 itself as an additional and separate subject.

(Adapted from California Office of Bilingual Bicultural Education, 1984; Shapson and Mellen Day, 1996; Swain and Johnson, 1997; Lindholm-Leary 2001; Chen, 2006).

Language immersion education can be noted to be closely related to *content-based instruction* (CBI), or *content and language integrated learning* (CLIL). In fact, Snow (2001) presents a typology of content-based models that includes immersion education including complete and partial immersion, theme-based instruction, sheltered content instruction, and adjunct instruction. Wei (2013) asserts that a number of misleading viewpoints arising from English-medium academic publications concerning bilingual education (BE) in China which involves using a foreign language (usually English) to teach part of the subject matter of non-language subject(s). This misleading view is to use the term “immersion” for the most widely used Chinese-English BE model. Wan affirms that Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as more accurate label for the most widely used Chinese-English Bilingual Education model. He proposes future research, such as identifying good practices of CLIL as driving forces behind the bilingual education in China. Furthermore, Vyas and Patel (2015) suggest a new pedagogy for teaching English as a second language in a new century is making language teaching relevant for the digital age and particularly adapting content-based instruction.

Historically, the term *content-based instruction* (CBI), or *content and language integrated learning* (CLIL) as it is known in Europe, refers to a variety of instructional models in which academic subject matter is taught in a second or foreign language, such students learn academic content and language skills simultaneously, meaning the integration of content and language learning (Widdowson, 1978). Content-based instruction is based on the rationale that "people learn a second language more successfully when they use the language as a means of acquiring information, rather than as an end in itself" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.207). CBI has developed as a pedagogical anchor to language education and has opened opportunities for integration of interdisciplinary collaborative approaches for language teaching and learning. The CBI approach is comparable to English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which is usually for vocational or occupational needs or English for Academic Purposes (EAP). The goal of CBI is to prepare students to acquire the languages while using the context of any subject matter so that students learn the language by using it within the specific context of an academic subject (Brinton, 2003). Methodologically, content - based instruction refers to an approach to second language acquisition that emphasizes the importance of content in contrast to other approaches or methods such as communicative language teaching which are centered on the language itself. In content-based teaching, language skills are mostly developed unconsciously through the content dealt with (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 204-205).

The challenge of *content - based instruction* (CBI) is how language teaching can be adapted in order to instruct content and language objectives in a balanced way. It demands that teachers work as researchers who are capable of teaching language and content, keeping a balance between two of them. The world has witnessed the diversity of CBI paradigms that are prevalent in primary and secondary schools and collaborative partnerships that have emerged within and across institutions and disciplines (Richards and Rodgers 2001; Brinton, 2003).

According to Stryker and Leaver (1997), in general, content-based instruction has been implemented more widely in ESL programs than it has in traditional foreign language programs at least in the United States. Stryker and Leaver insist that although contemporary foreign language textbooks contain units based on themes, these themes tend to be subordinated to linguistic content (Stryker and Leaver, 1997). However, Cammarata's study (2009) found that a group of foreign language teachers in the U.S. viewed CBI as an "idealistic" model that they would have difficulty implementing in a traditional classroom setting. In practice, there has been an increased interest in it over the last ten years, particularly in the USA and Canada where it has proven very effective in ESL immersion programs. This interest has now spread to EFL classrooms around the world where teachers are discovering that their students like CBI and are excited to learn English this way.

4. How teaching English as second language is assigned as national policies and implemented at school levels in some featured Asian countries?

Singapore

Being as an Asian country with English-medium national education systems, Singapore reflects the effective adaptation of complete English immersion model and content-based English teaching which is underpinned by the highly centralized language planning by Singaporean government to solve the problematic language diversity in Singapore. Under the multilingual policy stated in the Republic of Singapore Independence Act of 1965 which decreed that Malay, Mandarin, Tamil and English would be the four official languages of Singapore, English was accorded the status of an official language as it is the language of technology and economic development. A necessity for its utility in science and technology essential to economic development from the early years of Singapore's s independence has driven the public defense of English use nationwide. The Ministry of Education (MOE) places heavy emphasis on English, believing that "mastery of English is vital to Singapore's pupils" because English is "the language of administration, education, commerce, science, technology, and global communication". English skills are assessed through written examinations, oral examinations and listening comprehension in grammatically correct English tailored to purpose, audience and context. Hence, at this level English in academic subjects, students are expected to formulate analysis and arguments about current issues and show critical thinking (Patrick, 2011). However, the unbridled dominance of English as an official and administrative language has been a cause of concern for the nation. It is the deculturalization in Singapore caused from that teaching, learning and maintenance of local languages have failed in danger due to increased teaching and learning of English. This negative outcome has been adjusted by the English-knowing bilingual policy in which the Singaporean government clearly differentiates the relationship between English and the mother tongue by assigning English and the mother tongues to different domains. Such pragmatic linguistic language planning policy has enabled Singapore to remain modern and competitive in the world through English but, at the same time, maintain an Asian identity with the acquisition of the mother tongue. Particularly, the multiracial discourse in the "Asianizing of Singapore" is to ensure that Singapore remains a cohesive nation with three homogenous ethnic communities coexisting in equilibrium with each other (Patrick, 2011).

Philippines

The model of bilingual education in Philippines is characterized by school subjects taught in English (L2) and Filipino (L1). The promulgation and implementation of Bilingual Education policy in 1974, bilingual education in the Philippines is defined operationally as the separate use of Filipino and English as the media of instruction in specific subject areas. Filipino is used as medium of instruction in social studies/social sciences, music, arts, physical education, home economics, practical arts and character education. English, on the other hand, is allocated to science, mathematics and technology subjects. The policy on Bilingual Education aims at the achievement of competence in both Filipino and English at the national level, through the teaching of both languages and their use as media of instruction at all levels. The regional languages are used as auxiliary languages in Grades I and II. A profile of the Filipino bilingual is in terms of identity, sociolinguistic competence including language use, attitudes, motivations and proficiency with multicultural and multilinguistic settings (Yanagihara, 2007).

Malaysia

Relatively similar to Philippines's bilingual education model, in Malaysia, English is used for science and maths, with more culturally - or socially - orientated subjects taught in the national languages. However, the debate over English medium of instruction has occurred with arguments having not only economic, social and political dimensions but also pedagogical dimensions. Malaysia recently decided to go back to teaching all disciplines in Malay. According to Kaur's assumption (2012), this problematic situation of bilingual education in Malaysia basically lies in the Malaysian government trying to have one common language policy for the whole country, when the circumstances of each area and even each family differ so much.

China

Feng (2007) indicates that there is a large bank of literature on the history of bilingualism, bilingual educational practices, policies and research projects, particularly in the last three decades when China has opened up to the world. However, the concepts of bilingualism and bilingual education in China have had a long association with minority group bilingual education. Foreign language education in China was traditionally taken as an area in applied linguistics. It has rarely referred to bilingual education or has a little to do with bilingualism. However, teaching

English as a foreign language has been increasingly perceived by Chinese policy makers and other stakeholders as crucial for the economic development of the country and individual advancement in the society for the last two decades. English, and Mandarin Chinese are used as the languages for teaching school subjects in major metropolitan areas, such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, and special economic zones, such as Shenzhen. In Guandong Province, for instance, 200 state schools have been teaching certain subjects in English since 2003. English-medium instruction is expanding particularly fast in the private sector. Such Chinese–English bilingual education developed in a large scale at school levels as well as tertiary ones is resulted from catalytic factors such as China's 'open-door' policy, its successful bid for the 2008 Olympic Games in 2001 and membership of the World Trade Organization in the same year.

Hu (2007) presents the promotion of bilingual education in China as a major educational reform initiative, at the same time, criticizes the Chinese–English bilingual education as 'craze' sweeping across major economic centers in China. From Bourdieu's sociological theory, Hu warns consequences of this bilingual education in China in terms of policy goals as well as curricular implementation to be able to decrease efficacy in learning and detriment to the development of cultural identity in learners and national coherence.

Feng and Wang's work (2007) indicates the model of recent Chinese–English bilingual education. It is called Integrated English (IE), which is developed to suit the context of well-developed regions in China**.** According to these authors, IE is in principle an approach that bears a resemblance to a content-based language learning models. However, IE differs slightly from the content-based language learning in that is more language-driven with less pressure on mastery of content on the part of the students. The IE model in Chinese–English bilingual education is characterized by six beliefs in bilingual education: starting to offer English to pupils at an early age; teaching totally in English; focusing on listening and speaking skills first; developing strategies to help pupils acquire English naturally; developing pupils' overall abilities and integrating content learning with language learning. Such Integrated English model appears to have been effective in developing pupils' bilingual competence in English and Chinese. In addition to adaptation of integrated teaching, Zhang and Adamson (2007) assert that to produce a bilingual workforce, task-based language teaching was adopted in the national English curriculum in 2001 in an attempt to replace the teacher-dominated, knowledge-transmitting and grammar-based methods prevailing in primary English language teaching.

Japan

Japan is seen as a top well-developed nation but not having many Japanese with English proficiency. Hagerman (2009) argues that the point that rendered English language education in Japan less effective has been a historical and continuing disparity between official goals and implementation. This author also criticizes pursuit for national economic goals rather than any individual advancement of English education policies in Japan for the past decades. However, in 2003, by "The Action plan to cultivate Japanese with English abilities" designed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in March 2003, Japanese government established a system for promoting English education. English immersion classes implemented in this plan seem to be quite a complex combination of different formats of immersion language teaching: *partial immersion*; *content-based foreign languages in elementary schools*; and *foreign language experience* programs… Specifically, at primary levels, English is not required. Rather, elementary students take foreign language conversation classes as part of global studies of "Period for Integrated Study" with the purpose to foster students' positive attitude to English. Whereas, foreign language is compulsory subject at the junior and high school levels, students must attend English classes for fifty minutes, three times a week in 2003 & four times a week in 2011. Discontent with the Action Plan 2003, Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education published in July 2008 to stipulate foreign language education was launched. This action plan defines the English language abilities required for Japanese people as follows by education stages. At junior high school, average graduates should have basic communication skills; average high school graduates should be able to participate in normal communication with regard to topics relating to daily life; and, finally, average university graduates should be able to use English at a professional level in their work.

For the purpose of fostering innovative English education, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has designated the Super English Language High school, developed new curriculum focusing on English education. At this time, around 50 high schools are so designated to create distinctive methods such as a comprehensive and cross-curriculum teaching method for developing self-expression primarily by speaking and writing. These schools also promote English education for cultivating scientific logical mind and advanced communication abilities.

Regarding English instructors, there are two system of teaching licensing. The first is assigned by the type of school (primary, junior high school, high school) and by subject (except primary school).This license type is required for teaching in any public/private primary school, junior high school and high school nationwide. The special license system is awarded to persons with excellent knowledge, experience and skill, enables teachers to teach in an international school. In many schools, native speakers who are called "Assistant Language Teacher (ALT)" work with Japanese teacher in a team to teach an English class. More and more young Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) come to schools across the countries through The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET).

Recently, over the past couple of years, the government has been directing to consider reforms that would help Japanese students prepare for and complete better in a globalized world. Three action plans are proposed in rigorous consideration:

1) Moving the starting grade for compulsory English-language education to the third grade from where it is now – the fifth grade – by 2020. According to the Japanese government documents, this move would force the government to considerably boost the number and quality of English teachers and native-language assistant teachers at more than 22,000 six-year elementary schools with 7.1 million children across the country.

2) Promoting more English immersion Education Programs by expanding the number of schools that offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma to 200 over the next five years. This is being considered as part of the plan to promote more English immersion Education Programs for internationalizing Japanese education. The IB diploma – available in secondary schools across the world to varying degrees. It is recognized as "an academically challenging and balanced program of education. Its final examinations prepare students, aged 16 to 19, for success at university and life beyond. Also crucial to the IB diploma's spread in Japan would be Japanese universities considering it valid proof of eligibility for students to be accepted. It is noted as something that is far from universal as it stands today.

3) Introducing a new university entrance exam system by renovating University

Entrance Examination Standards

Tertiary education in its work toward instituting educational reforms is believed potentially to make Japan more globally competitive. The possibility of a new university entrance exam replacing the current, highly competitive exam based on standardized scores is being considered by the Education Rebuilding Implementation Council. The measures will be considered as English education reforms include (1) A series of rigorous English test administered throughout the school year instead of the one, huge, determining entrance exam; (2) Student thinking skills and personal strengths are strong focuses which are examined through the other tests and interviews; and (3) TOEFL testing is used to make English proficiency a factor in university acceptance.

(Synthezing from Kanno, 2007; Amaki, 2008; Cook, 2009; Matsuda, 2009; Fujimoto-Adamson, 2010; Fukada, 2011).

5. Conclusion: Implications for bilingual education development in Vietnam

The presentation above reflects briefly how English is in Asia and how Asia is in English. In the complicated course of English education development in Asian context, it can be noted that English has been increasingly become a medium of instruction from partially to completely. This may reveal a trend of an actual shift from teaching English as foreign language or as a school subject to teaching English as second language or as a learning tool across curriculum. In this trend, academic English programs using a variety of formats of dual language education model or content-based language teaching are seen widely as a way to ensure that Asian students- non-English speaking students, or students who are not yet proficient in English, are given equitable opportunities to succeed in acquiring English as “langua franca”.

As being integrated into the regional and international education, cooperation with and learning from Asian nations which have been succeeded in teaching English as second language would be the strong need for Vietnam. Based on the above review, some implications would be drawn for English education in Vietnamese educational context. Current teaching English as foreign language (EFL) would be gradually replaced by teaching English as second language (ESL). This process would be taken in the national agenda which should start with a rigorous formation of comprehensive and research-based policy for both minority group and majority group bilingualism. Discretion in choosing immersion English program modes or forms is greatly necessary. These programs should be developed differently in scrutiny of potentials and characteristics of different areas in the country, avoiding trying to assign a common language policy for the whole country like Malaysia. It is desirable to examine effective bilingual education with the interplay between different immersion forms being offered simultaneously in Singapore, China and Japan. On the other hand, development of the English immersion programs in response to content-based learning teaching model should be implemented in consistent system and in a large scale from school levels to tertiary levels. Results of a big number of studies on immersion programs and immersion language learners in the world indicate early immersion students are more proficient in listening and reading than partial and late immersion students (Baker,1993), whereas, two-way immersion or dual language program is considered the most effective bilingual program contributing to long-term academic success. Furthermore, as dual language programs, content-based teaching modes have been becoming the standard for all schools and to transform education to 21st century standards (Howard, Sugarman and Genesee, 2003; Thomas & Collier, 2012). In practice, there have been seeds of content-based

English teaching (also called as integrated English programs) in current teaching English at some primary schools in well-developed urban areas such as Ho Chi Minh city or Ha Noi.

However, it may be really careful when introducing English earlier and earlier into primary curriculum due to a lot of potential problems and difficulties in English-Vietnamese bilingual education in Vietnam. As Kirkpatrict (2012) posits, the moves to introduce English early into primary curriculum, while perfectly understandable from policy and parental points of view, are likely to be inimical, not only to the maintenance of local languages but also, paradoxically, students' English proficiency itself. Kirkpatrict (2012) also gives much evidence for the current policies, while well-meaning, leading to high primary school drop-out rates and very low levels of English proficiency. In fact, even Japan, a top well-developed country, is also being deeply immersed in the struggling and thoughtful process for implementation to move the starting grade for compulsory English-language education to the third grade from where it is now – the fifth grade – by 2020 because of their recognition of the entry-level teaching of a foreign language is "the most important" and also "the most difficult" to do well. The clearly they determine the specific number and quality of English teachers, students and schools that need for this move, the more they wonder whether it is possible to ensure enough human resources and whether it would be possible to secure enough money to realize the planned reforms.

In addition, a systematic renovation of teaching methodology should be research-based for conducting in English classrooms. The communicative approach is combined with constructivist approach together with improvement of teaching conditions so that an appropriately methodological context for English as second language development can be created as Longcope (2009) proposed that the term "context" should be understood to refer not simply to the environment in which learners are situated at a given time but also to refer to the learner's interaction with the learning environment.

Finally, it would be culturally deep in practice to adapt of notions of native speakers norms in the way of tailoring them in response to the Vietnamese context because the notion of world Englishes has been widely recognized in the world and also because the plausible way of managing of the multiculturalism of Asian English is not standardization but intercultural literacy (Honna, 2005)■

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UNDERSTANDING FIRST YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PASSIVITY VIA THEIR ATTITUDES AND LANGUAGE BEHAVIORS TOWARDS ANSWERING QUESTIONS IN CLASS

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ABSTRACT

Learning styles and learning strategies play a key role in learners' success and autonomy in language learning. However, the majority of research in this area is carried out in foreign context rather than locally. Thus, many false assumptions have been made about Asian learning styles in general and Vietnamese learners in particular, i.e. they are passive and group-oriented learners, and they tend to learn by rote and memorize knowledge. In an attempt to find out if Vietnamese first year university non-English majored learners are passive or active, the study investigates their attitudes and language behaviors towards answering questions in class. The major findings from valid questionnaires responded by 90 students from five different technology-grouped departments reveal that Vietnamese students are not passive at all and the reasons why they appear passive are related to their shyness and face-saving attitudes. No statistically significant association was found between students' personality and their passivity in the classroom.

Keywords: Active learners; Learning styles; Passive learners.

1. Introduction

In the past fifty years, a considerable number of different methodologies have emerged and have been claimed to be effective practices to enhance students' second language learning capabilities. These methods and approaches are mostly determined by educators and teachers, which can lead to the fact that how students are taught is a far cry from what they need. For that reason, a more learner-centered approach would probably bring in expected results. However, how can teachers acquire a genuine understanding of their students in addition to knowing their needs? In order to deploy suitable classroom activities effectively, it is vital to understand individual students' learning styles and strategies. Unfortunately, teachers often have misconceptions or false overgeneralizations about their students' styles and strategies, due to being influenced by what they read and misinterpreting what they see. Thus, a conscientious teacher should be not only sensitive to dissimilarities amongst their students, but should also be able to avoid stereotyping them. It is obvious that the majority of second language learning research about Asian learners is carried out in English-speaking countries, and thus an inaccurate picture of Asian learners in general, and Vietnamese learners, in particular, can be generated. Since the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Method to Vietnam in 1990s, the learning and teaching practice has changed to a certain extent. Departing from the traditional way of learning, students are relatively more active thanks to classroom communicative activities. Nevertheless, teachers often complain that most of their students still remain quiet although they try to encourage them to talk and put them into groups so that they will feel more secure. This passivity can be attributed to the students' individual personalities, or to the fact that they are still influenced by how they used to be taught.

1.1. Purpose of the study

Many passivity-related questions have been raised about Vietnamese learners in the new era of international economic integration: Are Vietnamese students passive in their thinking? Does their view about the suitability for speaking out in classroom make them appear passive in their classroom? This paper investigates the passivity of Vietnamese first year university non-English majored students with five major questions related to their attitudes and language behaviors towards answering questions in class.

1. Do students self-assess themselves as passive or active students?
2. If the teacher poses a question, when do students raise hands?
3. If students remain reticent when their teacher asks questions, what will they do?
4. Are students afraid of making mistakes in the classroom? If yes, what are the main reasons?
5. Is students' learning style dependent on their personality?

1.2. Significance of the study

In Vietnam, the issue of learning styles and strategies is not widely and duly understood. Many assumptions have been made about Vietnamese learners; most noticeably, they are passive learners. In fact, there has been little research on Vietnamese learning styles and, if any, there is no research carried out from students' perspectives, asking students to reflect on their own learning style via their attitudes and language behaviors towards answering questions in class. If teachers know the answer to the afore-mentioned questions, therefore, they will better be equipped to understand their students' needs, and to know how to help them improve and tackle the problem of second language learning. They will also be able to adapt their teaching styles to match their students' learning styles. For this myth to be unraveled, I have conducted this pilot research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of terms

Before having a closer look at Vietnamese students' language learning style, the following terms need to be clarified: style, learning style, active and passive.

2.1.1. Style

Style is a term referring to individual preferences or tendencies that are constant. In other words, styles are "those general characteristics of intellectual functioning" (Brown, 2000, p. 113) that belong to you and distinguish you from others. However, styles and abilities should not be confused. Style is a way of thinking and utilizing abilities (Stemberg, 1995, p. 266). Moreover, styles are changeable in accordance with tasks, time, context, the learning stage, culture and the age of the learners (Rubin, 1993, pp.48-49). It is noticeable that a person can have more than a style and no styles should be thought of as superior; they are just 'different' (Stemberg, 1995, pp.268-269).

2.1.2. Learning style

In reality, there is "a bewildering confusion of definitions surrounding learning style conceptualizations" (Curry, 1991, p.249). On the one hand, learning styles can be defined as "a characteristic and preferred way of approaching learning and processing information" (Hedge, 2000, p. 18) or the "general orientations to the learning process exhibited by learners" (Nunan, 1999, p.55). On the other hand, learning styles are equated with cognitive styles, which are "consistent individual differences in preferred ways of organizing and processing information and experience (Messick, 1976, p.4) or "the link between personality and cognition" (Brown, 2000, pp.113-114). In this case, learning styles can be divided into four categories: 'accommodators' (who enjoy hands-on experience and discovery), 'divergers' (who are curious and want to explore the problems from different angles), 'convergers' (who prefer to work with things, rather than people) and finally assimilators (who tend to focus on abstract ideas and are good at organizing and synthesizing data) (Kolb, 1984). Nevertheless, there is another school of thought claiming that viewing learning styles from a purely cognitive perspective can be misleading (Reid, 2007, p.27) and "learning style is just one aspect of cognitive style" (Mortimore, 2008, p.6) and thus it should be considered as "the application of a person's preferred cognitive style to a learning situation" (Mortimore, 2008, p.6). In fact, educators employ the term learning styles to mention "cognitive and interactional patterns which affect the ways in which students perceive, remember and think" (Scarcella, 1990, p.114). Moreover, since people's styles are subject to how they internalize their surroundings, it is not necessary that learning styles are characteristically cognitive. In other words, "physical, affective, cognitive domains merge in learning styles" (Brown, 2000, p.114). In particular, some research has tried to take into account other factors rather than cognitive ones. For example, based on purely the senses, learning styles can be grouped into four categories: "read/write, auditory, visual and kinesthetic" (Fleming & Mill, as cited in Nilson, 2010, pp.232-233). Besides, there is a multi-perspective approach to classifying learning styles. This is to say that learning styles can be explored from four dimensions: sensory preference (e.g. visual, auditory, tactile and kinesthetic); personality types (e.g. extroverted versus introverted, active versus reflective, and thinking versus feeling); desired degree of generality (global versus analytic); and biological differences (e.g. the times of day that students perform best and the need of food and drink whilst learning) (Oxford, 2003, pp.3-7).

2.1.3. Active

"Active" is defined as "being involved in something; making a determined effort and not leaving something to happen by itself" (Oxford dictionary) or in other words, it means "taking positive actions in order to make something happen, rather than just hoping that it will happen" (Macmillan dictionary). Accordingly, an active person is someone "who is active, does a lot of different activities and has a lot of energy and interests" (Macmillan dictionary).

2.1.4. Passive

Meanwhile, "passive" is defined as "accepting what happens or what people do without trying to change anything or oppose them" (Oxford dictionary). Thus, a passive person will rarely take steps to react to things around them. Another definition of "passive", which was found during the short interviews with my colleagues around Van Lang University campus is "not showing others any motive, interests or intent to join a certain activity".

2.2. Asian learning styles

There has been much research into Asian students' learning styles and strategies, both in those Asian countries themselves and "host" countries where Asian students study. For the most part, learners in a particular Asian country will show a bias towards a particular learning style. For example, Chinese, Korean and Indonesian choose auditory learning as their major learning style whilst Thai, Malay and Japanese students favor other methods (Saracho, 1997, p.18). Although Asian learners have varying learning styles, a few common factors can apply to all of them.

2.2.1. Asian learners are cooperative

One noticeable attribute belonging to Asian learners is their being more cooperative (Scarcella, 1990, p. 123). However, there is doubt as to whether this learning style is culturally or contextually affected. This is because some Asian countries such as China, Japan, Korea, Singapore, and Vietnam are influenced by Confucian heritage culture and ideologies, so they share some characteristics of a collectivist society, and thus learners in these countries tend to be group-oriented, confirming to norms and hierarchy (Biggs, 1996; Church & Lonner, 1998). Interestingly, some studies have shown that Asian learners who have studied English for more than three years in the United States tend to favor group learning far less than those who have spent shorter periods of time there (Reid, 1987, pp.95-96).

2.2.2. Asian learners are passive

Another characteristic of Asian learning style is 'passive learning'. It is generally assumed that Asian learners are inclined to adopt passive learning styles because they tend to keep quiet in the classroom. In addition, most people have a preconception that Asian learners really want to listen and obey. They appear passive because they want to be polite to teachers and they see knowledge as something their teachers transfer to them (Chalmers and Volet, 1997, pp.90-91). However, according to some research, many students do not want to adopt this role, i.e. being obedient listeners in class. They "do not want to sit in class passively receiving knowledge [but] want to explore the knowledge themselves" (Littlewood, 2000, pp.33-34). Furthermore, it is claimed that those who support these misconceptions do not take into account the cultural factors, cultural clashes and the students' expectations (Chalmers and Volet, 1997, pp. 90-91). A recent investigation of Chinese students' passive learning reveal that "passive learning behavior is related to the cultural background where one subsists [and that] they are afraid of making mistakes" (Yi, 2016, p.359).

2.3. Vietnamese learning styles

As a member of the Asian continent, Vietnam, to some extent, shares a culture similar to that of other countries in the region. This cultural heritage influences Vietnamese students' learning styles and strategies. It is noticeable that in terms of history, Vietnam was dominated by the Chinese for nearly one thousand years. Vietnamese people value harmony, family, achievement and hierarchy (Triandis, 1995) because China's Confucian ideologies are deeply ingrained in Vietnamese culture, which focus on virtue, respect, obedience and the relationship between ruler and subjects, father and son, older brother and younger brother, husband and wife, seniors and juniors. Moreover, in Vietnamese culture, self-respect and respectful attitudes are very important. This is expressed through politeness and obedience. Besides, Vietnamese people tend not to reveal their feelings and avoid conflict for fear that they will hurt others' feelings. In the classroom, most Vietnamese students tend to keep quiet and instead of volunteering, they wait until called on to answer the question posed by their teacher. They will even avoid eye contact with their teacher and tend to copy down everything on the board. This is due to the belief that being quiet in class demonstrates respect towards the teacher, and they do not raise questions because of their beliefs that it is enough to receive knowledge transferred from their teachers (Nguyen, 2002). However, this behavior is often "misunderstood as a passive or non-cooperative attitude"(Nguyen, 2002). Furthermore, in line with the common stereotypes of Asian learners, Vietnamese learners employ more frequently "repetitive learning strategies" (Helmke and Tuyet, 1999), but "repetition appears to have a different psychological meaning" (Helmke and Tuyet, 1999) for them. This is to say that the stereotype of being rote learners is not applied to Vietnamese learners.

3. Method

3.1. Participants and procedures

The study was conducted at Van Lang University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. In order to investigate the Vietnamese first-year undergraduates' passive learning style, a sample of 90 freshmen, who attended English class regularly, from five different technological grouped departments (Biotechnology, Environmental Technology, Architecture, Civil Engineering and Interior Design) was employed. Data was collected using convenience sampling survey technique. Particularly, students were selected from diverse personal and academic backgrounds. No attempts were made to select random samples. Students are required to complete a questionnaire. Questions pertained to students' self-assessment of their passive or active learning style, raising hands in class, responding to the teacher's questions, fright of making mistakes in class and reasons for the fright and self-assessment of their introverted or extroverted personality. After that, 10 students from the sample were conveniently selected to participate in the deep interviews in order to find out if their responses match their answers on the questionnaires.

3.2. Data analysis

The statistical analyses were conducted using the SPSS software program. To answer the question of whether students self-assess themselves as active or passive learners, when they raise hands in class, and what they do if they remain silent, descriptive statistics were reported. The data were obtained from students' responses on the designed questionnaire. Regarding the fourth question with the main objective of finding out whether students are afraid of making mistakes and the reasons for this fright, the mean scores and the frequency of participants' responses were calculated. To answer the fifth question of the study- finding the relationship between students' passivity and personality, the Pearson Chi-square test was employed.

4. Results

4.1. Students' self-categorization of their learning style

Table 1

Descriptive statistics results for students' self-categorization of their learning style

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Active	47	52.2	52.2	52.2
	Passive	34	37.8	37.8	90.0
	Neutral	9	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Slightly more than half of the participants (52.2 %) reported themselves to be active learners while only just more than one third of them (37.8%) categorized themselves as passive learners. An insignificant percentage (10%) self-assessed themselves as neither passive nor active learners.

4.2. Cases in which students raise hands

Table 2

Descriptive statistics results for cases in which students raise hands

	When I am sure of the answer	Even when I am not sure of the answer	Even when I don't know the answer
Frequency	68	35	3
Percent	75.6	38.9	3.33

About three-fourths (75.6%) of the students chose to raise hands when they are certain about the answer. Meanwhile, just only 3 cases questioned decided to raise hands even when they did not know the answer. There was only more than one third of the participants (38.9%) who chose to make educated guesses and raise hands when they are not sure of the answers.

4.3. Students' alternative ways of responding to the teacher's question

Table 3

Descriptive statistics results for students' alternative ways of responding to the teacher's question

	I do nothing and wait for my friends to answer the teacher's question	I think about the answer	I think about the answers and write guesses on paper	I ask my neighbor friends and discuss with them	Others
Frequency	6	40	18	45	0
Percent	6.7	44.4	21.1	50	0

Although nearly half of the participants (44.4 %) chose thinking about the answer while their teacher poses questions in class, half of them turned to their neighbor friends for help and discuss ideas with them. Only a negligible percentage of the students (6.7%) chose doing nothing and waiting for others to answer their teacher's questions. Slightly more than one-fifth (21.1) decided to work independently, i.e. thinking about the answer and writing guesses on paper.

4.4. Students' fright of making mistakes in front of the class and reasons for their fright

Table 4

Descriptive statistics results for students' fright of making mistakes in front of the class

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Extremely scared	6	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Scared	23	25.6	25.6	32.2
	Neutral	39	43.3	43.3	75.6
	Not scared	13	14.4	14.4	90.0
	Extremely not scared	9	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	90	100.0	100.0	

N	Valid	90
	Missing	0
Mean		2.96
Std. Deviation		1.038

The results show that students tend to be neutral towards the fright of making mistakes in class, with mean 2.96, Std, 1038. One third of students (32.2 %) said they were either scared or extremely scared of making incorrect answers in front of the class while nearly one fifth of them (24.4 %) reported that they were positive about making mistakes in class.

Concerning main reasons for those who are fearful of giving incorrect answers, let's look at the following table.

Table 5

Reasons for students' fright of making mistakes in class

	I am shy	I am afraid of being laughed at by my friends	I am afraid of being ridiculed by my friends	I don't want to leave a bad impression on my teacher	Others
Frequency	32	27	18	25	0
Percent	35.6	30	20	27.8	0

As can be seen from the above table, the most popular reason for students' reticence in class is related to face-saving attitudes (77.8 %); particularly, being fearful of being laughed at or ridiculed at by friends takes up 50 % and unwillingness to leave a bad impression on their teacher consists of 27.8 %. Slightly more than one-third of the participants (35.6 %) attributed shyness to their quietness in class.

4.5. Students' learning style and their personality

Table 6

Personalities and learning styles cross tabulation

		Learning styles			
		Active	Passive	Neutral	Total
Personalities	Extrovert	19	14	2	35
	Introvert	26	15	7	48
	Neutral	2	5	0	7
Total		47	34	9	90

Table 7

Results from Pearson Chi-Square test for students' learning style and personality

Chi-Square Test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.850a	4	.211
Likelihood Ratio	6.284	4	.179
Linear-by-Linear Association	.676	1	.411
N of Valid Cases	90		

The Chi-Square tests show no dependent relationship between the personality and learning style with $\chi 2(4) = 5.850$, $*p = .211$. However, it is interesting to note that out of 48 cases of introverted learners, slightly more than half of them (26 cases) rated themselves as active learners.

5. Discussion

5.1. Students are not passive learners. Students appear passive due to their shyness and their face-saving attitudes

In the light of the discussion and comparison with the assumptions about Vietnamese learning style literature, some conclusions can be drawn as follows. Contrary to what is generally stated about Vietnamese learners in the literature, the participants' responses reveal that they are not passive learners at all. Even when they do not raise their hands in class or think it out loud their ideas, their minds are active because they still think about the response to their teacher's questions and try to figure out the answers, and when they do not comprehend something, they will ask their friends for help. This, in this vein, is similar to Littlewood's research results in 2000, which conclude that Asian students do not want to be passive learners and obedient listeners. The fact that Vietnamese students do not appear to be active is partly due to their shyness, fear of being laughed at or ridiculed by their friends, or partly because of their face-saving attitudes. This finding also shows a sharp contrast to the widely held belief stated by Chalmers & Volet in 1997 about the reason why Asian learners are passive, i.e. they want to be polite to teachers and they see knowledge as something their teachers transfer to them. To help students overcome psychology-related hindrances above-mentioned, a positive mental attitude should be created among students, which helps them realize that mistakes are their friends that enable them to learn and that making mistakes is an unavoidable part of learning languages. Whenever anyone makes mistakes in class, instead of responding to mistakes with habitual laughter, students should be encouraged to say "That's ok. You are gonna better next time". Furthermore, no matter what extroverted or introverted learners they are, most Vietnamese students can be shy in nature. Therefore, they should be encouraged to think it out loud and share their ideas with their classmates more even when they are not certain about their answers. Besides, students should always receive positive comments for even wrong answers, which can leave positive imprints on the students that no matter how wrong their answers can be, they are all appreciated for sharing their opinions and ideas. Also, it is highly expected that no student is underestimated or ridiculed because of their wrong answers.

5.2. Students are very autonomous learners. Stereotyping should be avoided

From the finding, it is clear that students do not always sit silently and wait for others to feed them with answers. They are very autonomous; they think about the answers or discuss with their friends when they do not raise hands in class. Besides, although students tend to turn to their friends for help, it is not clear that they tend to be more cooperative as stated by Scarcella in 1990. Therefore, further research is necessary. Though there is evidence suggesting that "culture, as learned by the child from family, community, and school, has a strong influence on learning style" (Hedge, 2000, p. 19) and that a child's learning style depends on the "type of society and the way [he] is reared" (Brown, 2000, p. 115), stereotyping should always be avoided. In the same culture, there is still a wide variety of learning styles. It should be noted that there are serious and hidden dangers if students' learning styles are misidentified and that teachers' inappropriate instructional practices in response to any misidentified learning style can lead to students' future academic failure.

5.3. Students are not afraid of making mistakes. They have different personal reasons for the suitability of speaking in the classroom

Finally, concerning the matter of being fearful of making mistakes in class, from the findings, Vietnamese undergraduates are not totally afraid of giving incorrect answers in class because they have different personal reasons for suitability of speaking in the classroom. This is to say that they would raise hands when they are certain about their responses and that they do not want to waste time or win their friends' turn with their guesses (findings from deep interviews). Reluctance to raise hands can also be due to face-saving attitudes, which means they do not want to be ridiculed or laughed at or leave a bad impression on their teacher. For that reason, at the beginning of the semester, students should be clearly informed of how they are expected to contribute to the lesson and to behave towards each other in order to avoid future mismatched conceptions about the suitability of sharing ideas in classroom environment between students and teachers.

5.4. Students' learning styles are changeable. They should be encouraged to experience different learning styles

Moreover, though fairly stable learning styles appear, they are changeable. If not, students will not be able to surpass drawbacks or restrains of their own style. In fact, they will exert a certain style appropriate to the context. For example, when studying in Australia, "Asian international students […] are able to adapt to the new style of teaching and learning […] within two to three months (Woong, 2004), "have a positive attitude towards the Australian academic culture" (Ramsay, 2016) and can "adapt to deeper learning approaches" (Basthomi, 2016). However, not many learners can identify their own styles. Thus, they should be provided with the opportunities to discover their styles through facing certain challenging tasks and they should also be encouraged to experience themselves in different learning styles since students who employ multiple learning styles can enjoy "greater classroom success" (Reid, 1987, p.101).

5.5. Limitations and future directions

Since the respondents do not represent a scientific sample of first year Vietnamese university non- English majored students, generations beyond the sample cannot be made. However, the study can provide depth of understanding the students' beliefs about their learning style and conceptions about the suitability of speaking out loud in class as well as provide a guide towards future research and better practice at the institutional level. It is not in the scope of the research to find out whether external factors or internal factors have more impact on their passivity learning. Therefore, further research is necessary.

5.6. Conclusion

The present study shows that the majority of Vietnamese first year non-English majored students are not passive learners at all, which is consistent with prior research (e.g. Littlewood, 2000), and their learning style is not dependent on their personality. Those who consider themselves passive learners do not attribute their reticence in class to such attributes as obedience and politeness found in research done by Chalmers and Volet in 1997, but to shyness and face-saving attitudes. In the light of these findings, teachers should deploy suitable teaching strategies to help students develop a more positive and cooperative learning environment where students see mistakes as helpers rather than hindrances and have enough courage to make mistakes in learning. Also, it is necessary for teachers to explore their students' learning styles and help them experiment with other learning styles since styles can be changeable and adaptable■

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TEACHING ENGLISH IDIOMS OF HAPPINESS AND SADNESS THROUGH CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS IN VIETNAMESE CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

Idioms have long been regarded as a big challenge for EFL learners. With recent developments in cognitive linguistics, the method of teaching idioms has shifted from rote learning to raising the learner's awareness of conceptual metaphors (CM). This paper provides support for the adoption of CM in teaching idioms thanks to its effectiveness in enhancing the comprehension and retention of idioms. Because specific techniques of this approach have not been thoroughly explored, the paper attempts to provide and analyze CM-related activities for teaching idioms in EFL classrooms, more specifically teaching English idioms of happiness and sadness in Vietnamese context.

Keywords: Conceptual metaphors; Idioms; Mapping.

1. Introduction

Idioms are usually defined as groups of words whose meaning cannot be inferred from the meanings of their individual words (Kövecses, 2002). They include metaphors, metonymies, similes, phrasal verbs, and others. These expressions have been extensively used in all spoken and written genres of discourse (O'Dell and McCarthy, 2010); it was estimated that an English native speaker may use approximately 20 million idioms throughout his or her lifetime of 60 years (Cooper, 1998). Due to the substantial number of idioms and their pervasive use, lack of idiomatic knowledge can be a great hindrance to EFL learners' communication with native speakers.

However, learning English idioms is not an easy task. As Liu (2003) stated, idioms are "notoriously difficult" to the learners of English due to their "rather rigid structure, quite unpredictable meaning and fairly extensive use" (p.671). Moreover, idioms are not only cross-linguistic but also cross-cultural phenomena (Kövecses, 2002). According to Cooper (1998), even students with profound knowledge of grammar and vocabulary still feel difficult to understand and use idiomatic language if they are not aware of the cultural diversity underlying idioms.

Despite the importance of learning English idioms and learners' increasing difficulties in comprehending and using them, this area of language teaching is often ignored in EFL classrooms and textbooks. Among contemporary English textbooks used in Vietnamese high schools, there are only 24 idioms presented in three textbooks, i.e. *English 10, English 11* and *English 12* without any further practice or consolidation (Tran, 2013). Many Vietnamese teachers even tend to avoid using or teaching idioms in classrooms because they believe that idioms are too difficult for learners, which leads to Vietnamese students' poor idiomatic competence (Tran, 2012).

Due to the alleged arbitrary nature of idioms and their fixed structures, it was believed that rote memorization is the only way for learners to acquire these expressions (Kövecses, 2002). However, this learning method seems too time-and effort-consuming for the students as the have to acquire a great number of idioms by learning them separately and passively. Thus, adopting an effective method for idiom teaching has attracted great concerns among researchers and teachers. In recent years, with the significant development of cognitive linguistics, educators have shifted from traditional methods of idiom teaching to raising learner's awareness of conceptual metaphor, the underlying motivation behind idioms (Boers and Lindstromberg, 2008). This article supports the cognitive-oriented method for teaching idiomatic language and also attempts to demonstrate how to teach idioms, specifically idioms of happiness and sadness, comprehensively via conceptual metaphors in Vietnamese context.

2. Traditional and Cognitive Views of Idioms and Idiom Teaching

2.1. Traditional view of idioms and idiom teaching

Idioms are traditionally considered as linguistic expressions that are "isolated from each other" and "independent of any conceptual system" (Kövecses, 2002, p.200). In other words, they are simply a matter of language that has arbitrary nature with certain syntactic properties and meanings. In this view, teaching idioms is simply providing a list of idioms without systematic arrangements, with their meanings and examples. As a result, learners learn the targeted expressions by attempting to memorize these discrete and isolated entities. This type of rote learning may result in short retention of the target idiomatic expressions (Chen and Lai, 2013; Vasiljevic, 2011).

2.2. *Cognitive view of idioms and idiom teaching*

Contrary to the traditional view of idioms, cognitive linguists argue that the nature of figurative language, including idiomatic expressions, is not arbitrary; it is, in fact, systematized by the underlying principles of human language, thought, and perception, which are called conceptual metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Specifically, conceptual metaphors (CM) refer to the understanding of one concept in terms of another, typically a more abstract concept (i.e. the target domain) in terms of a more concrete or physical concept (i.e. the source domain) (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2002). According to the cognitive view, the occurrence of particular words in an idiomatic expression is to some extent semantically motivated (Kövecses, 2002; Boers and Lindstromberg, 2008). In fact, a considerable number of idioms can be traced back to a limited number of conceptual metaphors, forming a coherent system of metaphorical concepts. For instance, expressions such as to *brim over with joy, to overflow with joy,* and *to burst with happiness,* all relate to one single conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, in which the intensity of happiness is understood in terms of the intensity of the fluid.

When cognitive linguists talk about metaphors, they do not refer to the linguistic expressions as traditional views do, but to the cognitive mappings they represent. In other words, conceptual metaphors are mental categories and thus do not necessarily occur in a language, but conceptually underlie all their metaphorical expressions. According to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, a conceptual metaphor is a cross-domain mapping, i.e. "a fixed set of ontological correspondences between entities in a source domain and entities in a target domain" and is expressed as TARGET-DOMAIN IS SOURCE-DOMAIN or alternatively, TARGET-DOMAIN AS SOURCE-DOMAIN, in which capital letters is used as mnemonics to name mappings (Lakoff, 1993, p.245). These cognitive mappings of metaphors are tightly structured and asymmetric. The following table shows an example of the mapping of HAPPINESS AS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER.

Table 1

Ontological correspondences of HAPPINESS AS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Conceptual metaphor</th><th rowspan="3">Metaphorical expressions</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER</th></tr>
<tr><th>Source: A FLUID IN A CONTAINER</th><th>Target: HAPPINESS</th></tr>
<tr><td>The container</td><td>The body</td><td rowspan="4">a. I was full of joy at the prospect of meeting Agnes the next day.
b. Joy welled up inside her.
c. I brimmed over with joy when I saw her.
d. He was overflowing with joy.
e. The sight filled them with joy.
f. Then, forgetting her disappointment, she too burst into laughter.
g. The good news made him want to burst with joy.</td></tr>
<tr><td>The fluid</td><td>The happiness</td></tr>
<tr><td>The intensity of the fluid</td><td>The intensity of happiness</td></tr>
<tr><td>The inability to control a large quantity of the fluid</td><td>The inability to control great happiness</td></tr>
</table>

Here, the mapping is tightly structured. It includes ontological correspondences, according to which constituent elements in the domain of a fluid in a container (e.g. the container, the fluid, the quantity of the fluid, etc.) correspond systematically to constituent elements in the domain of happiness (the body, the happiness, the level of happiness, etc.). Such correspondences permit native speakers to reason about happiness by using the knowledge they use to reason about a fluid in a container. This process usually takes place unconsciously and the speaker and the listener produce and understand the metaphorical expressions without any effort. However, EFL learners are generally unaware of these underlying principles, resulting in their incomprehension or misunderstanding of English metaphors in general and idioms in particular.

The discovery of conceptual metaphors has great significance to idiom teaching and learning. Several studies have proved that the awareness of these underlying metaphors can greatly facilitate the learner's comprehension, retention and use of idioms in oral and written contexts (Boers and Lindstromberg, 2008; Vasiljevic, 2011; Chen and Lai, 2013). There are two possible reasons for the success of this approach. First, thanks to the teaching of conceptual metaphors, learners are aware of the semantic motivation behind the target expressions and they view these expressions as meaningful parts of certain structured networks rather than rigid and isolated pieces of language (ibid.). Second, the CM-oriented approach in teaching idioms could assist learners in creating mental images and, as a result, allowing dual coding of information – "the processing of imagery and linguistic information" (Clark and Paivio, 1991, p. 150). Since conceptual metaphors are grounded in bodily experience and in cultural and social practices (Kövecses, 2002), the explicit instruction of these metaphors could possibly stimulate learners' visualization of the input and improve their comprehension and memory.

In the light of cognitive view and its achievement in idiom acquisition, this article was written as a further support for this cognitive approach to the teaching and learning of idiomatic language.

3. Teaching English Idioms of Happiness and Sadness through Conceptual Metaphors in Vietnam

In recent years, there has been growing interest in contrastive analysis of conceptual metaphors in English and Vietnamese idiomatic expressions (Nguyen, 2012; Huynh, 2013; Nguyen, 2016; Pham, 2016); however, far too little attention has been paid to the employment of conceptual metaphors in teaching English idioms to Vietnamese students. According to Tran (2012), none of the teachers and students in Vietnam showed any evidence in using conceptual metaphors in idiom teaching and learning activities. Considering this situation, this article attempts to fill in the literature gap in idiom teaching and learning in Vietnam.

In the following sections, a series of CM-related activities are presented to help Vietnamese learners understand and remember a large number of English idioms. Prior to the elaboration of these activities, it is worthwhile to highlight the essential principles of employing conceptual metaphors to teaching idioms and the selection of the English idioms used in the activities.

3.1. Key principles for applying CM to teaching idioms

There are at least six essential principles to remember when preparing activities to teach idioms through the cognitive-oriented method. Firstly, since idioms are multi-word and, in most cases, non-literal fixed expressions, these idiom-focused activities require students to have a good command of English, i.e. at intermediate level or above, to interpret their figurative meanings (Liu, 2003; Boers and Lindstromberg, 2008). Secondly, the idioms presented to learners should be systematically categorized with conceptual metaphors to enhance their retention and recollection. Thirdly, the teacher needs to provide learners with various examples where the underlying metaphors can be observed so that the learners can discover the mappings and apply this knowledge to guess the meaning of other idioms with the same conceptual metaphors. Fourthly, after students have understood idiom meaning, form-focused activities are a prerequisite for them to develop a productive knowledge of idiomatic language. Then, the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural comparison of conceptual metaphors should be highlighted as it can contribute to the learner’s appropriate production of idioms in different contexts. Finally, the dual coding of information should be further stimulated through the use of images, pictorial elucidation and mime to commit the target idiomatic expressions to their long-term memory. These six principles underline the content as well as the order of the five activities presented in this article.

3.2. A selection of idiomatic expressions and examples

Since happiness and sadness comprise a large proportion of idioms of feelings (Huynh, 2013), they were selected as the topics of the idioms taught in the five following activities. The English idioms, examples and their conceptual metaphors were collected from a variety of sources by established authors and publishers such as *Metaphor we live by* George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphor: A practical introduction* by Zoltán Kövecses, *Oxford advanced learner’s dictionary (8th edition)* published by Oxford University Press, and British National Corpus at www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk. Likewise, the Vietnamese idiomatic expressions and their examples could be found in published and literary sources such as poems, folk songs, articles in newspapers, many of which can be found in Huynh (2013).

3.3. Classroom activities

The following activities are designed using inductive approach, in which students are guided by the teacher to discover the target language. Since conceptual metaphor is a new and complex concept to the learners, it would be difficult for them to acquire the knowledge without the teacher's careful guidance and instruction. However, the teacher only gives hints and tells the students what to focus on. It is the students who actively make use of their background knowledge and available sources to learn new things by themselves. In other words, this method focuses on learners' autonomy, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Their active involvement in these activities makes the target language more meaningful, memorable, and serviceable. In these CM-related activities, the teacher plays the roles of an organizer, a monitor, and a resource.

Activity one: "Warm-up"

The teacher sticks nine pictures, including five pictures of happiness and four pictures of sadness on the board. These pictures illustrate nine idioms of happiness and sadness that will be taught in other activities; in this activity, they are used only to arouse students' interest in the topic. They are asked to look at the pictures, guess the topic of the lesson, i.e. happiness and sadness, and share some expressions describing these feelings that they know. Then, the teacher asks them to work in pairs and share with their partner about an extremely happy or unhappy experience. They are encouraged to use all their language resource and are free to express their ideas. This activity aims to attract students' interest, energize them and make them feel the need to explore the target language that will be taught later.

Activity two: "Grouping"

Handouts are administered to the students who are then instructed to do the first task. Twenty idioms are provided in clear contexts and categorized into three themes, namely UP/DOWN, A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, A (NATURAL/PHYSICAL) FORCE. The students read the contexts in which the idioms are used, guess the meanings, discuss with their partners and write the idioms down in the right categories. After ten minutes, the teacher elicits the answers from the students and provides correction and explanation when necessary. The teacher can also ask the students to find out suitable idioms for nine pictures on the board to facilitate their dual coding of information and enhance their retention.

These tasks aim to develop students' guessing skill and enhance their retention of idioms. Categorizing idioms based on metaphor themes or source domain and recalling them via pictures are seen as beneficial learning techniques because they seem congruent to learners' preferred vocabulary learning style (Vasiljevic, 2011; Boers and Lindstromberg, 2008). These tasks also encourage students to guess the meanings of idioms from context, which involves deeper processing and can therefore lead to better comprehension and retention.

The teacher uses "Grouping" activity to introduce the concept of conceptual metaphor to the students. The idiomatic expressions categorized according to their themes are the surface realization of a particular conceptual metaphor. For example, "Her heart was *brimming over* with happiness", and "Joy *welled up* inside her" are both motivated by the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER. The definition of conceptual metaphor is provided. To motivate students to learn the new concept, the teacher should explain briefly why students' comprehension of conceptual metaphors can facilitate their learning of idioms and vocabulary in general.

Activity three: "CM Motivation Discovery"

To familiarize students with conceptual

metaphors, the teacher can clarify that these metaphors are, in fact, grounded, or motivated by, human experience (Kövecses, 2002). Take the pair of HAPPY IS UP and SAD IS DOWN as an example, students are asked to look at nine pictures on the board again, examine differences between postures and facial expressions of happy and sad people, and discover how it is related to the conceptual metaphors. They can find some clues to this question by examining the pictures on the board and doing the gap-filling exercise. These metaphors arise from the fact that as humans we have upright bodies. Thus, the erect posture typically goes with positive physical states which may lead to positive emotional states, whereas the opposite is true with a drooping posture (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Likewise, smiles in most cultures involve an upward turning of the lips, while frowning causes the edges of the mouth to descend.

Activity four: "Mapping Discovery"

In an EFL context, students tend to fail to perceive the conceptual metaphors and the underlying structures between a source domain and a target one. An insufficient knowledge of metaphoric mappings also prevents learners from guessing the meaning of unfamiliar idioms correctly though these idioms share the same conceptual metaphor with those they have already learned. Hence, teaching students about metaphoric mappings and how to associate a more concrete or physical concept with a more abstract and unfamiliar concept are a prerequisite for learners' acquisition of idioms (Chen and Lai, 2013). As for teaching idioms of happiness and sadness, the teacher should explain to students about metaphorical mappings and then instruct them how to discover the metaphoric mappings of the conceptual metaphors underlying the target idioms.

Activity five: "Discovering What's Missing"

While previous activities focus on the meaning of idiomatic expressions through awareness of their semantic motivation, this activity emphasizes the form or the lexical composition by noticing their phonological motivation. According to Boers and Lindstromberg (2008), students' awareness of alliteration and rhyme used in idioms to produce catchy sound patterns can increase their form retention.

To prepare for this activity, the teacher chooses those expressions that show alliteration or assonance from the list of previously-taught idioms and add some more. Some examples include _**j**ump for **j**oy_, _**h**eavy **h**eart_, _**d**own in the **d**umps_, _d**o**wn in the m**ou**th_, _d**oo**m and gl**oo**m_, _as h**a**ppy as L**a**rry_, _as h**a**ppy as a cl**a**m (at h**i**gh t**i**de)_, _as sn**u**g as a b**u**g in a r**u**g_, _as h**a**ppy as a **h**orse in **h**ay_[1], and so on. These idioms with one deleted keyword are presented in clear, brief and meaningful sentences. The teacher can make this gap-filling exercise easier by revealing the first letter of the missing word. For example:

Rowena ***j*________** *for* ***j****oy when she heard that she's won first prize.*

Steve was ***d****own in the* **d__________** *for the longest time after his breakup with Eve.*

*I was as h**a**ppy as a c___________ living in Hawaii; the beaches were beautiful, I played lots of outdoor sports, and the people were so nice.*

*Despite several setbacks, it is not all d**oom** and g_________ for the England team.*

Each sentence has two versions which are written on two separate cards so that different versions display different keywords. For example:

*Rowena **j**umped for **j**__________ when she heard that she's won first prize.*

*Rowena **j**_____________ for **j**oy when she heard that she's won first prize.*

The students are asked to work in pairs to find out the missing words in each sentence as soon as possible to become the winner. Each pair has a set of cards which are placed upside down on their desk. The students turn over one card at a time and attempt to fill the gap. If they are uncertain of their answer, they turn the card face down again and they will have the answer later when the corresponding version of that expression (with the key word they want to know and the other word is missing) is turned over. After the students finish this game, the teacher can ask them whether they notice any special feature of the target idioms presented in the game to raise their awareness of alliteration and rhyme used in these idioms.

Since the understanding of conceptual metaphors only helps students comprehend and recall the meaning of idioms but does not guarantee their retention of form (Vasiljevic, 2011), this form-focused activity is important to develop productive knowledge of idiomatic language, which involves retrieving and producing appropriate spoken or written form. Besides, this activity helps recall the idiomatic expressions in the previous activities, and offers students a chance to practice them and learn new ones in a relaxing environment. The high rate of success also gives students a sense of achievement and satisfaction.

The two following activities are designed to raise learners' awareness of the universality and variations of conceptual metaphors by examining the idiomatic expressions cross-linguistically and cross-culturally. As Deignan, Gabrys, and Solska (1997) states, this is a useful approach to increasing learners' reception and production of idioms.

Activity six: "Discovering the Universality of CM"

This activity highlights the fact that some conceptual metaphors can be shared across several cultures and languages thanks to certain similarities in experiences and perceptions. Firstly, the students are asked to work in groups and find out the equivalents of the idiomatic expressions. Then, the teacher distributes another handout and asks the students to compare idiomatic expressions that have similar meanings in English and Vietnamese. After placing the Vietnamese expressions in the right groups according to their conceptual metaphors, the students discover the similarity between the two languages, and then add more equivalents of their own.

Activity seven: "Discovering Cultural Variations in CM"

In addition to universality, there are cultural variations in metaphors. English and Vietnamese can have different conceptual metaphors. For example, whereas the English consider the heart as a seat of emotion, as in *fill her heart with happiness*, *heartsick*, and *heartbroken*, Vietnamese people use the belly and its organs such as stomach, liver, and intestine as a center of feelings, for example, *lòng đau như cắt, vừa lòng, thấy ưng cái bụng, nở từng khúc ruột*. Besides, one language may have a conceptual metaphor that does not exist in the other language. For instance, whereas the metaphor SAD IS BLUE is common in English, as in *feeling blue*, *baby blues*, and *Monday morning blues*, it does not exist in Vietnamese language. EFL learners usually find it hard to understand and recollect those idiomatic expressions, whose conceptual metaphors are distinct from their native language. Thus, this is the teacher's responsibility to foster students' awareness of such differences and help them apply conceptual metaphors to understand the target idioms.

With this activity, the teacher can explain to the students the reason why there are such variations in the two languages and cultures. Knowledge of etymology, as well as different lifestyle and ideologies of medicine in each country is necessary for an adequate explanation (Nguyen, 2012).

Activity eight: "Picture this!"

Students play this game in groups of five. Each member receives two cards and is told to keep their cards to themselves. There is one previously encountered idiom on each card. The Students take turns to mime or draw to elucidate literal meaning of the idioms so that their partners can guess what they are. The image in each selected idiom must be easy to be depicted by drawing or miming. For instance, *as happy as a clam at high tide* can be depicted by drawing a clam with a smiley or using two hands to mime the two shells of a clam. The group finishing the game first is the winner.

This activity is based on the findings of an empirical research by Boers, Lindstromberg, Littlemore, Stengers, and Eyckmans (2008). Pictorial elucidation and mime are proved to enhance the retention of meaning. To complete the task, each student has to make a cognitive effort to think of a suitable drawing or mime to illustrate the meaning of the idioms. Using pictures and body gestures explicitly to illustrate meaning can help stimulate dual coding of information, especially for those whose learning style does not help them create sufficient mental images from the previous activities. This conscious attempt is deemed beneficial to learners' comprehension and retention.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher can ask the students to work in pairs and 'retell' the story about an extremely happy or unhappy experience shared at the beginning. However, this time they should try to integrate as many idiomatic expressions as possible. Finally, they compare the first version (before learning metaphors and idioms) with the second one (after learning metaphors and idioms) and evaluate the effectiveness of applying such idiomatic language.

4. Conclusion

This paper aims to support the adoption of cognitive approach to teaching English idioms in Vietnamese context by applying the Conceptual Metaphor Theory to design various idiom-focused activities for the classroom. These activities require students to play an active role in their language acquisition with conceptual metaphors as an organizer and motivator of English idioms. By clarifying the motivation behind several idiomatic expressions, these activities help to relieve students' burden of rote learning, facilitate systematic and insightful learning, enhance their comprehension and retention of English idioms, and heighten their awareness of cultural universality and variations in English and Vietnamese idioms.

Importantly, this paper does not recommend using conceptual metaphors as a substitute for other methods of teaching idioms. In fact, these CM-related activities should be considered as part of a learning program and integrated with other approaches to teach vocabulary in general and idioms in particular. Rather than adopting a single method in teaching idioms, EFL teachers can use various techniques to enhance their students' idiomatic knowledge and inspire them with innovative activities. Then, the use of conceptual metaphors should be seen as an additional channel for idiom acquisition.

Despite the potential benefits of this cognitive approach in idiom teaching and learning, few studies about this topic have been conducted in Vietnam. Hence, further practical implementations and empirical evidence are needed to validate the impacts of conceptual metaphors on Vietnamese learners' acquisition of English idioms in particular and vocabulary in general■

Note

[1] The expressions such as *as happy as a clam (at high tide), as snug as a bug in a rug,* and *as happy as a horse in hay* are surface realization of the conceptual metaphor A HAPPY PERSON IS AN ANIMAL (THAT LIVES WELL). (Kövecses, 2002).

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STUDENT MOTIVATIONS TO STUDY ABROAD – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF VIETNAMESE STUDENTS IN UK

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ABSTRACT

This study adapts Push and Pull Theory in educational tourism to explore and measure factors that make students studying abroad in addition to considering travel behaviours of them while being in UK. By using the survey data from 125 Vietnamese students currently studying in United Kingdom. Vietnamese students decide to study abroad to get a better education than domestic one, improve job prospects as well as have a better understanding of western countries' culture. Quality of the course and university is also considered when making decision. Besides, pull factor related to destination is the last factor affect students' motivations. When Vietnamese students study at the host country, they seem to travel frequently and stay longer per trip. Vietnamese students also prefer hotel/motel than youth hostel in terms of accommodation.

Keywords: International student; Motivations to study abroad; Push and pull theory; Travel behaviours.

1. Introduction

Studying abroad is not a new phenomenon, especially in higher education level. In fact, Altbach and Teichler (2001) argued that the 21st century might be called the century of education. In the world of economic globalisation, the need for human resources which can work effectively in international environment becomes more essential (Vaicekauskas et al., 2013). Organisations hunt for employees who have linguistics capability (Tremblay 2005) as well as intercultural skills, international experience (Daly and Barker, 2005). Studying abroad is one of the most effective methods for graduates to equip themselves those skills and become more employable.

There is no surprise that the number of students enrolled in tertiary education outside their countries of origin has witnessed the sustainable growth since 1975. Over 37 years, the increase was more than 560%, reached 4.5 million of foreign students in 2012 (Figure 1). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries are considered as top destinations which have 75% of all foreign students study in (OECD 2014). In addition, EU countries hold the largest proportion with 48% of foreign students, followed by North America with 21% and Asia with 18% (ibid). More specially, US, UK and Germany are top three countries of destination respectively and the top six countries which include top three and France, Australia, Canada occupy more than 50% of the market (OECD, 2014).

On the demand side, with the young population, fast economic growth and the value of education in societies, Asia is the region which has the highest number of international students studying abroad with 53% of total (OECD 2014). In some particular host countries, the proportion of Asian students among international students is extraordinarily high such as 94% (Japan), 93% (Korea), 82% (Australia), 73% (US), and 70% (New Zealand) (ibid). In country level, China is leading country of origin of students studying abroad with 22% of the market. Table 1 shows the top ten sending countries of international students enrolled tertiary education outside their home nation.

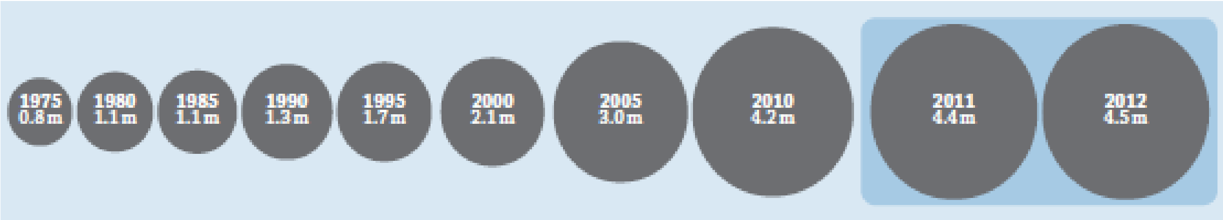

Figure 1. Long-term growth in the number of students enrolled in tertiary education outside their home countries

Source: *OECD (2014, p. 344)*

There are five objectives discussed in this study:

- To explore contributing factors students base on to choose a destination to study.
- To identify the relationship between contributing factors and the satisfaction of students while studying in UK.
- To investigate the future intention of student after experiencing UK education.
- To explain descriptively the travel behaviours of Vietnamese students.
- To discover the differences and similarities in travel behaviours in terms of different characteristics such as gender, marital status.

2. Literature review

Push and Pull concept

"Push and pull" concept has become the most common tool for educational researchers to explain the international student choice of country and institution (Wilkins et al., 2012). Students tend to study abroad because of the lack of capacity and opportunities in their home countries (Altbach, 2004), relatively lower educational quality, the unavailability of some particular subjects (Safahieh and Singh, 2006) as well as social and political issues (Maringe and Carter, 2007). Bourke (2000) in his research found that the most crucial reason that make student wish to study abroad is enhanced career prospects. The second significant factor is the chance to meet new friends and explore new culture. Chen (2007) supported that idea by suggesting one of the motivations is that the foreign degree could improve the job prospect and the chance to have better salary and promotions.

On the other hand, some of the "pull" factors discussed frequently in many researches is likely related to academic and institutional aspects. For example, among all of push – pull factors in Chen's study (2007), the academic factor which includes criteria such as the reputation of university/ programme, the quality of university/ programme and the ranking of university/ programme received relatively high scores. The finding was confirmed again by Abubakar and his colleagues (2010). However, with the aim of exploring travel behaviours, this research is going to focus on those factors students choose university that associated with destination. In general, the impact of country image on purchasing decision of any products or services has been investigated in various studies (Javalgi et al., 2001). In addition, Cubillo et al. (2006) argued that the city image plays a role as important as country does in international students' decision. In their suggested model, a destination factor could comprise weather, cost of living, international environment, development level, safety and security. Moreover, there are few more factors mentioned in other studies that are quite important, such as opportunity to live in a diverse culture (Mavondo et al., 2004), host country experience (Maringe and Carter, 2007) or travel opportunities (Porumbu and Necsoi, 2013)

Educational tourism – A lucrative tourism sector

This market is estimated as a multi-billion dollar business by professionals and academics (Chadee and Cutler, 1996). According to StudentMarketing (2014), the youth, student and educational travel market occupy more than 20% of all international arrivals and create US$ 194 billion in 2012. School breaks and holidays always offer university students the time to travel (Mattila et al., 2001). In detail, with around 20 weeks of free time for holidays each year and low rate of full-time employment (Davies and Lea, 1995), university students have few commitments and high propensity for travel. There is a common bias that students or youth travellers have small budget and do not spend a lot during their trip but actually from the observation of the industry, they tend to stay longer, spend more and travel more frequently than average international tourist (StudentMarketing, 2014). Additionally, the market is estimated to reach 300 million arrivals by 2020 and value US$ 320 billion.

VFR visits to international students – a significant source should not be neglected

With the nature of international student staying away from home for long time, their participation rate in VFR (visiting friends and relatives) tourism as a host or traveller is relatively higher among university students than general population (Chadee and Cutler, 1996, Michael et al., 2004). Michael et al. (2004) in their study also suggested considering the lifetime value of tourists since there is a significant positive relationship between VFR travel and repeat visitation. Furthermore, VFR travellers seem to take their visits in the off-season and lengthening the period of time at the destination (Noordewier, 2002; Hu and Morrison, 2002).

3. Methodology

3.1. Questionnaire Design and Data Collection

To test the proposed model and the given hypotheses, quantitative approach was mainly applied and a questionnaire survey was used to collect data. All items in the questionnaire were set with the Likert Scale's statement, basing on the five-point ranging from scale 1 to scale 5, equivalent to "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The target population is all Vietnamese students who are pursuing higher education degree in UK. According to HM Government (2013), UK welcomed 47,200 international students to study higher education level from Vietnam, ranked 6th in top sending countries.

This study applied convenient sampling technique. The data were collected by two ways: (1) questionnaires were delivered directly to the target respondents and (2) the link of online questionnaire was sent to respondents through emails. After completing data collection, there were 125 valid respondents in total.

3.2. Data Analysis

Firstly, to explore the correlations of independent and dependent variables and to examine the reliability and validity of them, the study conducted Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Reliability Test. Secondly, Multiple Regression were applied to find out the causal relationships between independent variables and dependent variable. Finally, descriptive analysis would be conducted to have an brief look at the travel behaviour of Vietnamese students when they are in UK.

4. Research findings

4.1. Profile of the Sample

In total of 125 collected questionnaires, there are 44 male students (taking possession of 35.2%) compared to 81 females (taking possession of 64.8%). More than 60% of the respondents are participating in graduate programs (Master or Doctor degree) and around 40% is studying bachelor level or lower. When being asked whether students are having part-time job while studying, 49 respondents said yes which means the majority (60%) completely focus on studying. This confirms previous researches about the potential of the international student market in tourism. With low rate of employment, especially full-time employment, international students have few commitments and high propensity for travel.

In addition, respondents come from various universities throughout the UK. In detailed, there are opinions from 29 different universities from North to South of the country.

4.2. Factor Analysis and Reliability

The factor analyses (EFA) were conducted with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Barltlett's test of sphericity and Varimax Rotation of 24 items of independent variables. The research collected the results of the KMO measure of sampling adequacy for independent variables (KMO=.914). It was higher than the minimum value for a good factor analysis .60. Furthermore, Barltlett's test of sphericity was significant (Sig.=.000), demonstrating the sufficient correlation between the variables.

From the result shown in table 1, all independent variables were divided into 5 different components, including Social Adaption, Destination Pull Factor, Course Quality, Push Factor, Study Support. Factor loadings of remained items were from .433 to .848, all of which were acceptable because of being higher than the level of minimum requirement at .40 (Hair et al., 2006). In addition, Cronbach's coefficient alpha value above .60 was proved to be acceptable by Pallant (2007), as a result, Cronbach's coefficient alpha values of all factors in the research were accepted.

Table 1

Factor Analysis and Reliability test

Factors/variables	**Factor loadings**				
	1	2	3	4	5
Factor 1: Social adaptation					
The diversity of the city where my university is located	.738				
Range of student clubs and societies	.718				
Part-time employment while studying	.656				
Intention to migrate	.604				
Chance to travel	.572				
Make new international friends	.527				
The international student support service is helpful	.499				
There is no discrimination against me at this university	.465				
Factor 2: Destination pull factor					
Comfortable climate		.832			
Quiet- studious environment		.788			
Lifestyle of the country/ city		.633			
Exciting place to live		.522			
Relatively lower cost to pursue the degree		.433			
Factor 3: Course quality					
The quality of the program			.848		
The quality of the university			.837		
Qualifications recognised worldwide			.536		

Factors/variables	Factor loadings				
	1	2	3	4	5
Factor 4: Push Factor					
Overseas course is better than local				.811	
Improves job prospects/ chance of receiving a good salary and promotions				.656	
Chance to get better understanding of Western countries				.597	
Improve language skills				.568	
Factor 5: Study support					
My profession requires an advanced degree					.639
Safe (low crime) environment					.592
General facilities at school - buildings and equipment					.570
Cronbach's Alpha	.842	.811	.835	.809	.641
Eigenvalues	4.06	3.11	2.80	2.61	2.13
Explained Variance (%)	17.65	13.51	12.17	11.37	9.26
Cumulative (%)	17.65	31.17	43.33	54.70	63.96

4.3. Factors affecting Dependent variable

Pearson's Correlation Analysis and Linear Regression Analysis were conducted three times to explore the relationships between independent and dependent variables, independent and mediating variables, mediating and dependent variables.

Basing on the data's result, it showed that three out of five independent variables are correlated with the dependent variable – Overall Satisfaction. The Push Factor seems to have most impact to the overall satisfaction with r=.357; p<.001, followed by Course Quality r=.326; p<.001), and Destination Pull Factor r=.167; p<.001.

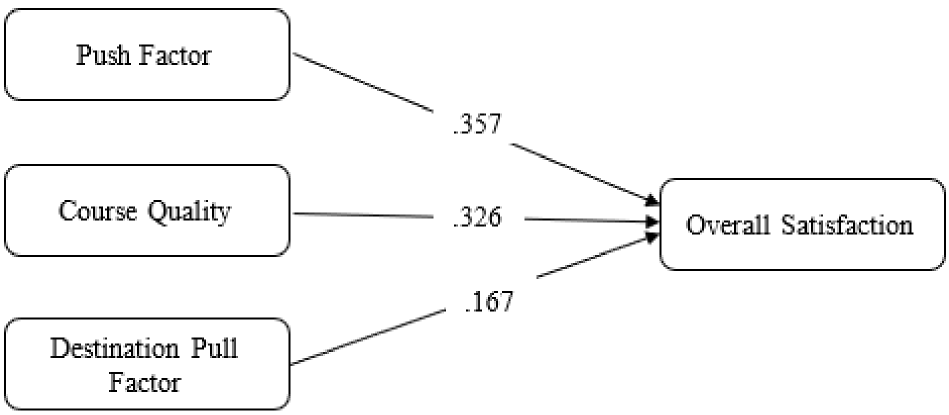

Figure 2. Causal relationship result

4.4. Student travel behaviours

Past travel experience

When be asked for the number of holidays in UK in the last 12 months, only six students (less than 5%) reported they have not travelled yet. On the other hand, 30% of the sample said that they travelled more than 6 times. It means that roughly they have at least one trip in every two months.

Type of accommodation

Regarding to which kind of accommodation that students usually use when travelling, 74 respondents indicated that they stayed in hotel or motel, 53 respondents would stay in Friend/ Relatives' houses, the same amount of respondents also stayed in Backpacker, Youth hostel, and only five respondents would stay in Camp site. The result may contradict with the common sense that students generally seek to cheap accommodation (WYSE 2010). However, it is similar to what Huang and Tian (2013) found when they studied about Chinese students in UK. There are several possible reasons for why Hotel/ motel is the most popular choice although Field (1999) indicated that students are more likely to stay at friends and relatives' houses. Firstly, Vietnam is very far away from UK and there are few students have relatives and friends in Britain. Secondly, B&B accommodation and camp site are types of accommodation which are not popular in Vietnam.

Mode of transportation

When being asked about mode of transportation students often use, Bus/coach (88 respondents) and train (79 respondents) are chosen the most and just only few students used to use rental car, motorcycle or taxi as their main mode of transportation when travelling. It is understandable while the public transportation in UK is well-developed and it is also convenient and relatively cheaper to travel across cities with this means of transportation. The rental car and motorcycle are not popular might due to the different side when driving between UK and Vietnam and there are not many Vietnamese young people who can drive car.

Size of travel group

The result when asking how many people respondent usually go with reveals that students seem do not want to travel alone. However, the big group is also not a preferred choice when only 4 respondents reported to go with a group larger than 6 people. 79 respondents indicated to go with 1-3 other people and 38 of them would go with 4-6 people. One possible factor might account for such finding is that it is fairly difficult to find accommodation to big group when travelling. Since majority prefer hotel-type accommodation, a room for a group of 2-4 traveller is easy to seek.

Eating preference

84% of respondent reported that they chose local home-style cuisine to try when travelling. 48% of them indicated fast-food restaurant as one of the options, followed by deli (24.8%), self-prepared meal (24%) and prestigious restaurant (16%).

Table 2

Travel behaviours

Categories	Frequency	Categories	Frequency
		Transportation	
Past travel experience		Rental car	16
Not yet	6	Bus/ Coach	88
1-2 times	31	Train	79
3-4 times	31	Aeroplane	53
5-6 times	19	Motorcycle	9
>6 times	38	Taxi	13

Categories	Frequency	Categories	Frequency
Length of trip		Size of travel group	
One-day trip	18	Alone	4
1-2 nights	37	1-3 people	79
3-4 nights	49	4-6 people	38
5-6 nights	12	>6 people	4
>6 nights	9		
Accommodation		Eating preference	
Hotel/Motel	74	Fast-food restaurant	60
Backpacker, Youth Hostel	53	Home-style restaurant	105
B&B Accommodation	27	Prestigious restaurant	20
Friends/ Relatives' houses	53	Self-prepared meal	30
Camp site	5	Deli	31

5. Conclusions and limitations

With the large amount of Vietnamese international students currently studying in the UK (HM Government 2013), this study critically explores the motivation factors of Vietnamese students in deciding the university to study abroad and investigate their travel behaviours during the time being in UK.

Firstly, there are three factors, destination pull factor (5 items), course quality (3 items) and push factor (4 items) were confirmed significantly have a positive relationship with the overall satisfaction (3 items). The social adaptation (8 items) and study support (3 items) were rejected to affect the outcome. Many students would like to recommend their friends and relatives to study in the country/university (68% of respondents) or even travel to the city/country that they are living (73.6%) of the respondents. In addition, 55.2% of the sample reported that they would like to come back to UK in the future after graduation. This could be a hint to the increasing of Vietnamese tourists in UK; therefore, any businesses in tourism and hospitality industry should prepare strategy to attract potential customers from this nation. On the other side, 57.6% of students indicated that they made the decision of selecting university to study abroad by themselves. University manager could base on this finding to reshape their marketing plan to approach the student better.

Moreover, in the last two decades, thanks to the increasing of internationalisation of education, both tourism and education industries are getting closer and witness the great growth rate (Lam et al., 2011). This research not only contributes to the academic literature but also provides crucial findings for both educational institution manager and organisations in tourism and hospitality industry. The understanding of motivations to study abroad and who influence the decision would help university to attract more students in the lucrative market. On the other hand, knowledge about travel behaviours would support tour operators or hospitality organisations to serve their potential customers better.

When considering the place to study abroad, Vietnamese students choose universities in UK mostly because the quality of the program as well as the university. Students believes that with a qualification that recognised worldwide, they can improve job prospects/ chance of receiving better salary and promotions. Besides, Vietnamese students in the sample have a willingness to gain understanding of Western countries and like other Asian students, they believe overseas course is better than domestic one. Improving language skill is also one of the reasons that push students to study abroad. Moreover, factors related to destination such as climate, environment, lifestyle and living cost are considered when making decision. Therefore, envisioning a bright future after graduation by introducing successful alumni stories or their reviews about the course could attract more prospective students. In addition, an introduction of the destination which is both rich cultures, exciting to live and suitable to study with cost advantage would gain impression from future students. The public educational fair or workshops in high school and university in Vietnam that targets directly to students could be a suitable approach since students reported they made the studying abroad decisions by themselves.

Tour operators should pay more attention to this lucrative market since most of respondents (95.2%) have travelled last year; even 30% of them had more than 6 holidays per year. In addition, the fact that majority would come back to the country after graduation turns this market more beneficial not only at the moment but also in the future. Therefore, the attractive promotions exclusively for students and strategy to maintain relationship with those who used to travel are some of the must-have tactics of any tourism organisations. In addition, the eating preferences of Vietnamese students imply that local home-style restaurants have competitive advantage against chain fast-food restaurant. The business owners of that kind of restaurant should have more promotions to appeal students.

Due to the difficulties in approaching target population which is Vietnamese students living in UK, the sample size of the study is quite small. Therefore, it will be difficult to generalize to the whole population. There is a recommendation that future research can use result from the study and conduct in the larger scale to ensure a representative distribution of the population. Besides, the objective of this study is to collect opinions of students from all level of higher education included doctorate degree. However, it was challenging to find many PhD students to diversify the answers■

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FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT THROUGH THE MEDIATOR JOB SATISFACTION - A STUDY OF OFFICE STAFFS IN HO CHI MINH CITY

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between employee-related factors and employee commitment through the mediator job satisfaction of office employees in Ho Chi Minh City. The conceptual model is adapted from previous research and Herzberg's two-factor theory. The theory emphasized the certain elements belonging to two categories intrinsic and extrinsic value that lead to people's satisfaction. Four factors include Training, Pay, Working Environment, and Leadership. The data is collected through questionnaires from 422 office staffs in Ho Chi Minh; then only 395 qualified responses are analyzed. SPSS and AMOS tools are used to analyze the data through Reliability test, Model fit test, SEM method. The final result reveals that all factors are significantly related to Job Satisfaction meaning these variables also have indirect positive relationship with Employee Commitment through the mediator. This research is useful for organizations which aim to build the commitment strategy for keeping best talents in the company.

Keywords: Commitment; Herzberg's two-factor theory; Office staff; Satisfaction.

1. Introduction

According to Salary Report 2016 of three credible recruitment consultancies in Vietnam - Robert Walters, Adecco and Job Street, Vietnam is one of the countries that has the lowest salary rate in Asia region, the class of workers with 1- 3 years' experience whose salary is 5-6 times lower than Singapore or 2-3 times lower than Malaysia. Particularly, office staffs usually deal with the same kind of job for a long time and they need to accomplish their tasks as known as their responsibilities in rush to keep pace with the deadline. Moreover, most office employees have to work intensely in the closed space that causes some health problems and stress. Nowadays, the development of advanced technology helps people access a lot of information sources than ever. People easily search the work vacancies on the Internet, which means employees can find new jobs anytime and anywhere if they are no longer interested in their current firms. Many business owners worry about "switching job" phenomenon so they try to find the ways that motivate good employees who have long-term commitment with their firms. Anis et al. (2011) confirmed the bad effects caused by employee turnover; organizations need to maintain their current employee's commitment. However, the staff members have to satisfy their needs and requirements before they commit to the firm so the management team should pay attention to employee satisfaction together with commitment strategy. Grobler (2005) mentioned that employees need to satisfy their self-fulfillment, so they have the tendency to look for new jobs which are more challenging and creative. Hence the more incentive on factors related to employee satisfaction at work, the more company can reduce the turnover rate and retain employee. The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the selected factors: Training, Pay, Working Environment, Leadership and office employee Commitment through the mediator Satisfaction and find out which factors affecting Employee Commitment. This study could be helpful for companies which are still concerned with the strategy to keep talented employees, giving them a view on the real scenario and the awareness of other problems that may occur in the company's human resource management. With the research findings, companies can know which factors play important roles in successful employee commitment strategy

2. Literature review

2.1. Job Satisfaction and Commitment

Hoppock (1935) defined job satisfaction as any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that make people honestly feel satisfied with their job. Locke (1976) also defined "job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience". Organizational commitment is defined as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization and can be characterized by a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership of the organization" (Mowday, Porter, & Steer, 1982). After that in 1991, Meyer and Allen developed their Three Component Model of Commitment stating that organizational commitment mainly includes the following components: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. These three components have an impact on the feelings of employees regarding to the organization that they work for. When the employees are satisfied with their job, it also affects the level of employee commitment. Feinstein & Vondrasek (2001) did the research in the tourism field and found that the level of job commitment depended on job satisfaction. It was also confirmed by Lam et al (2003); the result showed the strong impact of job satisfaction on organizational commitment. Gaertner (1999) proved that there exists the positive correlation between employee satisfaction and commitment. In other words, when employee has worked in the organization for many years and they become bored with their job, their attitudes are more negative than before (Lee, 2013). Similarly, Bateman and Strasser (1984) posited that there was a positive relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction. This result is also supported by Jermier & Berkes (1979); they discovered that employees who were always satisfied with their jobs would have a higher level of commitment. Employees who were committed to their organization in the tourism sector were willing to reach the goal and target of the company. When they completed the goal; it called "achievement". In 1959, Herzberg researched the factors affecting people attitude at work. He classified the essential factors into two dimensions Hygiene and Motivation. Herzberg said that the absence of Hygiene factors could lead to the job dissatisfaction and the presence of Motivation factors would increase the job satisfaction. Based on Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, achievement is one of the factor that causes the satisfaction, so the satisfaction now is treated as the outcome of commitment, not an antecedent (Lam, Pine, and Baum, 2003). Therefore, this study hypothesizes the positive relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee Commitment.

Table 1

Job Satisfaction Factors (Herzberg, 1976)

Factors Leading to Dissatisfaction (Hygiene)	Factors Leading to Satisfaction (Motivation)
• Company Policy • Supervision • Relationship with Boss • Work Conditions • Salary • Relationship with Peers	• Achievement • Recognition • Work Itself • Responsibility • Advancement • Growth

2.2. Training

Mincer (1962) simply explained training is an investment in procurement skills to improve employee's productivity. According to the Edwin (1987), "Training is the act of increasing knowledge and skills of an employee for doing a particular job." The paper of Turkyilmaz et al. (2011) revealed that training and personal development significantly affect employee satisfaction of 220 employees in Istanbul Branch of Social Security Department. Linking it to this business human resource context, when firms invest in their human resources in the form of training, employees are pleased to receive the knowledge and more willing to commit to the firms. There are various types of training such as on-the-job training, vocational training, general and specific training, depending on each context, HRM decides an appropriate type for employees (Hassan, 2013). According to Kulkarn (2013), the essential object of training is to provide the availability of skilled and well-trained employees who are ready to contribute to the organizations. A successful training session requires many steps of preparation and evaluation due to its effect on organization's operation and budget. Hence, this research proposes the positive impact between Training and Employee Job Satisfaction.

2.3. Working Environment

Kohun (1992) defined Working environment is the set of forces, actions and other influential factors impacting on the employee's activities and performance. Opperman (2002), Yusuf & Metiboba (2012) defined working environment which consists of three components technical environment, the human environment and the organizational environment in which technical Environment is infrastructure and physical, technical factor at the workplace. Human environment is the interrelationship among people, leadership and management and it can affect worker's morale (Clement, 2000; Stanley, 2003). Organization environment is mediated task, national environment (inputs) and process into final products or service (output) (Akintayo, 2012). Yusuf & Metiboba (2012) also claimed that employee behavior such as absenteeism, low commitment, and apathy are related to working environment. Brill, Weidemann, Olsen, Keable & Bosti (2001) revealed that the design of workspace has a huge effect on employee commitment and satisfaction. Wells & Thellen (2002) and Croasmun (2004) suggested the working environment which has enough privacy, quietude and suitable facility for old employees inspires people with motivation and satisfaction whereby contributes to employee commitment. As a result, the next hypothesis is working environment positively affects Employee Job Satisfaction.

2.4. Leadership

There are many definitions of leadership; however, in general, there is no unified consensus and this is just the influence of one person which leads to the actions or attitude of other (Wakabi, 2013). According to Okumbe (1998), leadership is the process encouraging people to do something by their willingness, not because they are afraid of suffering the consequences or discipline. Mat (2008) confirmed that people follow leader's acts and behaviors to achieve organization's goals. Dawley, Andrews, and Bucklew (2010) studied the influence of perceived organizational support, supervisor support and job fit on employees' turnover intention of 3 organizations. The paper showed that the perceived organizational support, supervisor support and job fit significantly impact employee satisfaction and that resulted in the high commitment. The recommended hypothesis is the positive effect of Leadership and Employee Job Satisfaction.

2.5. Pay

Obviously, people are looking for jobs because of not only their passion but also money. The most important reason for working is that people need money to pay everything for their lives and support their families. In addition, it is one of reward tools to help employees feel more positive at work because employees perceive their efforts to be recognized worthily (Silbert, 2005). Likewise, Gardner et al., (2004) mentioned pay as a motivator and technique of employee commitment, Milkovich and Newman (2004) expressed that among many types of rewards, monetary pay is one of the most important factors affecting satisfaction. Base pay and contingent pay are two main elements of pay whereas base pay is accounted for the largest part of total reward package for most employees (Green, 2010). There are many different results conducted by earlier researchers about the relationship between pay and job satisfaction, some studies found the positive correlation (Beutell & Wittig-Berman, 1999; Sanchez & Brock, 1996), weak relationship (Dunham & Hawk, 1977 and Adams & Beehr, 1998). Judge (2010) did a meta-analysis of the literature between pay and job satisfaction. In general, pay level is only marginally related to satisfaction. The reason that leads to the different results may come from people's psychologies and characteristics, for instance, Malka and Chatman (2003) suggested that people with more extrinsic value orientations tightly link the level of satisfaction to the level of income. A lot of researchers found the positive relationship between pay and job satisfaction because pay is seen as the critical reason that causes overall satisfaction (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969; Hulin, 1991; Heneman & Judge, 2000). Thus, Pay has the positive relationship with Employee Job Satisfaction.

Based on the literature review of much empirical research, the model contains popular variables that frequently appear in previous studies. The conceptual model is adapted from Herzberg two-factor theory. Job satisfaction will enhance if the employees can access to nice workplace training, environment, leadership styles and reward (Chen, 2006; Payne, 2005; Mohammad & Hossein, 2006).

The hypotheses for this research are summarized as following:

H1: Training positively affects Employee Job Satisfaction.

H2: Working Environment positively affects Employee Job Satisfaction

H3: Leadership positively affects Employee Job Satisfaction

H4: Pay positively affects Employee Job Satisfaction

H5: There is a positive relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee Commitment

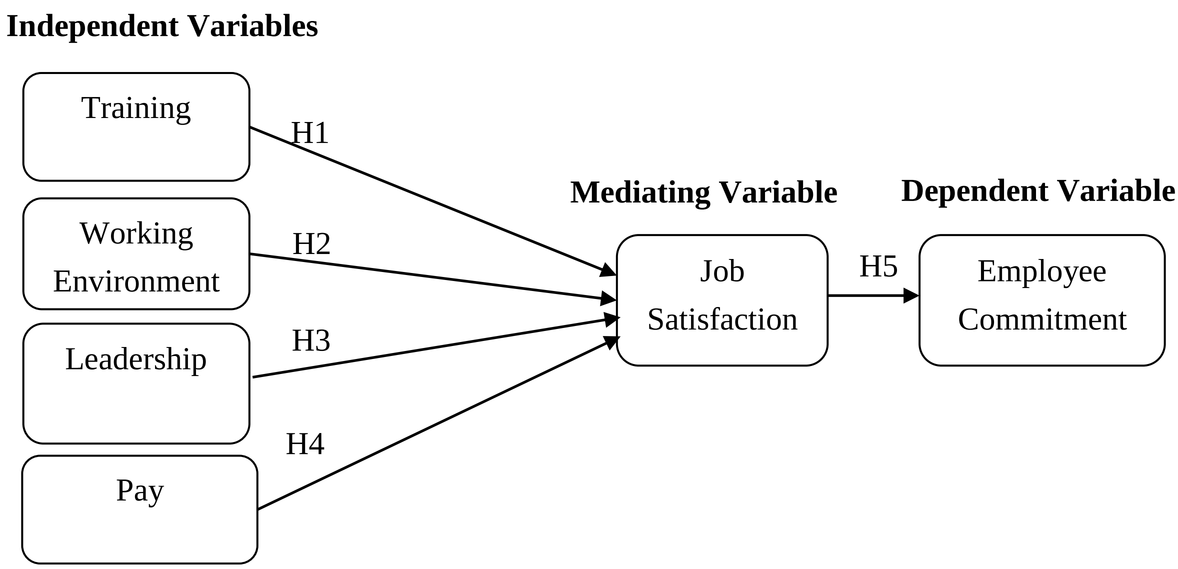

Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Framework

Source: Alshanbri et al. (2015) and Herzberg (1976)

3. Research methodology

This research uses the quantitative approach to obtain the purpose of the study. The quantitative research tries to gather data by objective methods and provides information about relations, comparisons, and predictions and removes the investigator from the investigation (Smith, 1983). In this case, the AMOS technique is mainly run to analyze the data, information that got from survey with initial support from SPSS so that the study has the most accurate result. The survey is continually chosen as the main method with questionnaire tool to collect primary data. The questionnaires were directly sent to 422 people who are classified as the office workers in Ho Chi Minh City, spreading from under 20 to over 46 years old.

The questionnaire is synthesized based on the previous study such as Koikai (2014), Msengeti (2015) and Achieng'Nyaura (2016), so that the measurement scale presents a high reliability. The questionnaire is divided into two sections: Demographic details and Perceived Relationship among the factors. Each factor includes five measurement statements using Likert scale which spreading from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Sample Demographics

The data collected by online and offline surveys to achieve 422 responses from the office staffs in Ho Chi Minh City in 2017. However, after eliminating the unqualified responses, 395 qualified questionnaires are used to analyze the data result. The number of Female respondents is 68.61% which is double the number of Male and the dominant range is from 20-30 years old (69.62%)

4.2. The Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

This research uses the Cronbach's Alpha reliability test before analyzing the EFA to exclude inappropriate variables because they can produce dummy factors. Acceptable values of alpha have a range from **0.70** to **0.95** (Nunnally, 1994; Bland, 1997; DeVellis, 2013). If the value is less than 0.6, the number of item in the questionnaire is low or the measurement questions are not inter-related to each other. Moreover, it is impossible to get the value greater than 0.9. This value indicates that the items are redundant and duplicate; the survey consists of many same questions but different.

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha Results ways of expressing (McClelland, 1980).

	Number or Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Training	5	.898
Pay	5	.788
Working Environment	5	.829
Leadership	5	.855
Job Satisfaction	5	.769
Employee Commitment	5	.858

The Cronbach's Alpha for all variables range from .769 to .898 depicts the moderate consistency among internal items. Especially Training has Cronbach's Alpha value.898 illustrates that all items measuring training are reliable and consistent. Because the results satisfy the requirements for Reliability test thus there is no variable to be eliminated and the measurement scales are appropriate for EFA analysis.

4.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

After running Cronbach's Alpha test, the second assessment to test the validity of all variables is EFA. This method evaluates two important values of the scale: Converging value and distinctive value**.** EFA helps to rearrange the scale into multiple sets. The variables belonging to the same set will measure the same concept. It is based on the correlation between variables (interrelationships). Promax rotation and Principal axis factoring are chosen to run EFA test for independent variables and Principal Component is applied for mediator and dependent variables. As the adjusted outcome of EFA and Reliability test, there are 18 items belonging to 4 groups of components. The final EFA result is reached at the third time after deleting unqualified measurement scales PAY4, PAY5.

Table 3

Factor Analysis – Independent variables

	1	2	3	4
Train4	.871			
Train3	.862			
rain2	.846			
Train5	.811			
Train1	.612			
Env2		.794		
Env5		.754		
Env1		.719		
Env4		.661		

	1	2	3	4
Env3		.589		
Lead4			.798	
Lead5			.751	
Lead3			.720	
Lead1			.650	
Lead2			.517	
Pay3				.912
Pay1				.569
Pay2				.488

This is the final EFA result for 4 independent variables; all component variables are regrouped into the same set of measurement. Both mediating and dependent variables are also grouped perfectly in EFA test. In the meantime, KMO and Barlett's Test is conducted in table 3 in order to present the appropriateness of factor analysis with actual data.

Table 4

KMO and Barlett's Test

	Independent Variables	**Mediating Variable**	**Dependent Variable**
KMO index	.889	.753	.833
Sig.	.000	.000	.000
Cumulative %	**55.622**	**52.964**	**64.660**

KMO value of independent variables is .889, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant with p-value .000 (<.05). Moreover, Cumulative% is 55.622% meaning 4 factors can explain for 55.622% of data variation and observed items are correlated with each factor. Hence EFA model is appropriate. Similarly, The KMO value of Mediating and Dependent Variables are .753 and .833 respectively depict good values so this measurement shows the compatible with actual data and good correlation among observed variables. Cumulative % value of Job Satisfaction and Employee Commitment are 52.964 and 64.660% in turns proving that the result is explained to 52.964% by Job Satisfaction and 64.660% by Employee Commitment in this research.

4.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

CFA is a methodology determining the relevance of research data to theoretical models. In other words, it is used to test the model fit. The CFA test includes Unidimensionality which measures the suitability of the model compared to research data. The result of this research model is compared with the cut off value of model-fit measurement indices (Tucker & Lewis, 1973; Bentler, 1990; Browne, 1993; Hair, 1992 and Abedi, 2015).

Table 5

Unidimensionality result (CFA)

Fit Indices	Level of acceptance	Test result	Comment
Chi-Square (CMIN)	**≠ 0 and p-value ≤ 0.05**	916.137 p-value=.000	Statistical significance
Chisq/df (CMIN/DF)	**≤ 3.0**	2.735	Statistical significance
CFI	**≥ 0.8**	.897	Acceptable
TLI	**≥ 0.8**	.884	Acceptable
GFI	**≥ 0.8**	.850	Acceptable
RMSEA	< **0.08**	.066	Acceptable

The result is satisfied with the standard indices and it is statistically significant, so the theoretical model of the topic is consistent with the data collected in the market

Moreover, observed variables have estimates of standardized regression weights (Table 6) greater than **0.5** at the significant level (P-value = **0.001**) (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), the CFA model obtains Convergent validity.

Table 6

Standardized Regression Weights (CFA)

			Estimate
Train3	<---	Train	.861
Train2	<---	Train	.829
Train4	<---	Train	.862
Env3	<---	Env	.682
Env2	<---	Env	.834
Env4	<---	Env	.623
Lead3	<---	Lead	.709
Lead2	<---	Lead	.805
Lead1	<---	Lead	.825
Lead4	<---	Lead	.671
Lead5	<---	Lead	.656
Com3	<---	Com	.841
Com2	<---	Com	.802
Com1	<---	Com	.685
Com4	<---	Com	.760
Com5	<---	Com	.648

			Estimate
Satis3	<---	Satis	.582
Satis2	<---	Satis	.732
Satis1	<---	Satis	.761
Satis4	<---	Satis	.714
Satis5	<---	Satis	.418
Train1	<---	Train	.638
Train5	<---	Train	.818
Env1	<---	Env	.731
Env5	<---	Env	.640
Pay3	<---	Pay	.792
Pay2	<---	Pay	.606
Pay1	<---	Pay	.565

In the CFA, the discriminant value indicates that this structure is really different from other structures. If p-value ≤ 0.05, CFA model obtains statistical significance. The table below shows the significant p-value ≤ 0.05 of all loading variables. Therefore, the concepts in the model achieve discriminant values.

Table 7

Regression Weights (CFA)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Train3	<---	Train	1.311	.094	13.963	***	
Train2	<---	Train	1.218	.090	13.598	***	
Train4	<---	Train	1.257	.090	13.968	***	
Env3	<---	Env	.912	.072	12.670	***	
Env2	<---	Env	1.092	.072	15.240	***	
Env4	<---	Env	.742	.064	11.583	***	
Lead3	<---	Lead	.904	.060	15.042	***	
ead2	<---	Lead	1.030	.058	17.663	***	
Lead4	<---	Lead	.832	.059	14.020	***	
Lead5	<---	Lead	.842	.062	13.651	***	
Com3	<---	Com	1.341	.092	14.643	***	
Com2	<---	Com	1.344	.095	14.106	***	
Com4	<---	Com	1.385	.103	13.469	***	

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Com5	<---	Com	1.294	.111	11.678	***	
Satis3	<---	Satis	.663	.060	11.054	***	
Satis2	<---	Satis	.937	.067	14.092	***	
Satis4	<---	Satis	1.012	.074	13.731	***	
Satis5	<---	Satis	.569	.073	7.843	***	
Train5	<---	Train	1.247	.093	13.466	***	
Env5	<---	Env	.728	.061	11.888	***	
Pay3	<---	Pay	1.547	.169	9.162	***	
Pay2	<---	Pay	1.331	.157	8.463	***	

Besides Cronbach's Alpha test, AMOS has another assessment to confirm the reliability of scale that is the concept of *Composite Reliability and Variance Extracted.* The equations calculate *Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)* developed by Hair et al. (1998) are used to calculate. When CR and AVE of each potential factor variable shave value ≥ 0.5, CFA model obtains synthesis reliability. (Hair et al., 1998). The result shows the good value of each factor's CR (>0.5), so does the AVE excepting the AVE value of Satisfaction and Pay which are less than 0.5. However, they are still acceptable because the large value of CR then model obtains synthesis reliability.

Table 8

Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variables	**CR value**	**AVE value**
Train	0.90	0.65
Environment	0.83	0.50
Leadership	0.85	0.54
Pay	0.70	0.44
Employee Job Satisfaction	0.78	0.43
Employee Commitment	0.86	0.63

4.5. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

SEM is one of the most complex and flexible techniques. SEM model combines all the techniques such as multivariate regression, factor analysis, and mutual relationship analysis (among elements in a network diagram) to allow us to examine the complex relationship. Because the complication of SEM model, many researchers visualized it by path diagram to represent the clear interrelationship among factors (Hair et al., 2006)

Table 9

Standardized Regression Weights (SEM)

			Estimate
Satis	<--	Train	.099
Satis	<--	Env	.328
Satis	<--	Lead	.358
Satis	<--	Pay	.280
Commit	<--	Satis	.749

The table shows the Estimate value in Standardized Regression Weights are all positive number at significant level p-value 0.05. Leadership has highest estimate value, accounting for 35.8% the variance of Job Satisfaction whereas the mediator Satisfaction interprets up to 74.9% the variance of Employee Commitment. The outcome shows the relationships between independent variables Training, Working Environment, Leadership and Pay to mediator Satisfaction which are significant with p-value < 0.05. And the effect of Satisfaction on dependent variable Commitment is supported by significant p-value; thus none of these variables are removed from the conceptual model.

Table 10

Summary of Hypotheses Testing

No	**Hypothesis**	**Standardized Regression Weight**	**P-value (level of significance 0.05)**	**Conclusion**
1	**H1**: Training positively affects Employee Job Satisfaction	.099	**.032**	Supported
2	**H2**: Working Environment positively affects Employee Job Satisfaction	.328	**.000**	Supported
3	**H3**: Leadership positively affects Employee Job Satisfaction	.358	**.000**	Supported
4	**H4**: Pay positively affects Employee Job Satisfaction	.280	**.000**	Supported
5	**H5**:There is a positive relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee Commitment	.749	**.000**	Supported

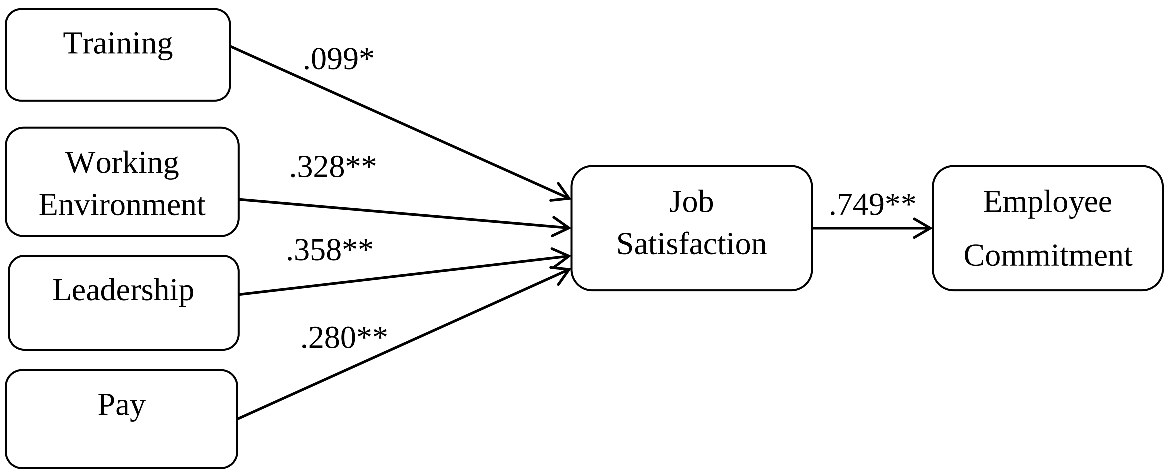

Figure 2. Testing Results of Structural Model by Using SEM-AMOS

*Note: * p<0.05, ** p<0.01*

The CFA model is analyzed again to test the model fit. Overall, it still achieved the good result after the model had an adjustment. Hence the theoretical adjusted model of the topic is consistent with the data collected in the market according to SEM result.

Table 11

Final model fit result (SEM)

Fit Indices	Level of acceptance	Test result	Comment
Chi-Square (CMIN)	**≠ 0 and p-value ≤ 0.05**	933.015 p-value=.000	Statistical significance
Chisq/df (CMIN/DF)	**≤ 3.0**	2.752	Statistical significance
CFI	**≥ 0.8**	.895	Acceptable
TLI	**≥ 0.8**	.883	Acceptable
GFI	**≥ 0.8**	.849	Acceptable
RMSEA	**< 0.08**	.067	Acceptable

4.6. Bootstrap Test

The Bootstrap method introduced by Efron (1979) which performed the sample repeated N times. Estimated results from N samples are averaged and this value tends to close to the overall estimate. The smaller the difference between the Bootstrap estimated mean values and initial sample, the more reliable the estimated model is. The bootstrap test is applied in adjusted SEM model to check the data of adjusted SEM being stable and representative of the population. According to Shrout (2002), Bootstrap's indicators include Critical Ratio and p-value. After examining, the CR value is above 1.96 and all items have p-value > 0.05. Therefore, the bias of this research is equal 0 at 95% confident interval which means there is no bias in the sample data and it can represent the population (Hu, 2010). Therefore, the data of this research is stable and representative.

4.7. Result Discussion

Overall, the results show the positive relationship between the four factors Training, Working Environment, Leadership and Pay with mediator Job Satisfaction. Moreover, the mediator Satisfaction explains approximately 75% of the dependent variable Commitment, hence it leads to the positive impact of four independent variables on job commitment. All the hypotheses are accepted at the significant level and they are in accordance with the literature review such as Siebern (2005) who conducted a study in 13 countries from 1994 to 2001 and found that job satisfaction will enhance if employees access to workplace training. Wells & Thellen (2002 suggested the working environment inspires people with motivation and satisfaction. Payne (2005) revealed job satisfaction can be consolidated by leaders who understand clearly the organizations' needs and spread the enthusiasm to subordinates. Moyes and Redd (2008) examined the job-related factors affecting job satisfaction of accounting professional and compensation has a positive significant relationship to Job Satisfaction. Referring to the result, Leadership has the tightest relationship with Satisfaction (35.8%) and Commitment, the leadership style has a profound influence on employee's attitude and the management team should pay more attention to this factor if they want to consolidate the labor force.

5. Conclusion and recommendation

5.1. Conclusion

The main objective of this study is to find the relationship between selected factors: Training, Pay, Working Environment, and Leadership and Office employee commitment through the mediator Job Satisfaction. After modification, the completed survey was distributed to the office staff in Ho Chi Minh City by online forms and papers. The result is the same as previous research according to literature review. The hypotheses are accepted and the research have achieved the initial objectives. There exist significant positive relationships between four independent variables: Recognition, Working Environment, Leadership, Career Development and mediator Job Satisfaction in which Leadership takes the highest percentages 35.8% in explaining Job Satisfaction variable. Moreover, it can be concluded that these four variables have indirect positive relationship with Employee Commitment through the mediating variable Job Satisfaction.

5.2. The limitation of the study

Firstly, this study just collected 395 samples of office staffs in Ho Chi Minh. It cannot cover all the Vietnamese companies. Secondly, because of the time limitation, data is collected by the open-ended questionnaire and the statements already listed for people to answer based on Likert Scale. The participants cannot provide their own opinions and evaluations. Finally, there are also many factors that affect the performance but not included in this study such as Job-itself, work-life balance etc. derived from Herzberg's theory.

5.3. Recommendation

Leadership explains 35.8% to a variance of Job satisfaction. The organizations are not going to be successful if there is no contribution from each employee. Hence,. the management team should consult employees when making decisions that are relevant to their interests so that employees notice their necessary role within the company, and their dedication is valuable. Each leader continues learning, cultivating his or her leadership skills, timely modifies policies that cause employee dissatisfaction, designs feedback boxes that help employees freely contribute their ideas to leaders, thereby helping each other to increase work efficiency. Good worker does not always become a wise leader

(Syptak, 1999). The supervisors have to cultivate leadership skills, treat people fairly and limit the negative comments.

Working Environment has a positive relationship to Job satisfaction and increases commitment so the companies should facilitate for employees to work in a new environment if possible. For example, one or two days a week, they can sit next to their favorite colleagues or work outside the office. Company shall remodel the workspace to promote cooperation and creativity but still keep enough private space for each employee.

It cannot be denied that salary and compensation are the most concern when entering the new company. Management team should always review the reward strategy in association with other factors that influence Job satisfaction such as companies' recognition of employee's good performance by giving monetary reward or HR departments' regular review of base pay rate and flexible contingent pay. Key Performance Indicator is used not simply giving workers benefit but also promoting people in their career path which is an essential concern by employees.

Furthermore, the improvement of the training program is also the method to retain key office employees. The training program ought to be designed as short, concise and with helpful content to reduce lassitude of employees. Moreover, Cross-Training should be applied since it decreases training cost for organization and increases the working process and peer relationship, Cross-Training is when organization create an opportunity for employees to enhance the proficiency levels beyond their ordinary responsibility and capture the workflow of other positions (Vasanthi, 2017). As long as the members of the group can understand other's job, they are more willing to support when someone needs, thereby each worker can realize their latent strength■

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