An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in New South Wales primary schools

By

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PLEASE NOTE

The greatest amount of care has been taken while scanning this thesis,

and the best possible result has been obtained.
To the memory of my parents
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“Never cast dirt into that fountain of which you have sometimes drunk”

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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICATION

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

Van Bon Nguyen

Signature
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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to look into the field of learning a language other than English (LOTE) and in particular examine the major factors, which influence the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in New South Wales primary schools.

After reviewing the literature, five research questions were addressed in the study:

1. What is the influence of parents’ competence in Vietnamese on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
2. What is the influence of parents’ attitudes to Vietnamese language learning on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
3. What is the influence of parental involvement in their children’s school on children’s Vietnamese language learning?
4. What is the influence of children’s attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning on their Vietnamese language competence?
5. What is the influence of school factors on the children’s Vietnamese language learning?

The survey involved parents, children and teachers of Vietnamese background. The survey was conducted by means of questionnaires for children and parents, the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Tests for children and interviews with teachers. A qualitative approach was used to examine factors that influenced children’s competence in Vietnamese.

The data were collected over four stages between March 1999 and April 2000 from 13 Public Schools and Community Languages Schools (Ethnic Schools) in Sydney, New South Wales. The response rate was high for all of the sampled groups. These groups were children aged from 9 to 11, and their parents and teachers. Among the 202 children who returned the questionnaires, there were 128 children who took part in the Vietnamese
language Basic Skills Tests. Of the 202 parents who returned completed questionnaires, there were 128 parents whose children took part in the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Tests. Twenty teachers whose students took part in the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Tests participated in the interviews.

It is often hypothesised that children's competence in Vietnamese would be influenced by the home environment (i.e. their parents' competence in Vietnamese, and their parents' attitudes to learning Vietnamese), parental involvement in their children's school, the children's attitudes towards and motivation to learning the Vietnamese language, and school factors (i.e. teaching strategies and the teacher quality).

The study found that these were indeed major factors affecting the development of children's Vietnamese language proficiency.

The increase in the proportion of children's competence in Vietnamese was related to their parents' competence in Vietnamese, and their parents' positive attitudes towards learning Vietnamese (i.e. their parents' use of Vietnamese at home, their parents' reading Vietnamese books/newspapers to children, their parents' listening to SBS radio (Special Broadcasting Service), and their parents' watching television with children, especially Vietnamese programs). The children's competence in Vietnamese was also related to parental involvement in school (i.e. parents' contact with Vietnamese language teachers, and parents' helping their children with homework). There were significant and positive effects of children's attitudes towards and motivation to learning Vietnamese on their high competence in Vietnamese. The teaching strategies and the teacher qualities also influenced children's Vietnamese language proficiency. It is believed that the following teaching strategies enhance the improvement of children's competence in Vietnamese: Student-centred and communicative approaches, the use of Vietnamese in classroom activities, the use of reinforcement techniques (i.e. verbal, and physical), and certain special teaching strategies
(i.e. correcting mistakes, reading stories, student participation in decisions about their own learning).

It is true that learning or teaching the Vietnamese language in the "new society" (Australia) is not a simple process, because some Vietnamese parents, Vietnamese language teachers and children have been influenced by traditional Vietnamese values and culture, which are related to the role of parents in their children's language learning, the position of the teachers, and the teaching or learning strategies. After reviewing the results, therefore, a series of recommendations is offered to all those involved in teaching the Vietnamese language.
INTRODUCTION

Proficiency in a second language enables students to communicate with other speakers of the language and gain socio-cultural, technological, and economic understandings, which may not be available to speakers of only one language.

Learning a language other than English (LOTE) provides students with an excellent opportunity to further develop general competencies that are crucial to effective learning, and to enable students to make a greater contribution to Australia’s engagement in international relations, and in the development of links with other countries (Clyne, 1982). The Report of the New South Wales Ministerial Working Party on the State Language Policy (1988) states that a nation whose young people are able to combine skills in languages with their other qualifications is a nation well equipped to operate on an international level. This is true in Australia today for geopolitical and economic reasons. Researchers suggest that all Australian children have the right to learn languages other than English at school (Lo Bianco, 1987; Smolicz, 1983a; Clyne, 1982; Scarino et al, 1988a; Makin et al, 1995). They argue that Australia is a multilingual and multicultural society with a wealth of language and cultural resources. It is recognized that languages are a valuable national resource. Ethnic communities regard their own language as their culture-carrying medium, a link between their heritage and their life in Australia. The teaching and learning of a language other than English help to harness those resources for the benefit of the nation and its linguistic communities and enable Australians to get an appreciation of their own and other cultures.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Office of Multicultural Affairs (1989) stated that “All Australians should have the opportunity to acquire and develop proficiency in English and languages
other than English, and develop cross-cultural understanding” (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Office of Multicultural Affairs. *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia: Sharing our Future*, 1989: 1).

Learning languages other than English in Australia takes two forms, with different curricula and teaching implications:

- First language maintenance, for people of non-English speaking background, and
- Second language learning for native speakers of English.

This should include learning of languages actively spoken within the Australian community, as well as languages regarded as important for international communication (Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education. *The National Policy on Languages 1987-1990: Report to the Minister For Employment, Education and Training*, 1990: 8).

Learning languages other than English is useful in trade and commerce. In particular, Asian languages and cultures should be taught in Australian schools, as according to some commentators, Australia’s future lies in trade and economic development with Asia. For example, Vietnamese is spoken by nearly 80 million people living in Vietnam and is the language of about 2 million people living in other countries including Australia (Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the United States of America. *Learn about Vietnam*, 2002).

Taking into account economic and trade factors, the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training released *The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (White Paper) in 1991*. The White Paper advocated support for Asian languages and listed fourteen languages
(including Vietnamese), and would allow each State to choose their own eight priority languages.

Unfortunately, the current Liberal Federal Government in the National Asian Languages Program holds a different view. In 2002, the Federal Government dropped the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (NALSAS).

In 1989, The New South Wales Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs released the *New South Wales White Paper on Curriculum Reform: Excellence and Equity*. This document lists the Vietnamese language as one of twelve languages that should be taught in New South Wales schools. The Vietnamese language has been introduced as a community language or language other than English (LOTE) in the school curriculum in New South Wales (NSW) since 1989.

One of the greatest concerns of Vietnamese parents and teachers is how to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in primary schools. The question being asked is why some Vietnamese students are successful at Vietnamese language learning while others are not. The answer to this question is difficult, but we can point to a number of factors affecting children’s competence in Vietnamese.

The present study tries to identify major factors that seem to make a profound contribution to students’ Vietnamese language learning, and recommends strategies to improve Vietnamese language learning and teaching in New South Wales primary schools. The study assumes that the students’ competence in Vietnamese is related to home factors, school factors, and student factors. The study is guided by the following questions:

1. What is the influence of parents’ competence in Vietnamese on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
2. What is the influence of parents’ attitudes to Vietnamese language learning on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
3. What is the influence of parental involvement in their children’s school on children’s Vietnamese language learning?
4. What is the influence of children's attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning on their Vietnamese language competence?

5. What is the influence of school factors on the children's Vietnamese language learning?

The structure of this study is as follows:

The introduction discusses the importance of learning a language other than English and summarises previous research related to this area. The introduction also indicates the purpose of the study and the hypotheses that relate to the factors affecting students' Vietnamese language learning.

Chapter 1 consists of six sections: The first three sections introduce the national policies on languages other than English, and define some of the terms that are found in the study in the following order: Section 1.1: Language maintenance and language shift, Section 1.2: Learning languages other than English (LOTE), Section 1.3: Vietnamese language learning in New South Wales (NSW).

The last three sections provide a review of related literature concerning the role of the home environment, parental involvement in school, students' attitudes and motivation on language learning, and school factors in the following order: Section 1.4: The influence of the home environment on language learning, Section 1.5: The influence of students' attitudes and motivation on their language learning, and Section 1.6: School factors affecting language.

The chapter gives the direction and the general theoretical framework with which to view the results of the study.

Chapter 2 addresses the aims of the study and the research questions that emerge from the literature review, and presents the procedures and research methodologies.

Chapter 3 presents the summary of the findings of the research questions that were addressed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 4 focuses on the findings of the research questions.
Chapter 5 summarises and provides recommendations based on the analyses of the findings presented in Chapter 3.

The influence of parent factors, student factors and school factors on students' competence in Vietnamese is summarised in a flow chart in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 1

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Before reviewing the literature in the field of language learning, it will be necessary to introduce and define some of the terms that are found in the present study. In addition, it is important to take a brief historical overview of languages other than English in Australia. Section 1.1 deals with the process and the causes of language maintenance and language shift. Section 1.2 deals with Languages Other Than English (LOTE) learning and gives a brief historical review of languages in Australia and the rationale for the study of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) in Australia. Section 1.3 concerns Vietnamese language learning in New South Wales (NSW) and will focus particularly on Vietnamese language learning in New South Wales primary schools.

1.1. Language maintenance and Language shift

Language maintenance refers to the situation in a multilingual society where members of a minority language group try to maintain their mother tongue (L1) while they acquire a second language (L2). Language maintenance is dependent on the relations between community groups. When a group starts to assimilate into the dominant language, and shows a preference for the use of the language of the dominant group and gives up its mother tongue (L1), language maintenance begins to break down and language shift is complete (Hamers and Blanc, 1989; Shameen, 1994).

According to Hoffman (1991), the shift can be complete or incomplete. A complete shift involves the change from one language to another, as the first language (L1) is gradually replaced by the second language. An incomplete shift involves situations where members of the
language community maintain their mother tongue while acquiring the new one. For example, in Wales everybody speaks English but one fifth of the population can also speak Welsh. Language shift, which may also involve language decline or language death, relates to cases where most members of a minority language community speak the new language, while the minority language is spoken by fewer and fewer people until it is no longer spoken at all. Hoffman (1991) distinguishes two situations. The first is the situation where people “in the course of their lives” (p. 188) do not use their mother tongue any more and decide to speak the new language. They gradually lose the ability to speak their first language (L1). This process is a “gradual process” (p. 188) and takes a long period of time, perhaps over several generations. The second is where bilingual/multilingual communities maintain stable bilingualism over a long period of time. Hamers and Blanc (1989) note that language shift may go on for three generations. The first generation is monolingual or the first language (L1) is at least the dominant language. The second generation is bilingual, while the third generation is monolingual or dominant in the second language (L2). Rene and Pieter (1988: 33) indicate that “when a language is reduced in its function, which happens in the case of shift towards the majority, generally speakers will become less proficient in it, i.e. language loss is taking place. Language shift linked up with loss will finally result in language death”. Rene and Pieter also believe that:

Language shift and language loss go hand in hand. The two processes reinforce each other with the ultimate result of language death, when no other community speaks the language in question. But also if the language does not die, because it is still in use somewhere else, for a certain community it may become a dead language. The community loses a strong symbol of identity which will influence the social-psychological conditions and the social life considerably (Rene and Pieter, 1988: 45).
The study of language shift in early childhood was reported by Cummins (1993). Cummins conducted a study of Portuguese-speaking children in Toronto, Canada. The study involved 20 children from Junior Kindergarten through Senior Kindergarten and grade 1. These children attended monolingual English school programs. Language use in the home was tape-recorded; interviews with the children were conducted in both languages. Reading measures were administered at the end of Grade 1. Although parents spoke Portuguese with their children, a minority of children already used more English with their parents, especially with mothers. The findings showed that of the twenty children, seven children showed a preference for Portuguese, three showed equal preference for each language, while ten children used English as their predominant language. By the time the children completed grade 1, there were only 2 (out of 14) who were rated as more proficient in Portuguese than English, while only 3 children were rated as equally proficient in each language.

Language is a component of culture as well as a means of communication. A language, therefore, is "a product of culture, transmitted from one generation to the next in the socialization process; it also moulds culture, that is to say, our cultural representation are shaped by language" (Hamers and Blanc, 1989: 116). Therefore, the maintenance of one's mother tongue is one important way in which the image of minority communities may be improved (Gilhotra, 1985).

What factors affect the survival of the mother tongue? We will make a brief overview of the maintenance of the mother tongue (L1) by immigrants and the maintenance of the mother tongue (L1) by children of immigrants.

1.1.1. The maintenance of the mother tongue (L1) by immigrants

A number of researchers have identified factors impacting on language maintenance, including language status, socio-economic factors, demographic and ecological factors, inter-ethnic marriages and so on.
Language status

In a study on language maintenance and shift, Rene and Pieter (1988) show that language status influences language maintenance. Language status can be an important factor in bilingual communities. Within a community, languages with high status would be easier to maintain than languages with low status. Languages of international communication have a high status (e.g. French, English, Russian and Spanish). However, it is noted that there is a difference between language status within a community and language status outside the community. For instance, in Canada, English has high status, but French has high status in Quebec even if not in the rest of Canada. In the Muslim world Arabic has high status, because it is "the language of the Koran", however, outside the Muslim world Arabic has relatively low status.

Socio-economic factors

According to Rene and Pieter (1988) economic status also influences the minority language. Immigrants who have a relatively low economic status want to use the majority language to attain higher status in society. They believe that “their low economic status is mainly caused by the fact that they speak a minority language” (Rene and Pieter, 1988: 33). de Wries (1984: 210) agrees that the socio-economic status of minority groups affects the group’s language maintenance. The argument is that minority groups “with low socio-economic status will have less ability to support their own institutions than groups with high socio-economic status”.

Demographic factors

These factors relate to group size, the number of members of a linguistic minority group and residential concentration and segregation. In a study of language maintenance of immigrants in Australia, Clyne (1982) concludes that the maintenance may be explained by residential concentration. The maintenance of some languages will be greater in an area of high concentration within the same city than in another district. In
other words, a language will be maintained in areas of high concentration of people who speak that language.

**Ethnic marriages**

In a study of language shift in the second generation of inter-ethnic marriages in Australia, Clyne (1982) notes that the occurrence of mixed or inter-ethnic marriages has strongly influenced language maintenance. Clyne states, “Australian-born people whose parents speak different CLOTEs are, on the whole, unlikely to maintain either of these” (Clyne, 1982: 53). Clyne provides data on the language shift in the second generation of inter-ethnic marriages. The data present the rate of language shift in the second-generation children of intra-ethnic and Anglo-ethnic marriages. Language shift towards English is nearly complete for children from Anglo-German, e.g. “language shift from father’s language: 96.42%, and language shift from mother’s language: 95.64%” (p. 51), and Anglo-Maltese marriages, e.g. “language shift from father’s language: 94.55%, and language shift from mother’s language: 94.64%” (p. 51). Most children born from these marriages adopt English as their main language. Inter-ethnic marriages where one of the parents is of either Italian or Greek background seem to be exceptions in terms of the rate of language shift. A greater proportion than the cases cited above maintain Italian, e.g. “language shift from father’s language: 79.71%, and language shift from mother’s language: 70.48%” (p. 51) or Greek, e.g. “language shift from father’s language: 71.63%, and language shift from mother’s language: 48.41%” (p. 51).

1.1.2. The maintenance of the mother tongue (L1) by children of immigrants

The maintenance of the mother tongue (L1) by children of immigrants involves both the children’s competence in the language and the actual use of it. Language maintenance implies the survival, the regular use of and maintained proficiency in a language. A number of studies show that children's competence in the mother tongue (L1) is correlated with the
literacy in the mother tongue (L1) of their parents; family interaction; attitudes to the mother tongue (L1), as well as the length of time they have been in Australia.

**Family interaction**

Language maintenance is related to interactions in the homes of immigrant families. In a survey of 197 secondary school students of Vietnamese ethnic background in Adelaide (Australia), Ninnes (1996) shows that there is a high frequency of the use of Vietnamese at home. Children use Vietnamese when communicating with parents and grandparents, who speak little or no English. The interaction between parents and children necessitates the use by children of their mother tongue. In a review of a number of studies on language maintenance and language shift, however, Clyne (1982) notes that in several immigrant families, while parents speak the home language to their children, the children usually answer in English. For example, German-speaking parents, in interaction with their children, use German and their children tend to answer in English. It has also been found that whatever language children use at home, they use only English in communication with their friends or other community members. Clyne also found that about 85% of the samples of Dutch-speaking migrants speak English to their children.

In a study of the language competence of Russian-speaking children in both the English and Russian languages, Taft and Bodi (1980) indicate that in general the majority of children prefer speaking English to speaking Russian. They use Russian more than English in the family, in home activities and at church. They use only Russian when they speak with their parents. They use both languages when they speak with their younger siblings who are fluent in Russian and English.

Thus we can see that the situation is a complex one. In general, most studies of language maintenance in Australia examine the extent of mother tongue use with parents and grandparents and suggest that despite other factors, family interaction and, in particular, the home environment, play an important role in mother tongue (L1) maintenance.
In some migrant families in Australia, parents feel that their children should learn English at school, but be encouraged to use their mother tongue (L1) at home. Parents choose to use L1 at home when communicating with their children (Makin et al, 1995). As is to be expected, the more parents and children speak L1 in their family, the better children learn L1. In short, parents and their siblings use of the mother tongue (L1) at home will help children to be competent in L1.

In conclusion, the survival of a language depends on its use. With regard to minority languages, "high vitality will lead to maintenance (or even shift towards extended use) and low vitality will result in shift towards the majority language" (Rene and Pieter, 1988: 33).

1.2. Learning Languages Other Than English

The teaching of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) has particular relevance in Australia. Opponents of the teaching of community languages believe that ethnic groups “should not be encouraged to promote their home languages”, and "call for the gradual extinction of minority languages in favour of a complete transition to major language only” (Debela, 1994: 63). Proponents of the teaching of community languages argue that all Australian children should have the right to maintain their cultural identity and learn their home languages at school. It is believed that the teaching and learning of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) can contribute positively to Australia’s economic future, and will enable children to acquire English skills (Makin et al, 1995). The New South Wales Department of Training and Education Coordination states:

The community languages program aims to

* support the maintenance and development of the languages and cultures of speakers of languages other than English (LOTE);
* promote community languages schools as an integral part of the teaching of languages in NSW;
* improve teaching practices and learning experiences in community languages schools;
* increase the awareness and understanding for all students of the diverse languages and cultures in NSW;
* encourage the learning of languages by students of diverse cultural backgrounds, including those whose first language is English (New South Wales Department of Training and Education Co-ordination: Annual Report - New South Wales Community Languages Schools Program, 1994-1995: 39).

According to the 1996 Census, 2.5 million (16%) of the population aged five years and over spoke a language other than English in the home. Of the 16% of people who spoke a language other than English in the home, 0.8% were Vietnamese. In 1996, just over 1 million (18%) of people aged five years or more in New South Wales spoke a language other than English at home. The languages most commonly spoken were Arabic/Lebanese, Cantonese, Italian, Greek and Vietnamese. Of the 18% of people who spoke a language other than English, 4.2% (51,800 people) were Vietnamese (Australian Bureau of Statistics – New South Wales Year Book No. 79/1999: 37).

1.2.1. A brief historical review of the language situation in Australia

According to Smolicz (1986), linguistic diversity is not a new phenomenon in Australia. Even before European settlement in Australia, there was a great variety of languages. At the time of European settlement, there were approximately two hundred and fifty Indigenous languages in use in Australia.

Between World War I and World War II, the assimilation policy had consequences for languages other than English. English monolingualism was “actively promoted by government intervention restricting and even
suppressing the use of other languages” (Lo Bianco, 1987: 9). Migrants, irrespective of the language they used at home and in the community, were not only expected to acquire the English language and British-Australian way of life, but also to abandon their own languages and cultures (Smolicz, 1995).

In the period after World War II, immigration policies changed this situation dramatically. The large influx of migrants from a range of countries in Northern, Eastern and Southern Europe, the Middle East, Asia, North and South America, Africa and the Pacific, led to an increase as well as a diversification of the communities who spoke a language other than English.

By the mid 1960s, it was realized that the policy of imposed assimilation was a failure and unacceptable, because it denied the linguistic and cultural diversity of Australian society. In the late 1960s, while English was recognized as the national, official and pre-eminent language, the policies of linguistic assimilation “gave way to the provision of assistance to learners of English and, in recent years, to more positive recognition of the value of their first languages” (Lo Bianco, 1987: 9).

From the 1970s, in response to Australia’s ethnically based cultural diversity, successive governments pursued a policy of multiculturalism. “This is the most appropriate and constructive policy for our society, and is in keeping with the diversity and freedom of choice that is an essential part of Australia’s character” (Australia Institute of Multicultural Affairs-AIMA-Review of Multicultural and Migrant Education, 1980: vi).

National policies and initiatives from the 1970s onwards have encouraged the teaching/learning of Languages Other Than English (LOTE). The Commonwealth and the States and Territories have an influential role in the development of languages policy, including policy on LOTE.

The aim of the present study is to examine the teaching and learning of Vietnamese in New South Wales primary schools. Thus we shall concentrate on national policies and New South Wales policies on languages to gain an overall impression of LOTE policy.
National policies and initiatives

The Galbally Report and the AIMA Review

The Galbally Report (1978: 106) was a national review of post-arrival provision for migrants. It had a great influence on multicultural education policies. It recommended that “our schools and school systems should be encouraged to develop more rapidly various initiatives aimed at improving the understanding of the different histories, cultures, languages and attitudes of those who make up our society”.

One of the effects of the Galbally Report was that many schools used Commonwealth Multicultural Education Program (MEP) funds for teaching community languages, for the production of materials, or for liaison with ethnic communities. Many primary schools around Australia used these funds to initiate classes in the Vietnamese language and for other related purposes.

The Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA) was established on the recommendation of the Galbally Report. Its task was to conduct a review of multicultural and migrant education. Two major decisions of the AIMA were to fund part-time ethnic schools on a per capita basis and to provide grants to tertiary institutions for the teaching of community languages. As a result, in Australia of the 222,367 primary students or 13 percent of the total primary students who studied in ethnic schools in 1988 there were 3,247 Vietnamese students, and the Vietnamese language was introduced at a tertiary level in three States and in the ACT.

National Policy on Language

Responding to pressure from a broader coalition of interests that Australia needed to have a comprehensive policy on languages and that all Australians should be able to learn another language, The Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts established a National Language Policy in 1984, with the following four guiding principles:
- Competence in English;
- Maintenance and development of languages other than English;
- Provision of services in languages other than English;

Based on these principles, Joseph Lo Bianco produced a policy in 1987, The National Policy on Languages (NPL) adopted by the Hawke Government. The National Policy on Languages emphasized the language learning program. Nine languages were nominated as languages for wider teaching: Mandarin Chinese, Indonesian/Malay, Japanese, French, German, Italian, Modern Greek, Arabic and Spanish. The National Policy on Languages stated that:

Almost half of all Australian school students never study a language other than English at any time during their schooling. Fewer than 12% of students matriculate with a language other than English. Non-English speaking background Australian students have limited opportunities for studying the language of their homes and with which their families identify in regular school programs. The languages of major importance to Australia’s geographical and economic relations with its neighbours tend to be relatively poorly represented in overall offerings of second languages (Lo Bianco, 1987: 120).

The National Policy on Languages recognised Australian English as the national language, the right of communities to use languages other than English. These languages included the language and language systems of the deaf and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (Lo Bianco, 1990). According to Smolicz (1995) and Moore (1996), The National Policy on Languages balanced elements of social justice, and
the economic and international needs of Australia. "The proponents of a language policy deployed the key notion of languages as resources in achieving national enrichment and economic advantage. This is a strong theme in the NPL document" (Moore, 1996: 478).

In an article "Language policy in Australia-Achievements, disappointments, prospects", Clyne (1997) stresses the strength of The National Policy on Languages is that it relates language to social, economic and political concerns. Clyne states:

It provided a rationale for multilingualism based on a balance of social equity, cultural enrichment, and economic strategies in areas such as English and ESL teaching, languages other than English (LOTE), and Aboriginal education (Clyne, 1997: 67).

With a focus on multiculturalism and a broader coalition of interests

The National Policy on Languages has had a significant effect on the level of intensive provision for children's ESL and promoted national development and public awareness of the need for adult literacy provisions (Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training. Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy- Companion volume to the policy paper, 1991b: 7).

The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (1991)

In 1991, The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) replaced the National Policy on Languages (NPL). The goals of the ALLP closely resemble the principles of the NPL. The ALLP promotes four main goals:
* English for all;
* Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island languages
* Languages other than English for all;
* Widespread and equitable languages services


Focussing on economic and trade factors, *The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (White Paper, 1991a) was released by the Federal Government in 1991. The White Paper strongly supported Asian languages, particularly Japanese. The White Paper listed fourteen languages (including Vietnamese) and allowed States to choose their own eight priority languages. This significant statement of the White Paper was drawn to the attention of the States as they made their choice:

In determining the languages to receive priority, systems should consider the benefits of ensuring Australia has the linguistic capacity to deal effectively with changing relationships in Asia, the Middle East and the Pacific Rim. Countries in these regions are important to Australia both economically and as the source of many immigrants (Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training. *Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy- Companion volume to the policy paper*, 1991b: 76).

The Commonwealth proposed that the proportion of year 12 students studying a language other than English should be increased to 25 per cent nationally by the year 2000 (Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training. *Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy-Known as the White paper*, 1991a: 17).
The main shift of *The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* was to focus on learning trade languages rather than community languages and development. Clyne (1997: 67) states: “The change of balance is apparent, with economically motivated second language acquisition taking precedence over socially motivated language maintenance”. Moore (1996) agrees that the ALLP focuses on overseas trade objectives. Moore states:

> Because the NPL had succeeded in naming languages as an object of policymaking, they would be reconstituted in the ALLP to serve economic restructuring: Asian languages would meet overseas trade objectives; literacy would focus on skills upgrading and social justice without allowing pluralist claims to surface (Moore, 1996: 492).

*The National Policy on Languages* (Lo Bianco, 1987) and *The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (1991) both affirm the importance and relevance of multiculturalism for Australia’s society. If Australians recognise that a multilingual-multicultural society is desirable, whose responsibility is language maintenance? It is believed that the valuable contribution of individuals, linguistic communities, and the government is needed. Baldauf (1985), in a review entitled “Linguistic Minorities and Bilingual Communities: Australia”, states:

> Individuals ultimately are responsible, but they are unlikely to take on this challenge if the burden is too great. Linguistic communities can provide partial support through the creation of living language domains, both aural and written. There is also a need to create a wider range of media, similar to that available in L1, to aid in this process. At the state and national levels, support is needed for both community and individual efforts. In the schools in particular, languages other than English need to be seen as a valid part of the curriculum for all students.
Perhaps the hardest thing to achieve is the change in attitude necessary to view bilingualism as natural and as a national asset for all Australians (Baldauf, 1985: 108).

**New South Wales Policies and Initiatives**

The Community Language Program was introduced in primary schools in 1981. In 1983, the New South Wales Government established its *Multicultural Education Policy*. It proposed to assist children

(a) to gain access to society’s resources through fluency in English and

(b) to understand, maintain and develop their language and/or culture through schooling (New South Wales Department of Education-*Multicultural Education Policy Statement*, 1983: 2).

The Multicultural Education Policy (1983) stated that:

it is recognized that the use of English is essential for full participation in the life of the nation. All children must therefore be assisted to become fluent in all aspects of English ...the use of a community language enhances communication across generations within the ethnic group and increases the potential for interaction between members of different groups. Therefore, the teaching of community languages and cultures both for native and non-native speakers will be supported and encouraged in our schools (New South Wales Department of Education - *Multicultural Education Policy Statement*, 1983: 1-3).

The New South Wales White Paper (*Excellence and Equity: New South Wales Curriculum Reform*) declares that:
while the government schools system will be encouraged to phase in implementation from 1991, the study of a language for one year (around 100 hours) will become mandatory for the school certificate for the 1996 year 7 cohort (that is, for the 1999 School Certificate) (New South Wales Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs: *Excellence and Equity: New South Wales Curriculum Reform: A White Paper on Curriculum Reform in New South Wales Schools*, 1989: 43).

In this document, twelve languages are listed as priority languages, because they are languages of considerable economic significance in New South Wales (NSW). These are: Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

*The Report of the Ministerial Working Party on the State Language Policy* recommended that:

In recognizing the importance of understanding and speaking the languages of other nations as a way of ensuring long-term social economic and international advancement, Australia has joined a growing number of nations which are developing and using their language resources. The Working Party believes that New South Wales for its part must move forward and build upon these existing resources in order to achieve state and national goals (New South Wales Ministerial Working Party: *The Report of the Ministerial Working Party on the State Language Policy*, 1988: 14).

In conclusion, in the last two decades, the change in government policy from assimilation to integration and finally to multiculturalism or cultural pluralism reflects the view that people’s diverse cultural heritage
and background are accepted rather than denied and suppressed (Vajda, 1996: 34).

In the 1980s the teaching of languages other than English (LOTE) for language maintenance purposes was introduced in schools around Australia.

1.2.2. The rationale for the teaching/learning of Languages Other Than English (LOTE)

Australia is a multilingual and multicultural society with a wealth of languages and cultural resources.

The wider study of LOTE helps to harness those resources to the benefit of the nation and its linguistic communities. Languages are also a valuable national resource which will enable Australia to engage in cultural, academic, artistic, commercial, industrial and diplomatic enterprises on an international scale...Learning to use a language other than English in primary schools contributes to students’ understanding of the influence of cultural context in communicating with others to achieve a range of purposes (New South Wales Board of Studies- Language other than English: k-6: Generic syllabus framework- Consultation draft, 1996: 3).

The study of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) and individual benefit

Learning through the home language (L1) will enable non-English speaking background (NESB) children to do better at schoolwork, gain confidence and self-esteem, enhance the understanding of their own and other cultures and develop their linguistic skills to a degree which enables communication at an appropriate and realistic level of competence.
The introduction of Community Languages Programs in main-stream school encourages students from non-English Speaking Background (NESB) to appreciate their own language as an asset (Clyne, 1982).

Learning through the first language "will enable them to develop a firm foundation for continued cognitive development, and will provide them with a degree of emotional security relating to identity and self-esteem, all of which will enable them to do better at their schoolwork" (McLean, 1982: 3).

For Australians of non-English Speaking Backgrounds, knowledge of their community language allows individuals to attain a deeper personal development, enhances the relationships between the members of the same ethnic group and the social interaction across cultural boundaries, allows a deeper involvement within the particular ethnic cultural context (Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs- AIMA. *Reviews of Multicultural and Migrant Education*, 1980: 6).

**Development of Self-esteem and enhancement cultural understanding**

Language reflects human personality and competency in its use contributes to self-esteem. In order to contribute to the development of a multicultural society, it is necessary for the members of minority groups not to give up their native languages. They can maintain their own languages while they also learn the language of the majority in order to develop social relations with members of the majority community and preserve their self-esteem. According to Gilhotra (1985: 61) “the minority communities will feel more comfortable if efforts are made to maintain their languages as it will help them to maintain their identities. Loss of identity often results in loss of self-esteem, not only for individuals but also for groups”.

The Review of Multicultural and Migrant Education (1980) indicates that:
Preserving community languages is seen as not only important but intrinsic to the identity of community groups. Many adults spoke with regret of their rejection of their parents’ language under assimilationist pressures and expressed the hope that the “third generation”, their children, would be able to regain what they had “lost”. They have considerable concern for the children caught “between cultures”, unwilling to identify with their parents’ background, and unable to identify with society at large (Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs-AIMA. Review of Multicultural and Migrant Education, 1980: 13).

Most parents want their own languages to be taught in Australian schools. Language is “a means of transmitting the cultural traditions of ethnic groups to the second and later generations of immigrants” (Smolicz and Secombe, 1977: 14). Smolicz and Secombe (1977) also argue that the teaching/learning of ethnic languages is a means of preserving family bonds, enhancing the development of a secure identity, and avoiding cultural conflict between generations.

Learning their family language enables students to develop an understanding of “the role and nature of language and of culture in everyday life, so that they may understand the diversity of the world around them, and act upon it in judicious ways” (Scarino et al, 1988a: 30). Smolicz (1983a: 199) affirms that language is an important part of culture. The learning of the home language is not only the individual’s right, but also a valuable educational experience. Rene and Pieter (1988) agree that minority language teaching helps minority groups maintain their culture and their mother tongue, as cultural pluralism enriches society. Ure (1981) also supports the view that the mother tongue is the vehicle for the transmission of the traditional values of ethnic groups. Knowledge of the mother tongue is one way in which “the depth and complexity of traditional ideas and beliefs, and an appreciation of the richness of traditional verbal art” may be understood (Ure, 1981: 303).
With regard to the reasons for the maintenance and teaching of community languages, the Review of Multicultural and Migrant Education (1980) states that:

The ethnic communities regard retention of their languages as a right, and a necessity if their cultures are to be preserved and made available to the rest of society. Language is regarded as a main “carrier” of their culture, a link between their heritage and their life in Australia, and such language becomes a prized possession to be passed on to successive generations (Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs-AIMA. Review of Multicultural and Migrant Education, 1980: 13).

Smolicz and Secombe (1977) affirm that although many minority groups are concerned to maintain and develop their languages and their cultures, they are also ready to share them with others.

The mother tongue (L1) can be said to be the best instrument for early stage learning and teaching. It helps minority children with no or little of the majority language to understand what their teachers say. The recognition of the minority language and culture will reinforce positive relations between minority groups and the rest of society, and minority language teaching helps minority groups participate in mainstream society (Rene and Pieter, 1988).

With regard to the reasons for teaching and learning minority languages, Ure (1981) affirms that the mother tongue is the link between the child and its community. Within this community there are still many members who do not have the benefits of modern education. Ure argues that “through the use of the tongue of the community to which the child belongs, we can avoid erecting a social barrier between those members of the community who undergo the educational process and those who do not” (Ure, 1981: 304).
Development of language skills

In setting out a rationale for learning a language other than English, the New South Wales Department of Education (1983) states that native speakers can achieve greater proficiency in a second language (e.g. English) if their first language is maintained. For non-native speakers, “a community language program can provide opportunities not only for becoming proficient in a second language and thus gaining access to the culture of the language, but also for broadening their general concepts about language and its functions” (New South Wales Department of Education- Community Language Education- A Support Document to the Multicultural Education Policy, 1983: 2).

Lo Bianco (1987: 123) agrees that the maintenance of the mother tongue will allow children to acquire English. “Continuing this learning can produce a sounder cognitive and linguistic base from which English can then be acquired”.

The home language (L1) spoken by a minority is not a rival of the second language, the language of the dominant group in society (L2). According to Smolicz (1995), research on language learning and bilingualism indicates that both on entry into school many young minority children are ready to start learning to speak English and to read and write their home language with the result that both their home language and English become adequately developed. Smolicz (1995: 161) suggests that “reading and writing skills are generally acquired more easily in the mother tongue; and that literacy in English is more firmly established once it has been acquired in the home language”.

Mother tongue literacy is not detrimental to academic achievement and these abilities may in fact relate positively to the school performance of ethnic minority students.

Dolson (1985) conducted a study of the effects of Spanish home language use on the scholastic performance of Hispanic pupils in the fifth or sixth grade at a large East Los Angeles (USA) elementary school during the 1982-1983 school year. The purpose of the study is to examine the differences in the scholastic performance of Hispanic students whose families maintained Spanish as the main home language and students
whose families shifted to English. The findings show that students whose parents maintained Spanish as the main home language performed better than students coming from Hispanic families who shifted to English.

This study found that the maintenance of the home language related to the improvement of scholastic performance. Dolson concluded that maintaining the home language improves scholastic performance. The more Hispanic students used Spanish at home, the better their English skills were and the higher their attainment in other school subjects. "Switching to English at home had detrimental effects on the Spanish language proficiency of Hispanic students" (Dolson, 1985: 150). The use of Spanish as the main home language positively influenced Hispanic students' psychosocial adjustment and the interaction between home and school.

The study of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) and the national goals

Recognition of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) as valuable national resources can be seen in the National Policy on Languages:

... language teaching/ learning efforts are to be harmonized with Australia's economic, national and external policy goals;
...language teaching and learning efforts are to enhance Australia's place in Asia and the Pacific and its capacity to play its role as a full and active member of world forums (Lo Bianco, 1987: 124).

Scarino et al (1988a: 1-2) affirm that "language is a national resource which enables the nation to engage in commercial, industrial and diplomatic enterprises on an international scale...The understanding of other languages and cultures is an essential factor in successful commercial and political activity".
The report of the Ministerial Working Party on the State Language Policy in 1988 indicates that the important functions of languages programs in schools are as follows:

- They provide the means by which students of language backgrounds other than English can develop a high level of proficiency in the language spoken in the home and in the community. This is a relatively efficient way of ensuring that there are enough bilingual people with the level of linguistic competence needed to meet Australia’s external and domestic language requirements.

- They provide opportunities for students to learn new languages. Such provision must take into account national needs, individual interests and preferences, and available resources (New South Wales Ministerial Working Party: Report of the Ministerial Working Party on the State Language Policy, 1988: 17).

The world is undergoing rapid change, and a new world order is being established which includes the restructuring of Europe and the growth of the European Community, and changes in the relations between Russia and the United States, between Western countries and the countries of the Middle East, and particularly the relations between Australia and its Asian neighbours. Following from this the study of all languages has intrinsic value in the world today (Makin et al, 1995).

The Report of the Ministerial Working Party on the State Language Policy (1988: 30) states that “a nation whose young people are able to combine skills in languages with their other qualifications is a nation well equipped to operate on an international level. This is true in Australia today for geopolitical and economic reasons”. Clyne (1982) affirms that through learning a Language Other Than English (LOTE) bilingual children in the future will be able to make more contribution to Australia’s engagement in international relations and in the development of links with other countries. Smolicz and Secombe (1977) argue that the
teaching/learning of migrant languages is useful in trade and commerce. Particularly Asian languages and cultures should be taught in Australian schools, as Australia’s future lies in trade and economic development with Asia.

Unfortunately, the view of the current Liberal Federal Government of the National Asian Languages Program is different. From 1996 the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia (NLLIA), which is largely funded by the Federal Government has been basically stripped of all funding. In 2002, the Federal Government dropped the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (NALSAS).

In reply to the letter of Associate Professor Stuart Campbell, Head of School of Languages and Linguistics (University of Western Sydney-Australia) concerning the ending of Commonwealth funding for NALSAS, Cathie Maguire, on behalf of the Minister for Education, Science and Training (2002) said:

In 1999, when the Government extended its funding of $30 million a year for three years, it was on the understanding that the Strategy should have become self-sustaining in schools by the end of 2002. I hope you will appreciate that this was a long standing decision rather than one made recently by the current Minister for Education, Science and Training. While some people may have hoped for new Commonwealth funding this year, State and Territory education authorities have been aware of this provision since 1999 and should have factored it into their forward planning. Decisions about the continuation of Asian language programs in schools rest, as they have always done, with State and Territory education authorities (Office of the Minister for Education, Science and Training. *Letter to Associate professor Stuart Campbell, Head of School of Languages and Linguistics - University of Western Sydney- Australia, concerning the ending of Commonwealth funding for the*
National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy, 2002).

The New South Wales White Paper on Curriculum Reform Excellence and Equity Recommendation (1989) states that the Vietnamese language, which is regarded as one of the twelve majority languages should be taught in New South Wales schools (New South Wales Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs- Excellence and Equity: New South Wales Curriculum Reform: A White Paper on Curriculum Reform in New South Wales Schools, 1989).

1.3. Vietnamese language learning in New South Wales

New South Wales is the State with the highest number of people of non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB). According to the 1996 population Census, there were 134,000 Vietnam-born people in Australia, representing 0.8% of the total overseas-born population. There were 51,800 Vietnam-born people in New South Wales, representing 4.2% of the total overseas-born population in New South Wales (Australian Bureau of Statistics- New South Wales Year Book NO. 79/1999). Most of Vietnamese immigrants have settled in State or Territory capital cities. In New South Wales, they are concentrated most heavily in the outer suburbs of Sydney within the city of Fairfield, or the middle-ring suburbs of Auburn, Bankstown, Canterbury and Marrickville. For Vietnamese parents, one of the important reasons for this pattern of settlement is so their children can have access to learning their home language and can maintain their culture.

Learning the Vietnamese language provides students with the opportunity to develop their general competencies in Vietnamese which are essential for applying their knowledge and capacities in an integrated way to a range of educational, social and work-related activities. Completion of the K - 6 Vietnamese language programs enables students to extend their language skills and continue their Vietnamese language
learning in High School. The New South Wales Board of Studies (2001) states:

The study of Vietnamese will enable students to:
* communicate in Vietnamese;
* increase their understanding of Vietnamese culture and heritage;
* continue their study of Vietnamese if they have previously studied the language;
* undertake a course of study in Vietnamese if they have not formally studied the language previously (New South Wales Board of Studies: Vietnamese Years 7-10 Syllabus, 2001: 3).

1.3.1. Primary schools

In 1988 in New South Wales there were 725 students learning Vietnamese in government schools (Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training, National Survey of Language Learning in Australian Schools, 1990). In 1993, there were 1,675 students learning Vietnamese in mainstream primary schools (Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training, National Survey of Language Learning in Australian Schools, 1993). In 1999 the number rose to 2,753 (See Appendix 1).

The New South Wales Department of School Education indicates:

In 1995, sixteen community languages other than English were taught in 136 primary schools to 29,117 K-6 students. Community language programs were maintained in Arabic, Chinese, German, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Macedonian, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese. New programs commenced in Punjabi, Samoan and Tongan (NSW Department of School Education – Annual Report, 1995: 34).
1.3.2. Community Languages Schools (Ethnic schools)

Community Languages Schools or Ethnic schools have a role to play in the development of Australia’s language resources. Community Languages Schools, which are community based and non-profit making, provide the teaching of languages other than English outside school hours, on a part-time basis. Apart from receiving contributions from parents, the New South Wales community languages schools are supported by the New South Wales Community Languages program. The New South Wales Community Languages program supports the maintenance, development and acquisition of the community languages, provides the opportunity for professional development of community language teachers, and provides administrative support and advice to community languages associations (New South Wales Department of Education and Training: NSW community languages program- Funding agreement, 2002: 2).

In New South Wales, the Community Languages Schools offer 64 community languages in over 57 schools totalling approximately 42,000 students. In 1994, there were 16 Vietnamese ethnic schools with 2,660 students in New South Wales, in 1997 there were 2,933 students in 20 Vietnamese Community Languages Schools, and by 1999 the number rose to 3,426 students (See Appendix 1).

In conclusion, Languages Other Than English (LOTE) are recognized as a valuable national resource that enables the nation to engage in international relations and in the development of links with other countries. If language learning, particularly the learning of languages other than English, is so important, then all children should have the right to study their cultural identity at school, and all Australian citizens should have the right not only to learn their first language but also to gain access to a second language.

One of the major concerns for researchers in the area of language learning and teaching is to find an answer to the question: “Why are some students successful at second language learning while others are
not?" In particular, much research aims at identifying those factors that may affect children’s language learning. There is considerable evidence indicating that such factors as home environment, attitudes and motivation, the role of the teacher, the relationship between parent and school, sex differences, age, and so on affect children’s language learning.

It is beyond the scope of this study to consider all these factors. The literature review focuses on three major factors which relate to children’s language learning. These include home factors, student factors, and school factors. In section 1.4 we will describe the influence of the home environment on language learning. This includes the role of families in language learning, literacy in the mother tongue (L1) of parents, the parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese, parental involvement in their children’s school, and the influence of specific factors such as books and magazines in the home, as well as the role of the media. In section 1.5 we will look at the influence of children’s attitudes and motivation on second language learning. In section 1.6 we will identify the school factors affecting children’s language learning. These consist of language teaching strategies, and the role of the teacher.

In general, the present study tries to identify major factors that have a profound effect on students’ Vietnamese language learning in New South Wales primary schools. In other words, we look for the answers to the following questions:

1. What is the influence of parents’ competence in Vietnamese on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
2. What is the influence of parents’ attitudes to Vietnamese language learning on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
3. What is the influence of parental involvement in their children’s school on children’s Vietnamese language learning?
4. What is the influence of children’s attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning on their Vietnamese language competence?
5. What is the influence of school factors on the children’s Vietnamese language learning?
1.4. The influence of the home environment on language learning

The purpose of this section is to review research that relates to the role of families in children’s language learning and the influence of other factors of the home environment on children’s language learning progress, particularly literacy in the mother tongue (L1) of the parents, parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese, parental involvement in their children’s school, the role of books in the home, records, videos and cassettes in the mother tongue, and the role of the media.

1.4.1. The role of families in children’s learning and language learning

Families are considered to be key players in a child’s learning in general and his or her language learning process. Families have the greatest influence on their children’s attitudes towards their home language as well as English. In particular, parents can be true partners in their children’s language learning. Makin et al (1995: 10) state that “Families, particularly parents, are recognized as partners in their children’s early language learning, and their experiences and cultural and linguistic skills are acknowledged. Their input is highly valued and utilized.”

The influence of families on children’s learning

Parents can play a positive role in their children’s learning. The family may have a great effect on their children’s learning, and can influence their children’s motivation either positively or negatively (Potter, 1995). Parents can be supportive of learning and provide their children with greater opportunities and assistance for learning (Peng and Wright, 1993).

The New South Wales Department of Education states: “Children are profoundly influenced by their parents and progress through school is
partly dependent upon home life. Few experiences in life have more fundamental significance than those of early childhood" (New South Wales Department of Education. *Reading K-12: Curriculum Policy Statement*, 1979: 2).

In a research project on children's school performance, King et al (1986: 158) argue that "even where there are good teachers, the support of parents is an important factor in the child's achievement and progress. The family as a third party acts as a source of support for the relationship between teacher and child".

In the report "Focus on Parent/Child-Extending the Teaching Competence of Urban Aboriginal Mothers", Watts and Henry (1978) point out the following contributions that the home makes to the educational development of children:

- Parents provide a great variety of learning experiences for the young child - in the home, via the mass media, and through the whole range of activities conducted by the family outside the home.

- They have an intimate knowledge of the child within the home setting, because of the many opportunities provided for observation. Thus they know him as a person - his likes and dislikes, his reactions, the things which prove attractive to him, the rewards that are perceived by him to be rewarding and the ways of learning he prefers. This knowledge is to some degree necessarily subjective.

- They can provide an individual learning situation for the child, almost a tutorial setting. They can offer almost instant feedback to him in his learning endeavours; they can manipulate experiences and explanations to suit the individual child.

- They know how the child reacts to the school program and school events and can help him in a one-to-one situation to examine and profit from these reactions.
-They can provide a setting, which the school cannot, for the child's application of his school learning to his out-of-school life (Watts and Henry, 1978: 3).

The influence of parents' literacy in the mother tongue on children's language learning

In some immigrant families, parents play a role in the development of proficiency in both the mother tongue and the second language acquisition of their children.

Parents' competence in their home language is one of the important factors influencing the children's competence in their mother tongue (L1). The literacy of parents has a significant effect on the language competence of their children. Children whose parents have considerable competence in their home language seem to maintain their mother tongue better than those whose parents have less competence in their home language (Wei, 1993).

Keepes and Keepes (1979) and Stevens et al (1993) agree that the family has an influence on the initial development of language in a child. It plays an important role in the life of the child by promoting his or her self-confidence in the use of language.

In immigrant communities the mother tongue is acquired by children mainly or only from the home environment. The quality of their mother tongue depends on the quality of language they hear from family members such as parents, grandparents and siblings (Saunders, 1982). Parents need to maintain their fluency in languages other than English (LOTE) if they want their children to acquire a good standard of LOTE. One of the best ways to maintain parents’ spoken fluency in LOTE is for parents to develop friendships with other LOTE speakers (Janssen and Pauwels, 1993).

In a study on the relationship between the home culture and language acquisition, Duquette (1995) argues that children's mother tongue learning skills begin to develop in the home where the home culture is a relevant factor in promoting their own language. The home culture and the contextual environment in which children live are the factors
promoting their development of skills in the mother tongue. Duquette states “children value their home experiences above any experiences at school and...factors promoting the development of skills in the mother tongue are socially defined in the family and influenced by the environment in which they live” (Duquette, 1995: 35). Duquette indicates that students use their mother tongue more at home than anywhere else. They mostly use their mother tongue in interactions, in expressing feelings and in discussions with their families. According to Duquette (1995: 39), “To reject the home culture or to try to replace it with a majority language and culture whether they are those of the host society or society of origin, is to devalue the first language of minority children and thus promote subtractive bilingualism”. Cummins (1993) indicates that when both parents speak a minority language at home, and use that language exclusively with their children, their children generally communicate in the same language.

The influence of families on children's attitudes to language learning: Parents’ attitudes to language learning

Studies of the influences of attitudes and motivation for maintenance of the mother tongue (L1) by children of migrant families have centred on the role of culture, parents' attitudes and the student himself or herself.

The core values of culture

Research on minority languages and the core values of culture show that culture influences the child's attitudes and motivation for mother tongue learning.

In recent years, a number of studies have examined factors contributing to the academic achievement of Asian students in the United States. These studies show that parents' and students' attitudes are related to cultural values. For example, it is felt that Japanese culture places a high value on educational success and achievement in school. "In Japanese society, the education of children receives top priority. Parents are committed to institutional efforts to educate their children, and
teachers receive considerable respect and support from them” (Wlodowski and Jaynes, 1990: 15).

In a study called “Effect of Minority Language Literacy on the Academic Achievement of Vietnamese Youths in New Orleans”, Bankston and Zhou (1995) affirm that literacy in Vietnamese is positively related to cultural values. Values and traditional culture constitute a source of motivation and direction that parents use to encourage and motivate their children to learn and maintain their mother tongue. On the other hand, the Vietnamese language helps the traditional culture and values to be transmitted through the family.

Besides, in Vietnamese culture, educated people are held in high esteem. The traditional classification: First: Scholars, Second: Farmers, Third: Workers, Fourth: Businessmen (Nhất Sĩ, Nhĩ Nông, Tam Công, Tư Thương) shows that educated people are the highest class in society. So, parents always encourage and motivate their children to pass examinations to get the highest position in society.

**Parental attitudes to their mother tongue (L1)**

Parents' attitudes towards their own language influence their children's attitudes and motivation to maintaining their mother tongue. Parents display a number of positive attitudes towards their children that help them to learn and maintain their mother tongue. In some migrant families, if parents are negative towards their mother tongue, this may make it difficult for their children to see the maintenance of the mother tongue as useful. On the other hand, parents' positive attitudes towards their own language help their children to learn and maintain their mother tongue (Arnberg, 1987).

However, the influence of parents' attitudes towards the maintenance of the mother tongue is complex. Because of the interaction between the two cultures (i.e. their own culture and the culture of the host country), some immigrant parents often want to maintain their own values and culture and maintain their L1. At the same time, their children may feel that there is a conflict between their parents' attitudes or values and those
of the new society (Arnberg, 1987; Harding and Riley, 1986). As a result, in some immigrant families, the second language replaces the mother tongue. The second language is used as the language of interaction among the children, while parents and grandparents use the mother tongue to communicate with the children. Other children, who used their mother tongue when they were very young, gradually shift to the second language and understand little of their mother tongue as they grow older.

In addition, it is difficult for parents to develop positive attitudes towards their mother tongue if their mother tongue and culture are not valued and recognised by the school, the mass media and so on.

In a review of research on attitudes of minority group parents to their children’s home language learning and English, Gardner (1985) argues that parents play both an active and a passive role in their children’s second language learning. The parent has the role of the major intermediary between the cultural milieu and the student. In the active role, parents encourage and reinforce their children in language learning. The passive role involves the parents’ attitudes and negative opinions toward second language learning. According to Gardner, children’s attitudes are influenced by their parents' attitudes through direct and indirect tuition.

A number of immigrant families believe that learning English is more important than maintaining the home language. Their concern is to encourage their children to speak English. They feel that the home language will negatively influence their children's English learning (Makin et al, 1995). According to some immigrant families, “the more of this language the children hear, the sooner they will become competent in it; speaking another language in the home would only reduce exposure to and hinder acquisition of the dominant language” (Saunders, 1982: 30). They believe that it will be best to speak the dominant language of the community in the home. Saunders (1982) comments that the use of the dominant language within some immigrant families may have disadvantages as the parents' ability in the dominant language may be defective because of their faulty pronunciation and deviant grammar. This may negatively affect their children's proficiency in dominant
language learning. Saunders adds that “using the parents’ native language within the family, a language in which the parents most probably feel more at ease and are more proficient, would also have the advantage of improving the children’s esteem of them” (Saunders, 1982: 31).

1.4.2. The influence of specific factors of the home environment

A number of studies have been carried out to find out which specific factors of the home environment are directly related to children’s language learning progress. Books and magazines in the home, records, videos and cassettes, and exposure to the electronic media in particular have been identified as major factors.

According to some experts, books and the mass media seem to play an important role in developing children’s language. Reading books will “increase the children’s vocabulary, exposes the children to new language structure” (Arnberg, 1987: 114). In addition to books, other mass media including video, radio and television programs in the mother tongue are effective ways to stimulate the use of the minority language.

This study looks at some ideas from researchers on the role of books/newspapers, records, videos and cassettes, and the mass media in supporting children's minority language.

Books and magazines in the home

Many studies of parent-child interactions show that storybook reading in both the mother tongue and English is a potent factor enhancing children’s early literacy development. The reading of stories has a positive effect on children’s literacy development (Lennox, 1995). Stevens et al (1993) write that educational aspirations relate to the number of books possessed by the pupils’ families (e.g. picture books, adult novels, adult nonfiction, reference books, magazines, newspapers, the Bible and other religious works). Parents’ reading to their children contributes to their children’s literacy development, so that storybook reading is a powerful factor affecting children’s early literacy development. According to Fuerverger (1994), bilingual children who
have a high ability in their home language will develop high levels of ability in English literacy. Fuerverger states: "part of the rationale for encouraging children to develop reading ability in their home language is that reading abilities are manifestations of an underlying conceptual competence that can be developed by reading experiences in either or both languages" (Fuerverger, 1994: 126). It is suggested that in order to assist children to improve their reading and writing skills, parents should supply children with books, storybooks and magazines suitable to their age and interests (Saunders, 1988).

**Records, Videos and Cassettes**

Records, videos and audio-cassettes in the home language are also useful for improving the home language. For example, during the playing of story recordings, parents can listen with children and explain any difficult words or accent used. Children will gradually acquaint themselves with different accents and varieties of the language (Saunders, 1988).

**The role of other media**

The mass media may have both positive and negative effects on children's learning in general and language learning in particular. In this review, the focus is the effects of the electronic media (radio and television) on children's language learning.

**Positive effects of the media on children's language learning**

*Television*

Television (TV) plays some role in the bilingual child's acquisition of his or her home language, and television may be useful for teaching and learning. When listening and watching television, children can improve their accent, voice and see the functions of language (Harding and Riley, 1986). Lian (1995) emphasises the role of the television in children's language learning: "one of the simplest, most effective and most obvious ways of putting students in touch with the languages and cultures of other
nations is, of course, through the use of television and other audiovisual channels" (Lian, 1995: 24).

On the positive side, television especially may have an important influence on the child’s attitudes, values and individual opinions. It is sometimes proposed that there be developed of more children’s programs which focus on both entertainment and education, and the development of a range of television programs for the needs of children at various ages (Murray, 1993).

In Australia, the government established the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) in 1978. Since 1992, the SBS Radio in Vietnamese has increased from two hours per week to 14 one-hour programs per week in Sydney and Melbourne. With regard to television in the Vietnamese language, Vietnamese Television Sydney (VTS) focuses on news, information, entertainment and education. Vietnamese programs on VTS are useful for children learning the Vietnamese language and culture (Nguyen, 1991). According to Berry (1993), television in the classroom should be used through a systematic approach in which the goals and objectives for using television must be clear, plans for teaching and learning activities must be developed, all children must be prepared to become skilled users, and there is a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of using television. Television and the new electronic media play an important role in learning and development. Television programs must be introduced into the curriculum of the classroom. The program content must assist children in their social learning and other socialization activities. Parental involvement in the plans for using television in the curriculum is crucial, because parents will be active in assisting and guiding their children’s viewing behaviour.

In the article "The Challenge to Improve Television for Children-A New Perspective", Stipp (1993) suggests a focus on three principles when improving television programs for children:

(a) Children have access to a large and increasing number of programs and program sources;
(b) Overwhelmingly, children choose entertainment programs that do not qualify as educational or informational;

(c) Most parents do not coerce their children to watch educational or instructional programs, and they do not prohibit them from watching popular entertainment programs designed for children or for family viewing (Stipp, 1993: 301).

Generally speaking, the use of television or radio is one of the most effective ways of improving children’s mother tongue learning. When watching TV or listening to the radio, their listening and reading ability improves (Saunders, 1982).

Apart from the positive side, the role of television may have a negative side.

The negative effects of the media on children’s language learning

(Television)

On the negative side, the language of television may influence children’s writing. It is recognised that “the degree of linguistic complexity in television scripts, as measured by the largeness of vocabulary and sentence length, may be reflected in the degree of linguistic complexity in the writing of students” (Geis, 1986: 65).

In research into the relationship between school readiness, children's television viewing, and the educational quality of the home environment, Clarke and Kurtz-Costes (1997) interviewed thirty preschool children from low-income families and their primary caregivers from Chapel Hill, North Carolina (USA). The research questions focussed on the relationship between viewing time and school readiness. The findings reveal that children who watched more television had poorer academic skills than their peers who watched less television - children’s television viewing time was significantly negatively related to parental instruction.

According to Beentjes and Van der Voort (1988), the relation between children’s television viewing and children’s reading skills is not negative
until the television viewing time reaches a threshold. If the television viewing time is beyond a threshold, the relation becomes negative. With regard to the types of television programs, the relation between the news programs and children's reading skills is positive, whereas the relation between entertainment programs and children's reading skills is negative. However, the relation between television viewing and reading skills is complex. The relation may be sensitive to the child's socio-economic status, intelligence, gender, and age. For example, children from a high socio-economic status who watch more television have lower reading achievement, whereas children from a low socio-economic status who have more television viewing time have a higher reading achievement. It is argued that the influence of television viewing on reading skills may be sensitive to the child's ability. Television viewing influences positively the development of reading skills for highly intelligent children, whereas for children of relatively low and moderate intelligence, watching television does not appear to interfere with reading skills.

Liberman (1983), in a paper entitled “The verbal language of television”, provides an analysis of the influence of the language of television on young people's writing. The paper found that in the last two decades, the writing skills of students have declined. Liberman assumes that the language of television must have some influence on this. According to Wlodkowski and Jaynes (1990), children are more motivated to watch television than they are motivated to learn. They want to watch television rather than do their homework. They claim that watching television is one of the direct causes of poor academic achievement.

Peng and Wright (1993) conducted a study into the influence of the home environment and educational activities on children's academic achievement. Their findings show that there is a negative correlation between television viewing and academic achievement. Peng and Wright conclude that students who watch more television than other students have low achievement scores. Koolstra et al (1997: 147) argue that children's level of reading comprehension and children's school
readiness are negatively associated with time spent watching television. Although research has shown “watching specific programs may enlarge children’s vocabulary, it does not necessarily follow that children’s total amount of viewing has a positive effect on children’s vocabulary acquisition”.

As we have seen, researchers have argued both the potential positive and negative effects of television. It is impossible to conclude whether television viewing is good or bad. On the question of whether television influences children’s learning positively or negatively, Luke (1990) says that in itself television is not either bad or good. Its effect depends on everyone’s interpretation of what they see on television. Luke writes:

> Television is not either bad or good; there is much content of merit and much that is undesirable. Viewers are active agents who choose what to watch or not to watch, and who actively construct meaning from TV text. Like a book, TV contains vast stores of information. But it only becomes information when a reader opens the book and begins to read, or when the viewer turns on the set and starts watching. The power over the text finally resides with the active user (Luke, 1990: 162).

Should parents decide and control what their children watch on television? If the role of parents is to be more supportive of their children’s learning, then parents can assist their children with television viewing by watching a special television programs with their children and then discussing them.

In summary, the family, books and magazines in the home, records, videos and cassettes, and the use of other electronic media are identified as factors which contribute most to children’s language learning. Some studies have identified the effects of books and magazines, records, videos and cassettes on children’s language learning. The influence of the media on children’s language learning has been stressed by a number of researchers.
In addition, an examination of the influence of parental involvement in their children’s school, and attitudes and motivation on second language learning may provide fruitful insights into the complex problem of success in second language acquisition.

1.4.3. Parental involvement in school

The cooperation between teachers and parents in their children’s education has an important effect on their children’s learning. Successful learning outcomes are influenced by the co-operation of parents and teachers. Where there is positive cooperation between the home and the school, school progress can result (Baker, 1988).

Researchers agree that schools can improve their students’ language learning if they can involve the parents in support of their children’s school learning.

The New South Wales Department of Education states:

Education is not the exclusive domain of schools and teachers. Learning begins with the child’s early experiences and is expressed through language. Reading has its basis in language. Therefore the child’s early language development is of importance to later success with reading. Thus, parents are the child’s first and perhaps most vital teachers (NSW Department of Education-Reading K–12: Support Statement No.1: The Home, School and Reading, 1979: 2).

According to Cummins (1986), the Haringey Project in England is seen as evidence of the importance of community participation and parental involvement in children’s reading. The project was established to assess the effects of parental involvement in the teaching of reading. All children in two different primary schools read to their parents at home on a regular basis. The researcher showed that parental involvement in children’s reading, even when parents are of non-English speaking
background or non-literate, has an important effect on children’s reading progress. Cummins states: “Parental involvement in children’s reading, even when parents were non-English speaking and non-literate had an important effect on children’s reading progress... when educators involve minority parents as partners in their children’s education, parents appear to develop a sense of efficacy that communicates itself to children, with positive academic consequences” (Cummins, 1986: 2). Parent support is a vital factor for the success of students’ learning as "it not only generates positive attitudes for both the teachers and the children, but also helps strengthen the teachers' confidence in what they are doing" (Clyne et al, 1995: 100).

Two kinds of parent support have been identified: parent support for the school and support for their children. McGaw (1992: 98) in analysing the responses of the Effective Schools Project reports that for the school, 30% of responses emphasize the importance of parental support. The findings about parent-support for children indicate that “the development of effective links between parents and schools is in the interest of the students”. About 34% of teachers indicate that the link between parents and schools affects their children’s education. Nearly 13% of the responses emphasize the importance of parental support for school learning. Other comments emphasize parental support with homework, reading, checking homework, setting a conducive home learning environment, parents encouraging positive attitudes towards school and learning.

In a study of home-school relation policies, Toomey (1989) indicates that in most schools there is a positive correlation between parental participation and involvement in the school and their children’s schooling. The findings show that children’s school learning is associated with the level of contact between school and parent. Low contact parents have a home environment less supportive of their children’s reading development. By contrast, high contact parents offer more support to the children’s learning at home. Toomey finds that “children of high contact parents are advantaged in their education by the support for school learning they receive at home. The parental contact with school has a
benefit for the child beyond that of initial home background support. The high contact parents seem to learn things from the school which help their children" (Toomey, 1989: 294). Parents’ active support and positive parent-teacher relationships enhance and contribute to the children’s success in school (Marjoribanks, 1980 and Berger, 1995).

Griffith (1996) conducted a study on the relation between parental involvement in education and student academic performance. The sample consisted of 42 elementary schools in a metropolitan area, Damascus, Maryland (USA). The findings show that parental involvement is correlated with student test performance. Griffith concludes "parental involvement is an important element in student academic performance" (Griffith, 1996: 40). McTaggart (1990) in an article called Parent Participation: Evaluating Educational Effects suggests that in order to evaluate and improve parent participation, the school must focus on the roles of parents in school and the educational effects that these parents' roles might have. Many people believe that a close relationship between home and school is useful for those involved. McTaggart argues that

for teachers, there is a stronger sense of relevance in their work; for parents, a greater sense of engagement in the lives of their youngsters; and for youngsters themselves, an enhanced sense of participation in the communication. Most important of all, students' educational achievements improve (McTaggart, 1990: 9).

Zellman and Waterman (1998) conducted a study into the relationship between parental school involvement and children’s educational outcomes. The participants were 193 second and fifth grade children and their mothers from two public elementary schools in the metropolitan Los Angeles area, California (USA). The results indicated that "parent school involvement contributes to positive child outcomes" (Zellman and Waterman, 1988: 370).

The New South Wales Department of Education states:
One of the important functions of today's schools is to encourage all parents to join with teachers as "partners in education". Parents are able to share in the implementing of school activities, gain better understanding of various learning situations. This knowledge can guide parents in their choice of experiences undertaken in the home as a complement to and enrichment of school programs ... The school can adopt an important role in assisting parents, establishing and maintaining the vital liaison between home and school (NSW Department of Education-Reading K-12: Support Statement No.1: The Home, School and Reading, 1979: 2).

The communication between home and school is also crucial for effective schooling "because of the lack of communication between school and home and because of the failure of the school to recognise and value the specific contribution of the home. We have cut many children off from the sources of their experiences and emotions" (Watts and Henry, 1978: 5).

McGaw (1992) suggests that communication between home and school should focus on (1) Communication between parent and school about matters concerning the child, (2) Discussion of minor problems before they become major ones, (3) Students playing an important role in the communication triangle between the parent, the child and the school, and (4) All necessary information being translated into community languages (e.g. newsletter, curriculum...).

Schools should try to establish a good rapport with parents. The importance of family participation often has been emphasised because it aids effective schooling and enhances the child's education. According to Makin et al (1995), the following strategies can be used to improve the relationship between home and school:
- Implement home-language support programs which include community language program and transitional bilingual or fully bilingual programs. Parents could be encouraged to participate in this program. In home-
language support program, "families can help in the same ways as English-speaking families do in English-Language program, for example, by hearing children read, supervising maths activities, leading club activities and discussing children’s progress" (p. 112).

- Parents can help their children to learn at home; for example reading in the home language will assist children to enhance their learning.
- Parents’ views relating to their children’s learning could be encouraged.
- Invite families to contribute their skills to the program, for example, parents can translate books, tapes and songs in their language, or teach both teachers and children to cook or do craft.
- Establish a system of community liaison such as a community liaison officer, ethnic aides or bilingual teachers, and language classes for parents of different groups, both English and languages other than English.
- Provide opportunities for parents to participate in school activities to see what their children are learning.

The New South Wales Department of Education states:

Some parents and community members have talents in their Community Language which they may be willing to share with the school and perhaps the wider cluster of teachers. In the past, some of these people have written short stories, produced art work, assisted with Music and Dance, provided background information for school excursions and loaned photographs which have assisted in materials production. Many have also participated in school excursions (The New South Wales Department of Education - *Community Language Programs - Organising Community Language Programs in New South Wales primary schools*, 1989: 16).

We have seen that home school interaction is one of the crucial factors which contributes to children’s success in learning. Parenting is the
greatest environmental influence on the children's language learning. In most cases, the cooperation between teachers and parents in their children's education has an important effect on children's learning. Parental involvement in schools and positive parent-teacher relationships enhance and contribute to the children's success in learning. According to Berger (1995), parents could do many things at home to contribute to their children's success in school, for example enhancing their children's learning through conversation, reading, discussing the news and other TV programs, discussing school events, providing books, supplies and a special place for studying.

In the following section, the influence of students' attitudes and motivation on language learning will be examined.

1.5. The influence of students' attitudes and motivation on their language learning

Why are some language learners more successful at language learning than others? Many researchers believe that the answer may lie in attitudes and motivation. Attitudes and motivation are involved in the decision to continue or drop out of language study. Attitudes and motivation orient the individual to seek out the opportunities to learn a language. "Everyone agrees that a key factor in successful learning is a learner's motivation. Everyone also agrees that a key factor in effective teaching is an instructor's ability to facilitate student motivation, particularly in circumstances where children are not inherently interested in learning" (McInerney, 2000: 1).

Some research on motivation for language learning has centred on two factors: learners' communicative needs, and their attitudes towards the second language community. If learners perceive the communicative need for a second language in a wide range of social situations, they will be motivated to be competent in it. If learners have favourable attitudes towards the speakers of the second language, they will learn a second language to interact with them (Lightbown and Spada, 1993). In addition,
they may wish to learn a second language for career reasons such as to get a better job, position or pass an examination (Cook, 1991).

In trying to understand how attitudes and motivation affect ethnic minority students' language learning, some researchers have focused on attitudes and motivation for maintenance of the mother tongue while others have focused on attitudes and motivation for second language learning.

1.5.1. Attitudes and motivation for maintenance of the mother tongue by children of immigrants: Children's attitudes to their mother tongue

Besides the parents' attitudes and motivation in regard to their mother tongue, children's positive attitudes and motivation play a predominant role in mother tongue learning.

Taft and Cahill (1989) conducted a study into the maintenance of Lebanese Arabic by 10 to 11 year old children of Lebanese immigrants in Melbourne (Australia). With regard to the children's language preference, children were asked the questions “Do you like speaking Lebanese? “Why?” Of the 72% of Lebanese children who liked speaking Lebanese, 41% answered "to communicate with parents", 13% answered "to learn Lebanese", while 18% of these children answered "because it is my language". Children were also asked to self-rate their competence in Lebanese. The results showed that the correlation between the children's attitude towards Lebanese and their competence in the language was positive. On the basis of their data, Taft and Cahill conclude that attitudes to Lebanese were closely linked to the children's learning of the mother tongue.

Debela (1994) considers the positive attitudes to Vietnamese language as one of the factors that enhance students' Vietnamese language competence. Debela conducted research into language activation, attitudes to Vietnamese language, and parental support of Vietnamese in a primary school located in the Western suburbs of Adelaide (Australia). Of the 110 Vietnamese background students who learned Vietnamese as
a mother tongue, 13 students (12%) were selected to participate in the study. The results of the Vietnamese language skills rated by their teacher indicated that the students developed their speaking and understanding skills better than their reading and writing skills. It also showed that 61%, 85%, 54%, and 53% of the students were rated as having high competence in understanding, speaking, reading and writing Vietnamese respectively. The findings showed that all respondents considered Vietnamese to be "a nice language" and they spoke Vietnamese with their parents and used English with their friends. The research showed that "the activation of Vietnamese at home, positive attitudes to Vietnamese language, parental support and positive evaluation of Vietnamese were important factors that help students in learning Vietnamese better" (Debela, 1994: 63).

1.5.2. Children's attitudes and motivation to second language learning

Several studies on second language learning indicate that attitudes and motivation have a significant effect on a student’s success or failure in learning a second language. Attitudes and motivation are involved in the decision to continue or drop out of language study. Attitudes and motivation orient the individual to seek out the opportunities to learn the language.

There is a relationship between positive attitudes and motivation and success in second language learning. The learner’s motivation is influenced by his or her attitudes towards language study and the target group. The more a learner wants to be integrated into the second language community, the more progress in learning a second language she or he will have.

According to Lightbown and Spada (1993), if learners have positive attitudes towards speakers of the target language, they will try to take any opportunity to make contact with them. There is a close link between an individual’s identity and the way she or he speaks, and “when speaking a
new language, one is adopting some of the identity markers of another cultural group” (Lightbown and Spada, 1993: 40).

Gardner and Lambert (1972) have demonstrated the importance of attitudes in second language acquisition. Gardner and Lambert are the original authors of the concepts **integrative motivation** and **instrumental motivation**.

Integrative motivation reflects learning a second language to take part in the target language community, and instrumental motivation reflects learning a second language for a career reason or other practical reason.

**Integrative motivation**

For this kind of motivation students desire to integrate themselves into the target culture and are attracted by the target-language community. Learners' motivation relates to the desire to resemble members of the target-language community. Learners wish to learn a second language to communicate, for the purposes of interacting with speakers of the second language. Integrative motivation is important for the development of communicative skills. Learners who have positive attitudes towards the speakers of the target language will have more contact with them. They want to use the second language to integrate with the target language community. The more a learner wants to be integrated into the second language community, the more progress she or he will make in learning a second language. Baldauf and Lawrence (1990: 225), in a study of the problem of high attrition rates for students studying languages other than English (LOTE) in Australian high schools, focus on two major factors related to the problem: students' socio-cultural background and the affective domain. The study examined the seven affective scales: integrative motivation, parental influence, instrumental motivation, personal attributes, teacher influence, multicultural influence and school administrative influence. The research findings indicated that “integrative motivation was the best predictor of a student’s decision to continue her/his studies”.
Integrative motivation is a crucial factor in second language learning. Gardner (1985: 134) states that "the integrative orientation reflects a positive non-ethnocentric approach to the other community, it might be expected to relate more directly to attitudinal reactions towards the other language group as well as to the motivation to learn the second language". Learners' positive attitudes toward the target language community and the language learning situations will influence the success in learning the target language (Gardner, 1988).

Burstell (1978: 2) emphasizes the importance of integrative motivation in second language acquisition: "the key to success in foreign language learning lies in the adoption of an integrative orientation towards the culture, as characterized by the student's willingness to share certain of the attributes of members of the other "linguistic community" and to regard himself as a potential member of that community". Regarding student motivation for languages learning, Djite (1994: 15) suggests "Language study should take into account not only the economic aims (instrumental motivation), but also the socio-cultural and sociolinguistic aims (integrative motivation)"

**Instrumental motivation**

Instrumental motivation is considered an effective factor for members of ethnic minority groups to learn a second language. Instrumental motivation means that a learner considers the second language as an instrument for gaining a necessary qualification or achieving employment prospects (Hamers and Blanc, 1989). Gardner (1985) assumes that an instrumental orientation emphasizes the practical value and advantages of learning a new language. Learners believe that mastery of the second language will assist them to get a better job or a good position in the second language community. According to Krashen (1981), with instrumental motivation, learners want to learn a second language to interact with other L2 speakers to fulfil certain ends, to get a good job, a satisfying position or to achieve professional ambitions.
Integrative and instrumental motivation are both important. A student can learn L2 with an integrative motivation or with an instrumental one or with both (Cook, 1991). Overall, studies show that positive attitudes and motivation are related to success in the maintenance of the mother tongue and in second language learning. Gardner (1985: 56) affirms that “they determine the extent to which individuals will actively involve themselves in learning the language”. But it remains difficult to suggest ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of language maintenance, if other factors such as the influence of the school have not been considered.

1.6. School factors affecting language learning

Australian second language learners can be divided into two major categories: Learners of languages other than English (LOTE), and learners of English as a second language (ESL). These learners include the following groups: (1) Members of a minority group learning a LOTE as a mother tongue, (2) Members of a minority group learning English as a second language (ESL), and (3) Members of the dominant group learning a LOTE as a second language.

Each of these groups has different needs that need to be considered, in order to offer suitable learning/teaching strategies or quality programs.

In the following sections, school factors are considered under the headings of language learning and language teaching, including language learning and language teaching, approaches to second language learning used in classroom, and the role and the qualities of a good teacher.

1.6.1. Language learning and language teaching

In this chapter, the review is limited to the examination of the relationship between the first and the second languages.
The relationship between the first and the second languages

One of the greatest concerns of ethnic minority and immigrant parents is whether learning both the second language and the first language at home and at school will negatively influence the child’s development of language competence. Several studies have tried to explain why it is a good idea for children to learn a second language at school.

Children who have a competence in their mother tongue and a developed range of concepts in that language are in a favourable position to learn a second language. The continuous development of the mother tongue in bilingual children will enhance both their English and their mother tongue (Gibbons, 1991). Scarino et al (1988a) indicate that learners who have already learnt a second language will learn a third language more effectively than learners who are learning a second language for the first time. Gibbons (1992: 231) argues that a second language is not learned by destroying the first, but building on it "minority language students can continue to learn and develop their mother tongue while they are also learning English".

In an article entitled "Working in a Multicultural Ethnic Primary School", Maughan (1985), a Head Teacher at Broken-Hill Primary School-Middlesbrough, is concerned with the role of the mother tongue in learning a second language. Because of her background, Maughan was conservative and rigid in the application of the concept of "speaking English". She did not encourage the ESL students to speak their mother tongue and she arranged a small withdrawal room for students performing poorly in English. The withdrawal room was run by two part-time peripatetic ESL teachers and one remedial reading teacher. One day, by sheer luck, the three Pakistani students showed her and the two related teachers how they used their mother tongue (Punjabi) to improve their learning of English. Her story reads as follows:
A few weeks ago as I was walking through an Infant teaching area I was accosted by Safina with the request, "Mrs Maughan, can I read with you, please? I explained that I was listening for the telephone as the secretary was out, and invited her to bring her book along to my room in five minutes. She arrived, plus two friends, Ashie and Nasreen, and her book - an Urdu reader! What a lovely twenty minutes. Safina read two prayers and a story about a cat. The three of them chatted in Punjabi (Ashie and Nasreen cannot read Urdu) and the four of us chatted in English. Safina had not brought the book from home; Mabel Pallister, our "infant" ESL teacher, had lent it to her. I accompanied them back to their teacher, Sarah, who then recorded it in her daily reading record. A small incident, perhaps, but a significant one for three children and three adults, and with wide-reaching implications (Maughan, 1985: 23).

Maughan and the other teachers started to understand the importance of the use of the mother tongue for the ESL students. A bilingual teacher was temporarily appointed to the school. She found out that "in their mother tongue many students were performing well above levels expected both in language and maths for their chronological age" (p. 24). Maughan realised that "to deny children their bilingualism in the early stages of learning is to deny them both learning and value" (p. 24). The withdrawal class was still functioning at her school at that time. However the ESL teachers worked on particular topics with class teachers, which meant some mainstream work for the bilingual students. A bilingual Nursery auxiliary was appointed permanently on site. The Head of the Multicultural Centre and the two ESL teachers started discussions about the possibility of developing a mainstream approach. Mainstream work can be very attractive for class teachers. The ESL teachers joined in most of the mainstream work in a team-teaching approach. Maughan indicated that "when teachers are truly collaborating it is no longer my class, my
children, my responsibility: for certain periods of the day these things are shared" (p. 25). At the end of the article, Maughan makes the decision against total withdrawal by exploring the following issues:

- Language is not acquired in a vacuum - the context of the mainstream is needed to use the structures of language.
- The confidence gained in a withdrawal group is not transferable back to the classroom.
- The class teacher should accept responsibility for the child's language development.
- "Learning English" should not be seen by young children as something separate because the use and mode changes from the group to the classroom.
- Withdrawal can be reinforce failure.
- Teaching should be about continuity and progression: children should not move in and out of learning activities.
- Teachers and children are missing out on each other's strengths (Maughan, 1985: 25-26).

Some researchers (Cummins, 1979; Arnberg, 1987) note that a number of studies claim that bilingualism itself is the cause of "language handicaps", "mental confusion" and "cognitive retardation". They claim that bilingualism has a detrimental effect on the child's capacity to learn. However, a growing number of studies affirm that bilingualism is neither a cause of cognitive confusion nor of academic retardation. On the contrary, it can positively influence both cognitive and linguistic development. Indeed it can have favourable intellectual consequences.

Everyone agrees that being bilingual means having two languages. A bilingual person is able to use two languages. We may say that "Bilingual does not necessarily mean equal proficiency in the two languages; many bilinguals are stronger in one of their languages in particular skill areas or prefer to use one or the other in certain situations" (Janssen and Pauwels, 1993: 1). There is a concern that bilingualism might somehow retard the children's first and second language development. Creaser and
Dau (1995) affirm that children learn a second language the same way they learn their first language. In the early stages, they begin with one-word utterances or telegraphic speech. Most children learn their first language in social interactions. Children who learn a second language need a supportive environment where they have opportunities to interact with other competent speakers. Children learn a second language quickly because they need to communicate and interact with peers in a short time. When children are bilingual from birth, and have acquired two languages at the same time, this is known as simultaneous bilingualism. When children have acquired one language then learn a second one, this is known as successive bilingualism. For those children, it is important to maintain their home language. The home language assists in the acquisition of a second language. Gibbons (1991) agrees that the processes of acquisition of a second language are similar to the processes of first language acquisition, e.g. learners begin by using "telegraphic" speech, and gradually use grammatical function words. According to Fromkin et al (1990: 356), children do not learn the language "all at once". They learn "one-word" sentences which are called holophrastic sentences. In this stage, children understand many more phonological differences than they can produce themselves. Gradually, children begin to produce two-word utterances. This stage is called the "two-word stage". First, children can join two words to form an utterance. Later, they begin using more than two words, longer sentences, and "children produce sentences that more and more closely approximate the adult grammar, they begin to use syntactic or grammatical function words and also to acquire the inflectional and derivational morphemes of the language". There are a number of factors that will influence the processes of acquisition of a second language such as the age of the learner, their attitude to the second language and culture, the motivation for learning a second language, the type of support, and the learning environment. Emmitt and Pollock (1993: 158) agree that "the processes necessary for second language learning are similar to first language learning - similar conditions are necessary such as immersion in the language, hearing and
seeing the language in purposeful contexts, opportunity to use the language, to receive feedback”

As we have seen, some researchers agree that the second language is filtered through the first. By the time they start learning a second language, they have had experience of using language. There is no evidence that early bilingualism has a negative effect on both the first and the second language acquisition.

In addition, in order to understand the relationship between first and second language, Cummins (1979) proposes The developmental interdependence hypothesis. According to Cummins, The developmental interdependence hypothesis is concerned with functional interdependence between the development of L1 and L2 skills. This hypothesis states that the level of L2 competence a child acquires depends to some extent on the level of competence attained in the L1. This means there is an interaction between the L2 and the academic ability in the L1 prior to school. Cummins states that the role of the child’s mother tongue in the developmental process needs to be taken into account in order to understand the educational outcomes of a variety of bilingual education programs, for example, classical immersion programs. Cummins adds that "the developmental interdependence hypothesis proposes that the development of competence in a second language is partially a function of the type of competence already developed in L1 at the time when intensive exposure to L2 begins" (Cummins, 1979: 222).

There is a positive correlation between mother-tongue maintenance and second language competence. The second language is seen as an additional rather than a replacement language. The stimulus for language maintenance outside the school correlates with rapid bilingual development. Beardsmore (1986) argues that

in cases where the first language is not sufficiently developed outside the school, for whatever reason, then high exposure to a second language in the school will hamper the continued development of the first language and
will not necessarily help stimulate successful bilingualism (Beardsmore, 1986: 173).

Beardsmore believes that the developmental interdependence hypothesis can explain the different outcomes in bilingual education, both for ethnic majority and minority children.

Gibbons (1992) affirms that

a well-developed first language is one of the most important factors in successfully learning a second language; the first language provides a framework for the second ... Similarly, students who arrive in Australia with an already well-developed mother tongue, and with literacy skills, will transfer this previous learning into English. Their first language is a bridge into their second (Gibbons, 1992: 225).

Gardner (1985) notes that

if learning the second language involves the development of proficiency in that language with no pressure to replace or reduce the importance of the first language, the result is an example of additive bilingualism. Under such conditions, the learner may experience changes in self-identity, but these would quite likely reflect positive growth. If on the other hand, the second language were being acquired to promote cultural assimilation as where minority groups are encouraged to learn a national language, this would be an instance of subtractive bilingualism. In the process of learning the second language, there is a threat to the first one, and such pressures could produce feelings of loss of cultural identity and the resulting alienation (Gardner, 1985: 134-135).
In some immigrant families in Australia, children are unable to communicate in their home language, that is, the language spoken by the family members. Parents and family members such as grandparents speak their home language to their children and their children respond in English. This is a sad reality for both children and parents.

The maintenance and development of children’s home languages can be effective when children use language to interact with others, for example, to express their feelings (Makin et al, 1995). The method by which children are taught certainly has some effect on their success. Therefore, the language teaching strategies adopted by teachers should aim to develop students’ communicative skills, their knowledge of the language and cultural understandings.

There are many different approaches and theories about language learning. Some approaches focus mainly on outcomes or products of language learning, while others focus more on the processes involved. There are certain approaches and theories which have had a profound effect upon the practice of language learning or teaching, so in this section we will look at some approaches of second language learning in order to draw conclusions about a methodology for the teaching or learning of Vietnamese.

**Approaches to second language learning used in the classroom**

The approach used for language teaching in the classroom will be based on a theory of language learning. The following is an examination of the major theories and their related teaching methods. The Direct or Audio-Visual methods will not be examined as they could be looked upon as early versions of the communicative approach, nor will be examined less common approaches such as Suggestopedia.

Language learning is a complex process and theories make significant predictions about language learning and language teaching. There are two approaches which have been based on particular theories of how language is learned: the Grammar-Translation Approach and the Communicative Approach.
The Grammar-Translation Approach (Historical)

The Grammar-Translation Approach emphasises the importance of grammatical structure and vocabulary. The knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of the target language is taught through explanation and translation using the mother tongue. Traditionally, the grammar-translation approach deals with formal grammar teaching such as phrases, sentence form, verbs and adjectives. In the grammar-translation approach, students use words together with syntactic rules to translate from English into the second language and vice-versa. In all courses designed for learners using the Grammar-Translation method, the lessons include a reading passage in the target language, a list of vocabulary items and their translations and an explanation in the mother tongue of the important points of grammar used in the text, and a series of exercises (Fromkin et al., 1990; Steinberg, 1993).

According to Scarino et al (1988a), the classical humanistic approach is concerned with linguistic knowledge and analytical skills rather than communicative ability. Scarino et al state:

the classical humanist approach emphasizes the importance of the analysis of grammar, the classifying of its parts of speech, the conscious understanding of its rules, the memorisation of these rules, the learning by heart of vocabulary items, and the reassembly of all this knowledge in the translation of texts into and out of the target language (Scarino et al, 1988a: 11).

One of the advantages of the Grammar-Translation method is that it can be applied at all levels of learning, from beginning to advanced levels. Learners can learn from reading books on their own outside the classroom. It is also appropriate for use in all classrooms with large groups of learners and for teachers who lack competence in speaking the target language.
Having said that, this method has some disadvantages. The disadvantages of this method involve little emphasis on oral skills. In almost all classrooms using the Grammar-Translation method, the teacher is the centre of classroom activities. The role of the teacher is dominant, while the role of learners is passive. The teacher explains and tells learners what they ought to learn; they listen and occasionally ask questions. This method cannot be applied to young children, since they cannot understand the rules of grammar, and they cannot read and write well.

Generally speaking, language is the major medium of communication, a system for the expression of meaning, primary function-interaction and communication. The aim of language teaching is to enable students to develop their communicative competence, so that they can operate effectively in the target language. In terms of learning, it is accepted that there are two kinds of rules, “knowing various grammatical rules and being able to use the rules effectively and appropriately when communicating” (Nunan, 1992: 12).

Some linguists maintain that it is not necessary to teach grammar. They affirm that “the ability to use a second language (knowing how) would develop automatically if the learner were required to focus on meaning in the process of using the language to communicate” (Nunan, 1992: 13). “Language is a complex range of activities and does not consist of just learning a series of rules. In fact, communication often exists despite the rules” (Hughes, 1999: 5). It is difficult for learners to match two kinds of knowledge. Learners may know the rules of grammar and vocabulary well but still be unable to participate in a conversation, because in communication learners require exposure to comprehensible communicative input rather than just exposure to the particular grammatical structures and vocabulary. Learning the grammar of a language requires learners to acquire the ability to produce grammatical features of a language (sounds, words, the formation and arrangement of words, etc). But it is not sufficient in enabling learners to produce grammatical sentences; they must understand utterances in their situation and know when and how to use them. Through the use of language
learners build their store of knowledge and discover information. Grammatical rules are only one factor contributing to communicative competence. It is argued that if teaching grammar enables children to develop their knowledge and understanding of language and helps them use language more effectively, it cannot be separated from the teaching of meaning and the use of communicative activities in order to develop effective language skills. If teaching grammar gives children confidence in their own language and enables them to talk about it with understanding and use it more effectively, it should be taught in the contexts of learning and living. “It’s context which provides purpose and meaning for activities and allows grammatical points to be linked to other aspects of language and to the broader curriculum concerns that children are engaged with.” (Collerson, 1997: 36).

The traditional Vietnamese teaching approach is very much like the Grammar-Translation Approach. Some points of the traditional Vietnamese teaching approach will be introduced below that have influenced students' Vietnamese learning.

Vietnamese people are influenced by the traditional Vietnamese culture and the French culture, but the traditional Vietnamese culture is deeply rooted in the Confucian tradition. Confucius (551-497 BC) was an important Chinese philosopher. He wrote The Four Books (Tư Thú), and The Five-Canons (Ngũ Kinh) to teach women the concepts of The Three Obediences (Tam Tòng) and The Four Virtues (Tư Đức), and to teach men the concepts of The Three Constant Obligations of Morality (Tam Cang) and The Five Constant Virtues (Ngũ Thường). According to Confucius, learning was the process of accumulating knowledge and reading of books. Under the influence of the French, Vietnamese education laid emphasis on the development of mental cleverness, intelligence, and theory.

In the Vietnamese educational system, the characteristics of the teaching methodology can be summarised as follows:
1. Learning by heart or rote learning.
2. Learning of moral conduct (i.e. the teaching process started with moral lessons).

3. The teaching strategy as a one-way process (i.e. it is teacher-centred. The teacher plays the key role in the students' learning process)

4. The role of the teacher in the classroom was dominant, and the role of the students was passive (i.e. students learnt what their teachers taught)

According to Nguyen, (1991: 19) "being so familiar with the above teaching methodology and concept of education, when a student encounters a new teaching method and a new learning environment in Western schools, he/she feels embarrassed, confused and certainly faces many difficulties". Some Western teachers complain that Vietnamese students are inclined to use rote-based learning. They want to rote-learn material rather than think; they are reluctant to discuss, criticize, or express their opinion (Biggs, 1990).

**The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching**

The goal of the Communicative Approach is to develop the students' ability to communicate. The communicative approach involves real communication and uses language to promote learning. It relates to the needs of the learner, and includes functional skills and linguistic objectives. All activities of the communicative approach engage learners in practicing communicative activities in order to develop effective language skills. The role of the learner is considered as a negotiator and interactor. The teacher is a “facilitator of the communication process, participants tasks and texts, needs analyst, counsellor, process manager” (Nunan, 1992: 95).

Cook (1991) affirms that the communicative approach aims to teach students the ability to use language in conversation with people. Its goal is “to develop the student's ability to communicate fluently rather than in grammatically flawless sentences” (p. 139). The role of the teacher in the classroom is no longer dominant, but the teacher “takes one step back and lets the students take over the activities” (p. 140). The teacher is
considered to be an organiser. Information gap strategy and role-plays are typical teaching techniques.

The primary purpose of learning language is for communication. Children learn to use language through an interactive process that involves the skills of talking, listening and viewing, reading and writing. The New South Wales Department of Education (1987) states:

Through language – through talking, listening, reading and writing – children learn about themselves, other people and the world. In using language for communicating, investigating and expressing, they make meaning for themselves and share meaning with others. Children learn to communicate in the language of the culture in which they are born. Most are able, at an early age, to use in their speech the complex conversations and structures of the language (New South Wales Department of Education—Writing K-12, 1987: 16-17).

According to Scarino et al (1988a), the communicative approach enables students to acquire communication skills in the target language and to use strategies to maintain relationships through discussion with others, exchanging information, feelings, opinions, attitudes, experiences, goods, and services. They search and discover information by listening to or reading a spoken or written text, story, play, film, song, poem, and so on. Scarino et al state that learners will aim to be able to use the target language to:

- establish and maintain relationships and discuss topics of interest e.g. through the exchange of information, ideas, opinions, attitudes, feelings, experiences, and plans.
- participate in social interaction related to solving a problem, making arrangements, making decisions with others, and transacting to obtain goods, services, and public information.
- obtain information by searching for specific details in a spoken or written text, and then process and use the information obtained.
- obtain information by listening to or reading a spoken or written text as a whole, and then process and use the information obtained.
- give information in spoken or written form e.g. give a talk, write an essay or a set of instructions.
- listen to, read or view, and respond personally to a stimulus e.g. a story, a play, a film, a song, a poem, a picture.
- be involved in spoken or written personal expression e.g. create a story, a dramatic episode, a poem, a play (Scarino et al, 1988a: 29).

Scarino et al (1988a) point out some principles of language learning/teaching to respond to the objective and subjective needs of language learners. According to Scarino et al, learners learn a language best when:

1. They are treated as individuals with their own needs and interests.
2. They are provided with opportunities to participate in communicative use of the target language in a wide range of activities.
3. They are exposed to communicative data which is comprehensible and relevant to their own needs and interest.
4. They focus deliberately on various language forms, skills, and strategies in order to support the process of language acquisition.
5. They are exposed to sociocultural data and direct experience of the culture(s) embedded within the target language.
6. They become aware of the role and nature of language and culture.

7. They are provided with appropriate feedback about their progress.

8. They are provided with opportunities to manage their own learning (Scarino et al, 1988a: 17).

The above principles suggest that the teacher should employ many different strategies, determine the content and processes of learning, provide a variety of sources such as teacher talk, other classroom talk, audio and video recordings, written information, and create a positive atmosphere. Teachers should use activities and opportunities to support individual differences in the learner’s ability, learning style, and language background. Learners should be encouraged to express their ideas and opinions and participate in communication activities. Teachers provide many different opportunities for learners to use the target language and contact with people in the target-language community. Teachers emphasize language learning and culture, learning through language and learning about language, and provide feedback on the learning process and suggest ways to improve learning. Learners are encouraged to develop their “cooperative learning skills” and “take increasing responsibility for their own learning” (Scarino et al, 1988b: 3).

Cummins (1986) suggests ways of distinguishing between the two major models, the transmission model and the reciprocal interaction model. The transmission model views the child as a passive seeker, and the teaching methodology is considered as a one-way process. The teacher teaches and the children learn. Classroom activities are neither considered important nor a part of the teaching-learning process. The teacher plays a key role in the child’s learning process. The transmission model contrasts with the alternative reciprocal interaction model. The reciprocal interaction model is related to “the empowerment of pupils”. This model focuses on student-centred activities and the children play an important role in their learning process. According to Cummins, the use of the interaction model in teaching:
... requires a genuine dialogue between student and teacher in both oral and written modalities, guidance and facilitation rather than control of student learning by the teacher, and the encouragement of student/student talk in the collaborative learning context. This model emphasises the development of higher level cognitive skills rather than the correction of surface forms. Language use and development are consciously integrated with all curricular content rather than taught as isolated subjects, and tasks are presented to students in ways that generate intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation (Cummins, 1986: 28).

Hughes (1999: 2) argues that “communicative language teaching methods are concerned with two major aspects of language learning: **what** is to be taught and **how** it is to be taught”. Hughes points out eight principles of Communicative Language Teaching to enable students to develop their language skills. The principles of Communicative Language Teaching can be summarised as follows:

1. Working hard at a language is not all that is involved- it matters **what** is learned and **how** it is taught.
2. Language learning is best when the language is relevant to the student – the best activities relate to the experience and interests of the students.
3. Language teaching methods should mirror the process of communication – setting a task and building feedback in activities is important.
4. Communication is an active desire to fill an information gap – the best activities have an information gap built into them.
5. Students must be encouraged to take risks - make sure that communication is not stopped by over-correcting every mistake.
6. Language is more than grammar - language is a complex activity and other factors such as sounds, stress, intonation, appropriateness and non-verbal features must be taken into account.

7. Communication needs practice – classes should involve as much activity as possible.

8. Motivation is the key to learning a language – teachers must concentrate on positive motivation to encourage language learning (Hughes, 1999: 8).

The New South Wales Department of Education states that:

Language learning is most effective when students are motivated by a need to communicate. Approaches which emphasize the development of communication skills are most likely to be successful. These approaches are based on the premise that language is learned through use. The starting point is what the learner needs or wishes to do with language, or express through language. Teachers need to devise strategies to meet student needs, teaching situations and teaching / learning styles (The New South Wales Department of Education-Community Language Education: A Support document to the Multicultural Education Policy, 1983: 8).

In language learning children need opportunities to talk about interesting things and practice language learning in a variety of situations. Children learn through their actions and experiences. They must have experiences which support their level of understanding and to see why and how things happen the way they do. In order to help second-language children develop language competence, Ebbeck (1991) suggests some teaching strategies as follows:
- Avoid over-correcting mistakes in the child's language patterns, constant correction of errors usually undermines self-confidence.
- Provide situations where children can experience success and make them conscious of being successful.
- In language learning children need opportunities to talk about interesting things and practice language learning in a variety of situations (Ebbeck, 1991: 106-108).

It is agreed that a learner needs to use language to communicate meanings, and needs to use feedback to judge his or her success. In the communicative approach, the following aspects of activities are very important when using communicative teaching methods: (1) The teacher's role in the learning process is less dominant, (2) Communicative interaction gives more opportunities for cooperative relationships among learners, and between teacher and learners, (3) Communicative interaction gives learners more opportunities to express their own individuality in the classroom, (4) Errors are considered as a normal phenomenon in the development of communicative skills.

The New South Wales Board of Studies (2001) states:

The communicative approach involves use of the language in a purposeful and active way, and the syllabus therefore emphasises the development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, within a cultural context (New South Wales Board of Studies- Vietnamese years 7-10 syllabus, 2001: 3).

All these approaches have been used in schools to assist students in learning language. In fact, an approach that is best for one teacher and group of students may be inappropriate and unsuccessful in another context. Teachers should employ different strategies, provide different kinds of support, creative opportunities, and use a variety of activities for
learners to improve their language learning, and develop the basic skills of language acquisition.

Students' learning in general or language learning in particular may correlate with the role of teachers. Several studies have indicated that teachers play an important role in the success or failure of students' language learning. The next section deals with the qualities that a good teacher needs to have.

1.6.2. The general qualities and the role of a good teacher

Besides the home environment and children's attitudes and motivation, the role of teachers has an important effect on children's learning in general and language learning in particular. Some research finds that the qualities that an effective teacher needs to have relate to personality characteristics, knowledge and abilities, the use of specific techniques or routines for different subjects, and the development of teaching skills (Cole and Chan, 1987). There are things the teacher can learn to do to improve the effectiveness of children's learning. Other strategies include communicating with parents, interacting with children and modifying teaching strategies to suit the background and the needs of the children in the class.

This section will examine only the general qualities and the role of a good teacher. In general, however, the qualities and the role of a good teacher can be identified as:
- providing a link between home and school.
- being interested in the skills, attitudes and interests of students.
- developing and maintaining positive attitudes towards students.
- making all students participate in learning.

An effective teacher must provide a link between the home and school

Evans (1992), in analysing the responses of the Effective Schools Project dealing with teachers and teaching, indicates that all the solicited
comments stressed the importance of interaction between teachers and others. The positive interaction between teachers and parents and between teachers and students is considered a key to effective teaching and learning. Evans states that the role of the teacher is the key element in school effectiveness. Teachers should have a positive attitude towards learning and encourage students to learn.

Successful learning outcomes are influenced by the co-operation of parents and teachers (Baker, 1988). Partington and McCudden (1992) argue that the co-operation between home and school is crucial to effective schooling.

Positive co-operation between parents and teachers contributes to students’ achievement in school. The relationship provides an important and supportive factor in encouraging and motivating children to learn. It is also helpful for both teachers and parents to share the information relating to the child’s learning. It is believed that the positive co-operation between teachers and parents can more positively influence the motivation for children to learn. An effective teacher should do his or her best for the good of the children. Generally speaking, having a good rapport with parents is crucial to effective schooling and will enhance children’s learning.

An effective teacher must be interested in the skills, attitudes and interests of the students

Fry and Morrow (1994) argue that effective teaching by those teachers who don’t use one particular method of teaching, is nevertheless characterised by group work, cooperative learning, individual learning, practice activities and inquiry learning procedures. Effective teachers must select appropriate methods, learning styles and strategies to suit student needs, interests and abilities. Fry and Morrow (1994: 1) add: "Effective teachers are able to accommodate different learning styles and provide their students wider time to experiment with applications from a diverse range of strategies and technologies". An enthusiastic teacher employs a variety of methods and teaching strategies to stimulate
students' interest and encourages students to develop their knowledge and competencies (Mathews and Fehring, 1987). Finocchiaro and Bonomo (1973) consider the language teacher as a combination of linguist, sociologist, anthropologists and pedagogue. The tasks that a teacher should perform are to help the students achieve their aspirations and keep the students' motivation at a high level.

**An effective teacher must develop and maintain positive attitudes towards students**

A good teacher must have positive attitudes towards students and encourage students to learn (Evans, 1992; Scarino et al, 1988a; Cole and Chan, 1987; Westwood, 1996).

In a report entitled “Focus on Parent/Child - Extending the Teaching Competence of Urban Aboriginal Mothers”, Watts and Henry (1978) point out the following contributions that teachers bring to the child's learning:

- The teachers, of course, bring to the situation professional pedagogical skills, insights and knowledge which they can use to tempt the child to make steady progress towards the objectives of the educational program.
- Teachers also offer themselves as adults other than parents as role models for the children (Watts and Henry, 1978: 4).

Lewis (1993: 29) affirms that "Teachers are particularly important… the attitudes they bring to the classroom are sometimes the single most important influence in the overall success or failure of what happens in the classroom”.

According to Evans (1992), personal qualities are important in an effective teacher. Several qualities have been considered as key elements: "academic attitude; valuing learning; social and learning skills;
discipline; friendship and warmth; care and concern for other people; respect for dignity of each person; ethical and personal direction” (p. 75). It is suggested that “learning should be enjoyable” and “students and teachers sound have a love of learning”. The teacher is considered as a facilitator of learning; the teacher should “promote curiosity”, “develop searching inquiring mind” and “challenge students” (p. 70). Evans suggests focusing on “competence, professionalism, positive attitudes, consistency, liking of children, interest, understanding, friendliness and dedication” (p. 75).

With regard to teacher characteristics, McInerney and McInerney (1994 ) assert that teaching procedures and behaviours relate to positive student learning outcomes and student attitudes to learning. McInerney and McInerney affirm that enthusiasm, warmth and humour are factors that an effective teacher needs to have. Teacher enthusiasm affects both student attitudes and achievement.

According to Cole and Chan (1987), teachers who are enthusiastic about teaching and learning promote better learning in their students, and teacher enthusiasm is necessary to enhance their students’ motivation. Cole and Chan (1987) have summarized the following personal qualities that teachers need to have. The teacher must:

- develop a positive attitudes towards students.
- maintain a friendly attitude.
- establish positive relationships with students.
- treat students as individuals deserving of respect.
- be interested in skills, attitudes and interests of students.
- be an active listener.
- have “receptive attitudes”, are “open-minded”, “empathic” and “understanding”.
- be confident and develop a relaxed style of communication.

According to Westwood (1996), the following are the attitudes and behaviours that a teacher needs when teaching basic academic skills. The teacher must accept responsibility for teaching the students, believe in his or her ability, and believe in students’ ability to learn.
An effective teacher must make all students participate in learning

To develop effective classroom communication, teachers must develop personal qualities and skills that enhance efficient communication, provide a supportive learning environment, provide opportunities for students to practice, encourage peer assistance and cooperative learning (Westwood, 1996; Cole and Chan, 1987).

The role of the teacher involves the facilitation of both learning as well as learning skills. Scarino et al (1988b) state that in the learner-centred approach, the teacher is seen as playing the role of an instructor and facilitator in the classroom. The teacher is considered as “a consultant, providing constructive criticism, indicating where help is available, and assisting in developing independent learning skills...The teacher is sensitive to the needs of the learners and seeks to organise and plan a learning environment” (Scarino et al, 1988b: 1).

With regard to the role of the teacher, the Education Department of Western Australia (1995) states:

One aim of teaching is to help children become independent learners. This can only happen if teachers allow children to make decisions and take responsibility for their learning. As part of this process, children can be involved in self-evaluation if teachers promote a positive learning environment where individual achievement is valued more than competition and comparisons. By involving students in daily decisions about evaluation and encouraging them to set and review personal goals, teachers can help children to know what they know. Self-evaluation encourages children to think about what they are doing and what they need to do (The Education Department of Western Australia -Writing Developmental Continuum, 1995: 15).

As we have seen, researchers argue that the students' success or failure relates to specific teacher qualities. It is agreed that a positive
relationship between teachers and parents contributes to children’s achievement in school. The relationship provides an important and supportive factor to encourage and motivate children to learn. It is also helpful for both teachers and parents to share information relating to children’s learning, and this provides an opportunity for parents to express their concerns. It is believed that the cooperation between teachers and parents can more positively influence the motivation of children, enhance the children’s learning, and contribute to the effectiveness of children’s language learning.

An effective teacher must do his or her best to have a good rapport with parents for the good of the child, and have positive attitudes towards children to make them participate in classroom activities. The challenge for an effective teacher is to develop his or her ability to help the children achieve learning outcomes. The teacher needs to recognise that children’s attitudes to learning and using language are key factors for successful learning. The good language environment should be one where children feel at ease, challenged and stimulated, and it should maintain the children’s engagement with the work of the classroom. The choice of teaching strategies influences children’s learning. An effective teacher is able to match teaching strategies to children’s needs, skills, and interests. The best interactive classroom will allow children to be more involved in their own learning.

1.7. Summary of the literature review

A number of research projects and theories about the home environment, students’ attitudes and motivation to language learning, and school factors affecting language learning have been reviewed.

The home environment, including parents’ literacy in the mother tongue, parents’ attitudes to language learning, parental involvement in school, and specific factors such as books, newspapers and other media (i.e. The Special Broadcasting Service Radio and television), has been identified as a major factor affecting students' language learning.
Regarding the parents' literacy in the mother tongue, the researchers stress that when parents are competent in their mother tongue and use the mother tongue at home with their children, their children generally communicate with them in the same language. Researchers have found that parents' attitudes to their own language help their children learn and maintain their mother tongue. Cooperation between teachers and parents has an important effect on students' learning. Where there is positive cooperation between the home and the school, school progress can result. Researchers argue that parent involvement can improve their children's learning. Schools can improve their students' learning if they involve parents in supporting their children's school learning. The fact that parents' involvement in school displays a number of positive attitudes to their children helps them to improve their competence in learning language. The frequency of the contact with teacher can include parent-teacher meeting and school activities. Parents can check on their children's progress and cooperate with teachers. In order to find the reasons why some second language learners are more successful at language learning than others, several studies have focused on students' attitudes and motivation to language learning. A distinction has been made between two kinds of motivation: integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Attitudes and motivation lead the learner to seek out the opportunities to learn language.

With regard to the school factors affecting language learning, researchers have focused on the relationship between the first and the second language, the approaches to second language learning used in the classroom, and the general qualities and role of a good teacher. Two groups of approaches were examined. These were considered to provide an explanation of how the second language is learned: The Grammar-Translation approach, and the Communicative approach. Researchers argue that children who have competence in the first language are in a favourable position to learn a second language. Researchers also argue that the teaching methods must have some effect on a students' success. Students need to be given opportunities to practise and use language, and students must play an active role in the learning process. In addition, the
qualities of a good teacher are considered as crucial factors that influence students' language learning. The qualities and the role of an effective teacher can be identified as an ability to form a link between the home and the school, being interested in the skills and interests of children, and making all children participate in learning.

The literature has stressed the influence of home factors, student factors and school factors on the language learning (Figure 1.1). Based on the data analysis, the remainder of the study will look at the influence of these factors on the improvement of students' Vietnamese language competence.

**Figure 1.1.** The present study involves the influence of home factors, school factors, and student factors on students' effective language learning

1. Home factors consist of parents' competence in the mother tongue, parents' attitudes to learning language, and parents' involvement in the school.
2. Student factors consist of students' attitudes and motivation to language learning.
3. School factors consist of the approaches to second language learning used in the classroom, and the role and qualities of a good teacher.
CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Introduction

The hypothesis of the study was that students’ competence in Vietnamese was affected by parents’ competence in Vietnamese, parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese, parental involvement in school activities, students’ attitudes and motivation to learning Vietnamese, and school factors including the teaching strategies and the role and the qualities of teachers.

The intention of this present study was to eventually inform attempts to improve Vietnamese language learning/teaching in multicultural education. In this study, the qualitative methodology was employed to examine factors that influenced students’ competence in Vietnamese.

2.2. Aims and Objectives

The aims of this research included the following:

1. To identify factors which affect the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

2. To recommend strategies to improve Vietnamese language learning/teaching in multicultural education.

As we have seen, the literature stressed that home factors, student factors and school factors affect student language learning.

The home environment included parents’ competence in Vietnamese, parents’ attitudes to Vietnamese language learning, parental involvement in their children’s school. The latter included the frequency of parents’ contact with teachers concerning their children’s language learning, and parents’
help children with their homework. Students’ attitudes and motivation involved the use of Vietnamese at home, school, outside the home and school, and the reasons for learning Vietnamese. School factors involved the influence of the teaching strategies, and teacher qualities and the role of a good teacher.

In this research the major findings are reported in the relation to children’s competence in Vietnamese. More specifically, the aim of this research is to examine the significant data relating to the areas of teaching and learning Vietnamese in New South Wales primary schools.

In doing this, the research was guided by five questions:

**2.3. Research Questions**

1. What is the influence of parents’ competence in Vietnamese on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
2. What is the influence of parents’ attitudes to Vietnamese language learning on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
3. What is the influence of parental involvement in their children’s school on children’s Vietnamese language learning?
4. What is the influence of children’s attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning on their Vietnamese language competence?
5. What is the influence of school factors on the children’s Vietnamese language learning?

**2.4. Preparation of the survey**

Subjects: The subjects in this study were students of primary school age in Public schools and Community Languages schools, their parents and teachers. These included: 250 students (90 students in Public schools and 160 students in Community Languages schools), 250 parents (90 parents of
students in public schools and 160 parents of students in Community Languages schools), and 20 teachers (7 teachers in Public schools and 13 teachers in Community Languages schools).

Participants: The survey was undertaken within the Sydney region of the New South Wales Department of Education. Within this region there were approximately 25 Public schools and 18 Community Languages schools teaching Vietnamese. This survey involved children aged between 9 and 11. A total sample of 13 schools, consisting of 5 Public schools and 8 Community Languages schools, were available for the survey. Teachers, parents and students were all of Vietnamese background.

Instruments: The survey was conducted by means of Questionnaires, the Vietnamese Language Basic Skills Test, and the teacher interviews.

2.4.1. Questionnaires

The questionnaires for parents and letters to parents written in Vietnamese translated by the researcher, and they were checked by a colleague who is a current interpreter with National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATT) level 3.

The survey was anonymous. A participant did not need to supply his or her name nor the name of his or her school anywhere on the questionnaire. All responses were treated confidentially and the data were only used for the purposes of this research. The research volunteer could withdraw at any time. Each participant was allocated a code. The name of the schools, students, parents, and teachers were referred to by code. The code number was on the right top of the parent questionnaire, the student questionnaire, and the Basic Skills Test. Each student and his or her parent had the same code number to match his or her name with his or her parent’s name, his or her teacher and the name of his or her school. For example, in school A 20 students and one teacher teaching Vietnamese took part in the study. The code for the students, parents and teachers of school A were as follows:
S1/P1/TA (S1 = student1, P1 = parent1, TA = teacher of school A), and S2/P2/TA...S20/P20/TA. If there were 2 teachers teaching Vietnamese in School A, the code of each teacher was TA1, TA2.

Survey items in the questionnaires related to parents’ competence in Vietnamese, parents’ attitudes to Vietnamese learning, parental involvement in their children’s school, and students’ attitudes and motivation to language learning. The groups and number of items were:

1. Parents’ competence in Vietnamese: 4 items,
2. Parents’ attitudes to Vietnamese learning: 4 items,
3. Parental involvement in school: 2 items,
4. Parents’ concerns about Vietnamese language learning, and
5. Students’ attitudes and motivation to language learning: 5 items.

The questionnaires and the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test were then pilot tested on a small group of subjects, 25 students and their parents from two schools not being surveyed, with the assistance of two Vietnamese language teachers from these schools. Based on the pilot study results, both the questionnaires and the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test were revised with the cooperation of two teachers involved in the pilot study. (The questionnaires for parents and students consisted of some questions, which were not relevant to the aims of the study, and some questions on the Basic Skills Test were too difficult for primary school students to answer). After subsequent refinement, the questionnaires and the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test were submitted to the New South Wales Department of Education in an application to conduct the survey.

**Parent Questionnaire**

The data were obtained in parent questionnaires. It was difficult to assess the quality of the environment provided by the home in relation to children’s Vietnamese language learning for a number of reasons. First of all, the home environment factors which were related to children’s Vietnamese language learning had to be identified. It was not possible to test
the parents for proficiency in the Vietnamese language, so the information for this relied on parent self-assessment. The final eight-question questionnaire was designed for parents to examine their influence on their children’s Vietnamese language learning. The questions were grouped under 3 sections (See Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).

*Parents’ competence in Vietnamese*

Questions 1

It was felt that the formal educational background of the parents was a significant factor in the home, since their own experiences of education including competence in their mother tongue would be necessary for them to assist or judge their children’s Vietnamese language competence. For Vietnamese competence, the parents were asked, “How would you rate your competence in Vietnamese?” (Question 1). The parents responded to each question on a 5-point scale ranging from very low =1 to very high =5.

*Attitudes to language learning and the media*

Questions 2-5

Regarding the attitudes to language learning, the parents were asked the following questions:

Question 2: “How often do you speak Vietnamese in your home?”

Question 3: “How often do you read Vietnamese books/newspapers to your children?”

Parents were asked to rate the frequency of listening to SBS radio and watching television (TV) with their children:

Question 4: “How often do you listen to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) with your children?” and

Question 5: “How often do you watch Television (Vietnamese programs) with your children?”
Parents responded to each question on a 5-point scale ranging from never = 1 to very often = 5.

**Parental involvement**

The research focused on two general categories of parental involvement in their children’s school: the frequency of parents’ contact with Vietnamese language teachers, and the amount of help parents gave their children with their homework. The parents were asked: “How often do you have contact with your children’s Vietnamese language teacher to express your concerns relating to your children’s learning Vietnamese?” (Question 6), and “How often do you help your children with their homework?” (Question 7).

Parent responded to each question on a 5-point scale ranging from never = 1 to very often = 5. Parents were asked: “The most pressing concerns you have when you assist your children to learn the Vietnamese language?” (Question 8: open question).

**Student Questionnaire**

A questionnaire consisting of a student profile and 5 questions was designed for students. This was to find out students’ attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning. The questionnaire consisted of 2 sections. The first section of the student profile was used to classify and match his or her questionnaire with his or her parent’s questionnaire, and to his or her Basic Skills Test. These results were not used in the analysis of the data. The second section involved students’ attitudes and motivation to learning Vietnamese, and the third section involved students’ competence in Vietnamese and was completed by the teacher(s) and the researcher (Appendix 4).
Student profile

The student did not need to write his or her name nor the name of his or her school anywhere on the questionnaire.

Attitudes and Motivation

Questions 1-5

The student was asked to explain his or her motivation and attitudes to the Vietnamese language. The student was asked: “How often do you speak Vietnamese in your home?” (Question 1). “How often do you speak Vietnamese at school?” (Question 2). “How often do you speak Vietnamese outside the home and school?” (Question 3). The student responded to each question on a 5-point scale ranging from never = 1 to very often = 5.

The last two questions were: “Studying the Vietnamese language is important for me because it is my mother tongue” (Question 4), and Question 5: “It is good to start studying Vietnamese at primary school, because it enables me to continue learning Vietnamese in high school”. The student responded to each question on the Likert Scale (a five-point scale) scored from “Strongly Disagree = 1” to “Strongly Agree = 5”. The following codes were applied to tabulate the results: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, and SA = Strongly Agree.

Students’ competence in Vietnamese

Based on class records and four syllabus outcomes, the class teacher assessed their students’ competence in spoken Vietnamese. Based on the results of the Vietnamese Basic Skills Test, the researcher assessed the students’ competence in written Vietnamese with the assistance of the two teachers from two schools not being surveyed. All teachers were voluntarily involved in the study.
2.4.2. The Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test

The Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test consisting of four questions was designed to assess students’ competence in written Vietnamese (Appendix 5).

There is no Vietnamese Language Basic Skills Test provided by the Department of Education. The outcomes for the communicating in the LOTE from the Generic Syllabus Framework (Languages other than English-Consultation draft, 1996) issued by the New South Wales Board of Studies were used to design the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test. The NSW Board of Studies states: “Teachers may adapt the above outcomes as appropriate for their programs in particular languages” (NSW Board of Studies. Language Other Than English: K-6: Generic Syllabus Framework: Consultation draft, 1996: 13-15).

The works of Ingram (1984) and Wylie and Ingram (1991) on the Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ASLPR) test were also examined in detail by the researcher.

The Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating Scale (ASLPR) is potentially an important tool for developing nationally agreed measures of language proficiency in Australia. Developed with reference to English, the ASLPR has been modified and trialled with other languages. However, language-specific exemplars should be provided (Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training-Australia’s Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (Known as the White Paper), 1991a: 75).

In addition, discussions were held with principals and LOTE teachers with particular skills and interests in Vietnamese language teaching.
As a result, the following Two Four-Point Scales were designed and used to assess students’ competence in Vietnamese.

**Two Four-Point Scales**

The measurement of Vietnamese language learning skills involved the use of two Four-Point Scales. Two Four-Point Scales scored from (1) to four (4) were designed to measure individual students’ ability in using spoken communication and written language. Each scale consisted of 4 outcomes.

For students to progress through the outcomes they must have achieved all previous outcomes. For example, if a child was at outcome four, then he or she was assumed to have achieved outcomes 1, 2, and 3. The outcomes that a child achieved in Vietnamese language learning were used to measure Vietnamese language proficiency in order to correlate this with home factors, school factors and student factors.

The highest rating was defined as “Excellent” for students who achieved outcome 4. The lowest rating was defined as “Poor” for students who satisfied outcome 1, while the ratings of 2 and 3 were defined as “Fair” and “Good” respectively.

The ability in understanding and usage of both spoken and written language could be summarized as follows: Outcome 1: Poor, Outcome 2: Fair, Outcome 3: Good, and Outcome 4: Excellent.

The four outcomes according to which the students' oral and written language ability were designated as follows:

*Spoken communication*

1 [ ] understand some basic greetings, give name, age, address etc...
2 [ ] express daily requirements, ask simple questions and make simple statements.
3 [ ] participate in casual conversation (e.g. discussion familiar topics among friends)
4 [ ] understand SBS radio and television programs (including
Vietnamese films, and videos), and take part in any group discussion and speak fluently.

**Written language**

1 [ ] read some Vietnamese signs and short words through the observation of pictures.
2 [ ] locate and recognize known words in the text.
3 [ ] write words and correct sentences.
4 [ ] read books, newspapers, magazines etc., and write informal letters, write a story with a simple sentence (Appendix 4, Section 3).

With regard to the students' writing skills, the Basic Skills Test involved the use of a multiple-choice comprehension. The Basic Skills Test was based on a Three Level Reading consisting of a series of statements as follows:

a. *Literal comprehension*: Reading the passage to see what is actually said. The answer is in the text. For example: Tick the statements that say what the author actually said.

b. *Inferential/interpretive comprehension*: Reading the passage to make inferences about what the author might mean. Search for clues in the text and think about the answer. For example: Tick the statements that you think the author meant.

c. *Evaluative/Applied comprehension*: The answer will not be found by words in the text. The answer involves the use of interpretation or judgement. For example: Tick the statements that you think the author would support.

### 2.4.3. Teacher interviews

Introduction

It was hypothesised that the improvement of the students' competence in Vietnamese was influenced by school factors including the teaching
strategies and the qualities of teachers. "The way in which teachers teach is strongly influenced by their own self-perception as individuals, and as teachers" (Lewis, 1993: 30).

Regarding the influence of school factors on children’s competence in Vietnamese, the qualitative methodology was used.

The researcher carried out a semi-structured interview with Vietnamese language teachers whose students were involved in the study. It was believed that

quality teaching and best practices are characterised by those teachers who utilise a wide variety of strategies in the classroom...Effective teachers are able to accommodate different learning styles and provide their students with time to experiment with applications from a diverse range of strategies and technologies (Fry and Morrow, 1994: 1).

The findings from the analysis of the teacher interview responses were used to examine the influence of school factors on children’s competence in Vietnamese.

Instruments

The survey was conducted by means of a semi-structured interview with Vietnamese language teachers. The teachers participated in interviews in which they were asked to indicate their background: (1) Their teaching experience and formal education, (2) Their teaching methods “What teaching methods do you think are effective for your students to learn Vietnamese?” (3) The teaching strategies used during their day-to-day work in the classroom “What teaching strategies do you use to teach Vietnamese in your school?”, (4) The use of reinforcement techniques, “What reinforcement techniques do you think are effective for your students in the classroom”, (5) The role and qualities an effective teacher needs to have,
"What role and qualities do you think an effective teacher needs to have?", and (6) The teachers' perceptions of some special teaching strategies, "In order to help children to develop language competence, some researchers think that children need opportunities to take part in decisions about their own learning, need to be given the opportunities to negotiate of their reading materials, and need to be given opportunities to make their own correction of mistakes. How do you feel about this? What did you do about this?" (Appendix 6).

The conversations were recorded and the transcript of each teacher's comments was prepared for content analysis. All teachers' comments were categorised into the presentation of data to be analysed.

2.5. Administration

Conducting the survey involved a number of strategies:

An explanation of the purpose and nature of the study was given to each principal who advised teachers and students participating in the survey. Visits were made to teachers and students in Public schools and Community Languages schools teaching Vietnamese to explain the purposes of the survey, the student questionnaire, parent questionnaire, and the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test. Letters to parents were sent through students to request their permission for their child to take part in this research.

In order to evaluate the child's developing Vietnamese language, the two tests were administered. The first Basic Skills Test and the second Basic Skills Test were carried out within a 10-month period.

The data were collected over four stages between March 1999 and April 2000.

Stage 1. The data were collected from the first of March 1999 to 30th of April 1999.
This period involved 250 parents (n=250) and their children (n=250). The questionnaires for students were distributed during class time along with consent letters, and the questionnaires for parents were sent through their children. Parents and students received sealable envelopes in which to return the questionnaires. If both parents and students were willing to take part in this research, parents were requested to complete the permission note along with the attached questionnaire and return it in the envelope provided by the researcher. Accompanying the questionnaire was a letter asking parents to complete the questionnaire and put it in the envelope provided, to be returned by their child to their teacher. The questionnaire was estimated to take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

The questionnaires were sent to the parents of 250 students and 202 of the questionnaires were completed and returned. These included 60 parents of children in Public Schools and 142 parents of children in Community Languages Schools, a response rate of 80.08%.

**Stage 2.** The first Basic Skills Test was conducted. The data were collected from the 15th of May 1999 to 31st of July 1999.

In this stage, there were 128 students who took part in Vietnamese Language Basic Skills Test (n = 128). These consisted of 35 students in Public Schools and 93 students in Community Languages Schools (Ethnic Schools).

All participants in this stage consisted of students who participated in stage 1 of the research. Letters were sent to 202 parents to request permission for their children to take part in the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test. If both parents and their children were willing to participate in the test, they completed the permission note and returned it in the envelope provided by the researcher.
Of the 202 parents who returned completed questionnaires, there were 128 parents who gave permission for their children to take part in the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test.

**Stage 3.** The second Basic Skills Test was conducted. The data were collected from the first of November 1999 to the first of December 1999.

In this stage, there were 128 students \((n = 128)\) who took part in the Vietnamese Basic Skills Test.

The First Basic Skills Test and the Second Basic Skills Test involved the use of the same test and the same students, with the assistance of the same teachers in order to control for and ascertain the improvement of students' Vietnamese language proficiency.

**Stage 4.** Teacher interviews: The teacher interviews were conducted from the first of March 2000 to the 15\(^{th}\) of April 2000.

Participants

In this section, the data were drawn from two main groups of participants: the 20 teacher participants in Public schools and Community Languages schools were those whose students took part in the study. Among the 20 teachers \((n=20)\), there were 7 teachers in Public schools and 13 teachers in Community Languages schools. Three teachers had from 4-6 years of teaching experience (15%), and 17 teachers had from 7-9 years of teaching experience (85%). Of the 20 teachers, 12 teachers (60%) had tertiary teaching qualifications from Vietnam, and had continued their studies in Australia, receiving tertiary qualifications in teaching in Australia. Eight teachers (40%) had tertiary teaching qualifications from Vietnam and the Teaching Languages Other than English certificate gained in Australia (LOTE).
The conduct of the interviews

Before conducting the interviews, several strategies were used in order to establish contact with the teachers and to obtain their permission to be interviewed: (1) Thirteen principals of Public schools and Community Languages schools were consulted by telephone or personal visit to explain the purposes of the interview, (2) The researcher took part in staff meetings organised by the principals in order to explain the purposes of the interviews, and invite the teachers to participate in the interviews.

All participants were guaranteed the "privacy of participants". The researcher used Vietnamese, English or both languages, depending on the participants' wishes. The interviews were recorded if the participants gave permission. The tape was used simply to recall details. When the report was finished, the recordings were erased. The participant's Pseudonyms in the study for the participants were used. The participant's real name did not appear in the researcher's records. The name of the participant's school was not recorded. The records were kept in a secure cabinet at the University. Only the researcher and supervisors had access to the records.

Participation in the interview was voluntary and the participant could withdraw at any time without having to give the researcher any reason. The teachers were contacted by telephone, by personal visit or by letter to conduct the interview, and consent forms were obtained.

As a result, twenty teachers (20) whose students took part in the Vietnamese Basic Skills Test were contacted by telephone, by letter or personal visit to participate in the interview, and 20 consent forms were obtained (n=20), a response rate of 100%. The interviews were conducted by telephone or individually after school hours. The interview with each teacher varied from 20 to 30 minutes. The interviews were carried out within a 5-week period.

Since the researcher served as a Vietnamese language teacher in one of the schools being surveyed during the research, and has personal experience in Vietnamese language teaching, the validity of the responses, the teacher
interviews, and the assessment of the Basic Skills Tests were deemed appropriate.

2.6. Data

The data used in this study were categorised as follow:

* Children’s competence in Vietnamese consisted of: (1) Children’s competence in spoken Vietnamese, and (2) children’s competence in written Vietnamese. Alpha reliability for the scale of the first BST 1999 was .8333, and Alpha reliability for the scale of the second BST 1999 was .7511.

* The home environment consisted of: (1) Parents’ competence in Vietnamese, and (2) Parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese.

Parents’ competence in Vietnamese: There were 4 items in this category: (1) Speaking Vietnamese, (2) Listening Vietnamese, (3) Reading Vietnamese, and (4) Writing Vietnamese. Alpha reliability for the scale was .7893.

Parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese: There were 4 items in this category: (1) The frequency of parents’ use of Vietnamese at home, (2) The frequency of parents’ reading of Vietnamese books to children, (3) The frequency of parents’ listening to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs), and (4) The frequency of parents’ watching television (Vietnamese programs). Alpha reliability for the scale was .7829.

* Parental involvement in their children’s school: There were 2 items in this category: (1) Parents’ contact with their children’s Vietnamese language teacher, (2) The frequency with which parents helped their children with their homework. Alpha reliability for the scale was .5421.

* Parents’ concerns about Vietnamese language learning: Of the 128 parents who took part in the survey, 81 parents answered the open question. There were 81 parents’ responses which responded in the following categories: (1) Maintaining the Vietnamese language and cultural virtues, (2) The home environment including the role of parents in language learning, and the specific factors of the home environment, (3) The role of the teacher and the school, and (4) Other concerns.
* Children’s attitudes and motivation to learning Vietnamese: There were 5 items in this category: (1) The frequency of children’ use of Vietnamese at home, (2) The frequency of children’ use of Vietnamese at school, (3) The frequency of children’s use of Vietnamese outside the home and school, (4) Children’s learning Vietnamese because it is their mother tongue, and (5) Children’s learning Vietnamese at primary school as necessary. Alpha reliability for the scale was .8267.

* Teachers’ perceptions of teaching strategies, and the role and qualities of an effective teacher: There were 6 items in this category: (1) Teaching experience, and formal education, (2) Teaching strategies, (3) Teaching strategies used in the classroom, (4) The use of reinforcement techniques, (5) The role and qualities of an effective teacher, and (6) The teachers’ perceptions of some special teaching strategies.

**2.7. TECHNIQUES OF ANALYSIS**

This study used mainly information available through the student and parent questionnaires, the results of the second Basic Skills Test, as well as the teacher interviews.

For the purposes of the survey, it was decided to obtain not only quantitative data but also qualitative data. The qualitative approach was used to interpret and illuminate the data that were available.

Broadly the following strategies were used:
1. Descriptive statistics were used to address the questions regarding the parents’ competence in Vietnamese, parents’ attitudes to Vietnamese language learning, parental involvement in the school, and children’s attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning.
2. Test analysis was used to check the reliability of the pilot study and the main study data. The paired t-test was used to check the significance of the improvement in the Basic Skills Test.
3. To address the research question concerning the influence of school factors on children's competence in Vietnamese, the major purpose was to generate qualitative information on what Vietnamese language teachers perceived to be their teaching strategies used in the classroom, and the role and qualities of an effective teacher.

The interpretation concentrated on the influence of the home environment, parental involvement in school, children's attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning, and teachers' perceptions of teaching strategies and the role and qualities of an effective teacher on children's competence in Vietnamese.
CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to look for the answers to the following questions:

1. What is the influence of parents’ competence in Vietnamese on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
2. What is the influence of parents' attitudes to Vietnamese language learning on their children’s competence in Vietnamese?
3. What is the influence of parental involvement in school on their children’s Vietnamese language learning?
4. What is the influence of the children’s attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning on their Vietnamese language competence?
5. What is the influence of school factors on the children’s Vietnamese language learning?

The findings from the Basic Skills Tests, the questionnaires, and teacher interviews were categorised in the following sections:

Section 3.1. Alpha reliability analysis
Section 3.2. The results of the Basic Skills Tests of Vietnamese language competence for Vietnamese children
Section 3.3. Parental data
Section 3.4. Parental involvement in school
Section 3.5. Children’s attitudes and motivation to learning Vietnamese
Section 3.6. School factors
3.1. Alpha reliability analysis

Test analysis was used to check the reliability of the pilot study and the main study data. The results are shown in Table 3.1, and Appendix 7-17.

Table 3.1 Alpha reliability estimates for students’ competence in Vietnamese, parents’ competence in Vietnamese, parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese, parents’ involvement in school, and students’ attitudes and motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Pilot Study (N=25)</th>
<th>Main Study (N=128)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ competence in Vietnamese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First BST 1999</td>
<td>.9547</td>
<td>.8333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second BST 1999</td>
<td>.7511</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Parents’ competence in Vietnamese</td>
<td>.6718</td>
<td>.7893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese</td>
<td>.9152</td>
<td>.7829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Parents’ involvement in school</td>
<td>.6699</td>
<td>.5421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Students’ attitudes and motivation</td>
<td>.8406</td>
<td>.8267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The alpha reliability of the students’ competence in Vietnamese, and the four other factors ranged between 0.5421 and 0.8333 for the main study data, and between 0.6699 and 0.9547 for the pilot study data. These results which are shown in Table 3.1 for both the pilot and main study indicate that the measure of students’ competence in Vietnamese and each of the other four factors is reliable.
3.2. Results of the Basic Skills Tests of Vietnamese language competence for Vietnamese children: Children’s competence in Vietnamese

The results of the Basic Skills Tests of children’s competence in Vietnamese are shown in Table 3.2, Table 3.3, and Figures 3.2 – 3.5.

Table 3.2 BASIC SKILLS TESTS: Children’s competence in spoken Vietnamese (N=128)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken Vietnamese</th>
<th>Spoken Vietnamese</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First BST</td>
<td>Second BST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>14 10.9%</td>
<td>- 14 (10.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>53 41.4%</td>
<td>- 35 (27.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>53 41.4%</td>
<td>+ 3 (2.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>8 6.3%</td>
<td>+ 50 (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>128 100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>128 100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most children were rated as having good or excellent competence in spoken Vietnamese: An increase of 41.4% between the two tests.

Figure 3.2 The First Basic Skills Test: Children’s competence in spoken Vietnamese

![First BST:Children's competence in spoken Vietnamese](chart.png)
Figure 3.3  The Second Basic Skills Test: Children’s competence in spoken Vietnamese

![Graph showing children's competence in spoken Vietnamese]

Table 3.3  BASIC SKILLS TESTS: Children’s competence in written Vietnamese (N=128)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Vietnamese First BST</th>
<th>Written Vietnamese Second BST</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>-9 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (7.00)</td>
<td>00 (28.9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>-27 (21.10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 (50.00)</td>
<td>37 (28.9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>+4 (3.12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 (38.3)</td>
<td>53 (41.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>+32 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (4.7)</td>
<td>38 (29.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 128</td>
<td>Total 128</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most children were rated as having good or excellent competence in written Vietnamese: An increase of 28.12% between the two tests.
Figure 3.4  The First Basic Skills Test: Children’s competence in written Vietnamese

First BST: Children's competence in written Vietnamese

Figure 3.5  The Second Basic Skills Test: Children ‘s competence in written Vietnamese

Second BST: Children's competence in written Vietnamese
A comparison of the figures in Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 indicates that there was a difference in the children’s competence in Vietnamese over time. There was a large proportion of children rated as having good or excellent competence in spoken Vietnamese (an increase of 41.4 percent), and an increase in the proportion of children’s competence in written Vietnamese (an increase of 28.12 percent).

The results from the first Basic Skills Test and the second Basic Skills Test indicate that there was an improvement in children’s competence in spoken and written Vietnamese.

The improvement is supported by the paired t-test.

**The paired t-test:** The paired t-test was used to test the null hypothesis that there was no difference in the students’ competence in Vietnamese between the first Basic Skills Test and the second Basic Skills Test.

The results from the paired-t-test are shown in Figure 3.6 and Figure 3.7.

**Figure 3.6** Paired t-test for the children’s competence in spoken Vietnamese: The first Basic Skills Test and the second Basic Skills Test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Number paired</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>2-tail Sig.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First BST</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>.933</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>6.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second BST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>.669</td>
<td>5.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Paired Differences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE of Mean</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-.91</td>
<td>.281</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>-36.753</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.6 shows the results from this t-test. In the First Basic Skills Test, children had an average of 2.43 competence in spoken Vietnamese, while in the Second Basic Skills Test children had an average of 3.34 competence in spoken Vietnamese. The Standard deviation of the 128 differences is 0.281. The t-value is -36.753. The degree of freedom is
127. On average, the difference between the two means is -0.91. The observed significance level associated with this difference is 0.000. Since this significance level is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis Ho is rejected. The results from the paired-t test showed that there was a difference in the students’ competence in spoken Vietnamese. In conclusion, there was an improvement in the children’s competence in spoken Vietnamese (Appendix 18).

**Figure 3.7** Paired t-test for the children’s competence in written Vietnamese: The first Basic Skills Test and the second Basic Skills Test.

\[ \text{t-test for paired samples} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Number paired</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>2-tail Sig.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE of mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First BST</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>0.645</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>0.692</td>
<td>6.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second BST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.768</td>
<td>6.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Paired Differences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE of Mean</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-0.60</td>
<td>0.619</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>-10.993</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.7 shows the results from this t-test. In the First Basic Skills Test, children had an average of 2.41 competence in written Vietnamese, while in the Second Basic Skills Test children had an average of 3.01 competence in written Vietnamese. The Standard deviation of the 128 differences is 0.619. The standard error of the mean difference is 5.47. The t-value is -10.993. The degree of freedom is 127. On average, the difference between the two means is -0.60. The observed significance level associated with this difference is 0.000. Since this significance level is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis Ho is rejected. The results from the paired-t test indicated that there was a significant difference in the students’ competence in written Vietnamese. In conclusion, there was an improvement in the children’s competence in written Vietnamese (Appendix 19).
3.3. Parental data

3.3.1. Parents’ competence in Vietnamese

Parents whose children took part in the research were asked to indicate their literacy in Vietnamese. Table 3.4 summarises the information of the parents’ competence in Vietnamese.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Speaking (%)</th>
<th>Listening (%)</th>
<th>Reading (%)</th>
<th>Writing (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>31 (24.2%)</td>
<td>67 (52.3%)</td>
<td>56 (43.8%)</td>
<td>62 (48.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>60 (46.9%)</td>
<td>39 (30.5%)</td>
<td>41 (32.00%)</td>
<td>49 (38.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>34 (26.6%)</td>
<td>22 (17.2%)</td>
<td>31 (24.2%)</td>
<td>17 (13.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3 (2.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speaking: Very high and high = 71.1%
Listening: Very high and high = 82.8%
Reading: Very high and high = 75.8%
Writing: Very high and high = 86.7%

The figures for “very high” and “high” reveal that a majority of Vietnamese parents believed they were highly competent in Vietnamese, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing Vietnamese. Of the 128 parents, 46.9% assessed themselves as being highly competent in speaking Vietnamese, 24.2% as being very highly competent in speaking Vietnamese, 26.6% as having average competence in speaking Vietnamese, and only 2.3% having low competence in speaking Vietnamese. Regarding the competence in Vietnamese listening, 30.5% of parents assessed themselves as having high competence in Vietnamese listening, 52.3% having very high competence in Vietnamese listening,
and 17.2% having average competence in Vietnamese listening. Of the 128 parents, 32% were self-assessed as having high competence in Vietnamese reading, 43.8% having very high competence in Vietnamese reading, and 24.2% having average competence in Vietnamese reading. Of the 128 parents, 38.3% believed that they had high competence in Vietnamese writing, 48.4% had very high competence in Vietnamese writing, and 13.3% of parents had average competence in Vietnamese writing.

3.3.2. Parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese

Parents were asked how often they used Vietnamese at home, read Vietnamese books or newspapers to their children, listened to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) with their children, and watched television (Vietnamese programs) with their children. The information is shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5  Parents’ attitudes to Vietnamese language learning and the media: Parents’ use of Vietnamese at home, reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers to their children, listening to SBS radio, and watching television with their children (Vietnamese programs) (N=128)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ use of Vietnamese at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>9 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>50 (39.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>69 (53.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>128</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ reading of Vietnamese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>books/newspapers to children</td>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>6 (4.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>26 (20.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>86 (67.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>10 (7.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>128</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ listening to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) with children</td>
<td>4 (3.1%)</td>
<td>32 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ watching TV (Vietnamese programs) with children</td>
<td>4 (3.1%)</td>
<td>31 (24.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Parents’ use of Vietnamese at home: Often and Very often 93%
* Parents’ reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers to children: Often and Very often 75%
* Parents’ listening to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) with children: Often and Very often 71.8%
* Parents’ watching TV (Vietnamese programs) with children: Often and Very often 72.6%

**Parents’ use of Vietnamese at home**

Over 93% of parents reported that they often used and very often used Vietnamese at home. Of the 128 parents, 39.1% often used Vietnamese at home, 53.9% very often used Vietnamese at home, and 7% used Vietnamese at home “sometimes”. The results shown in Table 3.5 indicate that parents often used their mother tongue when interacting with their children.
Parents’ reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers to children

As the information in Table 3.5 indicates, a majority (75%) of parents reported that they read Vietnamese books/newspapers to their children “often” and “very often”. Of the 128 parents, 67.2% often read Vietnamese books/newspapers to their children, 7.8% very often read Vietnamese books/newspapers to their children, 20.3% read Vietnamese books/newspapers to their children “sometimes”, and 4.7% of these parents hardly ever read Vietnamese books/newspapers to their children.

Parents’ listening to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) with their children

The figures for listening to SBS radio reported by parents were as follows: Of the 128 parents, 60.9% often listened to SBS radio with their children “often”, 10.9% very often listened to SBS radio with their children, 25% listened to SBS radio with their children “sometimes”, and 3.1% of these parents hardly ever listened to SBS radio with their children. The results shown in Table 3.5 confirm that parents and children often listened to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs).

Parents’ watching TV (Vietnamese programs) with their children

Of the 128 parents, 64.8% often watched television with their children, 7.8% very often watched television with their children, 24.2% watched television with their children “sometimes”, and 3.1% of these parents hardly ever watched television with their children. The results shown in Table 3.5 indicate that parents and children often watch television (Vietnamese programs).

3.4. Parental involvement in their children’s school

Parents were asked how often they had contact with their Vietnamese language teachers and help their children with their homework. The responses are shown in Table 3.6.
Table 3.6 Parents’ involvement in their children’s school: Parents’ contact with Vietnamese language teachers, and helping their children with their homework (N=128)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ contact with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese language teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>13 (10.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>44 (34.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>67 (52.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>4 (3.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>128</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ helping children with their</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>6 (4.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>36 (28.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>40 (31.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>46 (35.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>128</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Parents’ contact with Vietnamese language teachers: Often and Very Often: 55.4%
- Parents' helping their children with their homework: Often and Very often: 67.2%

3.4.1. **Parents’ contact with their children’s Vietnamese language teachers**

When asked about how often they had contact with their children’s Vietnamese language teachers to express concerns relating to their children’s learning Vietnamese, 55.4% of parents indicated that they often and very often had contact with Vietnamese language teachers (52.3% = often; 3.1% = very often), 34.4% indicated that they had contact with Vietnamese language teachers “sometimes”, and 10.2% hardly ever had contact with their children’s Vietnamese language teachers.
3.4.2. Parents’ helping children with their homework

Parents were also asked how often they helped their children with their homework. Responses were received from 128 parents. Of the 128 parents, 35.9% very often helped their children with their homework, 31.3% helped their children with their homework “often”, 28.1% sometimes helped their children with their homework, and 4.7% hardly ever helped their children with their homework.

3.4.3. Parents’ concerns about Vietnamese language learning

Regarding the open question: “The most pressing concerns you have when you assist your children in learning the Vietnamese language”, of the 128 parents, 63.28% parents expressed their concerns about Vietnamese language learning, and 36.72% did not answer this question. These concerns are categorised in Table 3.7, Appendix 20 and Appendix 21.

Maintenance of the Vietnamese language and cultural virtues

The parents (17.96%) indicated that they wanted their children to learn Vietnamese, because learning the Vietnamese language enabled their children to maintain Vietnamese culture.

The home environment

Of the 13.28% parents who responded about the home environment, 9.3% emphasised the role of parents in their children’s language learning, and 3.9% indicated their concerns about reading Vietnamese books or Newspapers and watching television or listening to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) with their children.

Most of them reported that they encouraged and assisted their children with learning Vietnamese at home, often read Vietnamese books or newspapers to their children, and listened to SBS radio and watched television (Vietnamese programs) with their children.
Table 3.7 Parents’ concerns about Vietnamese language learning: Parents responded to the open question: “The most pressing concerns you have when you assist your children in learning the Vietnamese language” (N=128)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of parents’ concerns</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Maintenance of the Vietnamese language and cultural values</td>
<td>23 (17.96%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Home environment</td>
<td>17 (13.28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*The role of parents in the children’s language learning</td>
<td>12 (9.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Parents’ reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers, listening to SBS radio or watching television (Vietnamese programs) with their children.</td>
<td>5 (3.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Children’s Vietnamese language competence</td>
<td>31 (24.21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The role of the Vietnamese language teachers</td>
<td>5 (3.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Other concerns</td>
<td>8 (6.25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>81 (63.28%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 128 parents, 17.96% showed interest in the maintenance of the Vietnamese language and cultural values, 13.28% showed interest in the home environment (the role of parents in the children’s language learning = 9.3%; parents’ reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers, listening to SBS radio or watching television with children = 3.9%), 24.21% showed interest in their children’s Vietnamese language competence, 3.9% were interested in the role of the Vietnamese language teachers, and 6.25% showed interest in other concerns (Appendix 20 and Appendix 21).

**Children’s Vietnamese language competence**

Parents were also interested in their children’s Vietnamese language competence. There were 31 parents (24.21%) who indicated that their
children should have a good pronunciation in speaking Vietnamese. Their concerns were that their children often spoke Vietnamese with an Australian accent, and confused the use of "tone" when writing Vietnamese words.

The role of Vietnamese language teachers

There were 5 (3.9%) parents involved in the survey who also felt that parents and teachers should help their children to take pleasure in learning the Vietnamese language. They declared that teachers were responsible for teaching children at school, but that parents were responsible for teaching their children at home.

Other concerns

Other concerns were mainly about maintaining community language schools, and the number of hours per week available for learning Vietnamese.

3.5. Children's attitudes and motivation to learning Vietnamese

In order to identify the attitudes and motivation which may affect the children's competence in Vietnamese, they were asked about the use of Vietnamese at home, school, outside their home and school, and their reasons for learning Vietnamese. As explained earlier, these children also took part in the first Basic Skills Test and the second Basic Skills Test. The information is presented in Table 3.2, Table 3.3, and Table 3.8.

3.5.1. Children's attitudes to learning the Vietnamese language

Children were asked how often they used Vietnamese at home, at school, and outside the home and school. Their responses are presented in Table 3.8.
**Table 3.8** Children’s attitudes to learning Vietnamese: Children’s use of Vietnamese at home, at school, and outside the home and school (N=128)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s use of Vietnamese at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1 (0.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>14 (10.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>27 (21.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>42 (32.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>44 (34.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s use of Vietnamese at school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>16 (12.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>15 (11.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>44 (34.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>53 (41.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s use of Vietnamese outside the home and school</td>
<td></td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>6 (4.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>36 (28.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>64 (50%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>22 (17.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Children’s use of Vietnamese at home: Often and Very often = 67.2%
* Children’s use of Vietnamese at school: Often = 41.4%
* Children’s use of Vietnamese outside the home and school: Often and Very often = 67.2%

**Children’s use of Vietnamese at home**

Children were asked how often they used Vietnamese at home. Of the 128 children, 67.2% reported that they used Vietnamese at home “often” and “very often” (often = 32.8%; Very often = 34.4%), 21.1% sometimes
used Vietnamese at home, and 11.7% never or hardly ever used Vietnamese at home (Never = 0.8%; Hardly ever = 10.9%). The information indicates that a majority of children used Vietnamese at home “often” or “very often”.

**Children’s use of Vietnamese at school**

The children were also asked about the use of the Vietnamese language at school. Again, they reported that they generally used Vietnamese at school. Of the 128 children, 41.4% reported using Vietnamese at school “often”, 34.4% used Vietnamese at school “sometimes”, and 24.2% showed that they never or hardly ever used Vietnamese at school (Never = 12.5%; Hardly ever = 11.7%). The information indicates that a moderate number of children used Vietnamese at school “often”.

**Children’s use of Vietnamese outside the home and school**

As indicated in Table 3.8, a majority of children used Vietnamese outside the home and school. Of the 128 children, 67.2% indicated that they often or very often used Vietnamese outside the home and school (Often = 50%; Very often = 17.2%), 28.1% used Vietnamese outside the home and school “sometimes”, and 4.7% used Vietnamese outside the home and school “hardly ever”. The findings indicate that a majority of children used Vietnamese outside the home and school “often” or “very often”.

**3.5.2. Reasons for learning Vietnamese**

Children were asked to indicate their reasons for learning Vietnamese. They responded to each question on the Likert Scale. The information is shown in Table 3.9.
Table 3.9  Children’s attitudes and motivation to learning Vietnamese:
Reasons for learning Vietnamese (N=128)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for learning Vietnamese:</th>
<th>Strongly Disagreed</th>
<th>Disagreed</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agreed</th>
<th>Strongly Agreed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese is the mother tongue</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 (7.8%)</td>
<td>25 (19.5%)</td>
<td>23 (18%)</td>
<td>38 (29.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>128</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is good to start studying Vietnamese at primary school, because it enables me to continue learning Vietnamese in high school</th>
<th>Strongly Disagreed</th>
<th>Disagreed</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agreed</th>
<th>Strongly Agreed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (0.8%)</td>
<td>1 (0.8%)</td>
<td>17 (13.3%)</td>
<td>76 (59.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33 (25.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>128</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Reasons for learning Vietnamese: Vietnamese is the mother tongue: Agreed and Strongly Agreed: 54.7%
- It is good to start studying Vietnamese at primary school, because it enables me to continue learning Vietnamese in high school: Agreed and Strongly Agreed: 85.2%

**Vietnamese as the mother tongue**

With regard to the statement: “Studying the Vietnamese language is important for me because it is my mother tongue”, the results indicated that a majority of children agreed with the statement. Of the 128 children, 54.7% of children agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (Agreed = 29.7%; Strongly Agreed = 25%), 27.3% indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (Disagreed = 19.5%; Strongly disagreed = 7.8%), and 18% were undecided.
It is good to start studying Vietnamese at primary school, because it enables me to continue learning Vietnamese in High School

Most of the children reported that learning Vietnamese at primary school was necessary to be able to continue learning Vietnamese in high school. Of the 128 children, 85.2% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (Agreed = 59.4%; Strongly Agreed = 25.8%), 1.6% indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (Disagreed = 0.8%; Strongly disagreed = 0.8%), and 13.3% were undecided.

3.6. School factors

The findings from the analysis of the teachers interview responses are presented for (1) Teachers’ background, (2) Teachers’ perceptions of teaching methods, (3) Teaching strategies used by teachers, (4) Teachers’ perceptions of the use of the reinforcement techniques, (5) Teachers’ perceptions of teacher qualities, and the role of the teacher, and (6) Teachers’ perceptions of special teaching strategies.

Teachers’ comments during the interviews were related to teaching strategies, teacher qualities, and the role of the teacher. The details are presented in Table 3.10, and Transcript (Appendix 22 and Appendix 23).

3.6.1. Teacher background

Teachers were asked a number of questions relating to their teaching experience and qualifications. Of the 20 teachers, 3 teachers (15%) had from 4 to 6 years of teaching experience, 17 teachers (85%) had from 7 to 9 years of teaching experience.

These teachers, who all had tertiary qualifications in Vietnam, continued their studies in Australia and received further qualifications in Australia. Of the 20 teachers, 12 teachers (60%) had tertiary qualifications in teaching in Vietnam and in Australia, and 8 teachers (40%) had tertiary qualifications in teaching in Vietnam and had gained
the Teaching Languages Other Than English certificate in Australia (LOTE)

**Table 3.10** School factors: Teacher background, teaching strategies, reinforcement techniques, teacher qualities and the role of the teacher, and special teaching strategies (N=20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher background</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 years of teaching experience</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9 years of teaching experience</td>
<td>17 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Tertiary qualifications in teaching in Vietnam and in Australia</td>
<td>12 (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Tertiary qualifications in Vietnam and Teaching Languages Other than English certificate (LOTE)</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching strategies</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use Vietnamese in classroom activities</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Focus on the four basic skills, and spelling in Vietnamese</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Classroom interaction: Combination of pair work and group work activity.</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching strategies used in the classroom</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student-centred and Communicative approach</td>
<td>18 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mixture of Teacher-centred and Student-centred techniques</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reinforcement techniques</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mixture of Verbal Gestures, and contact</td>
<td>14 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Activity</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proximity</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Token</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3.10 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher qualities and the role of the teacher</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- providing a link between home and school</td>
<td>18 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- being interested in skills, attitudes and interests of students</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- developing and maintaining positive attitudes towards students</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- making all students participate in learning</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special teaching strategies</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Over-correcting mistakes in the children’s language pattern assists them to write Vietnamese correctly</td>
<td>19 (95%) did not support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Children learn best when they are provided opportunities to participate in decisions about their own learning</td>
<td>3 (15%) did not support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher who tries his/her very best to get children interested in a story he/she is reading to them assists children to use language more fully</td>
<td>18 (90%) did not support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6.2. Teachers’ perceptions of teaching strategies

All teachers (100%) assessed themselves as generally tried to vary the activities in the classroom. They believed that in order to maintain students’ interest, a variety of instructional modes should be used, e.g. emphasising the maximum use of Vietnamese in classroom activities with a focus on lexical items and grammatical structures, developing students' independent learning skills through focusing on and practicing spelling in Vietnamese, and promoting the four basic skills, such as listening, talking, writing, and reading. They believed that listening and talking should be accompanied by visual aids; e.g. pictures, concrete materials, charts, signs, etc... Reading and writing should be
accompanied by questions in comprehension, discussion, etc… They also said that they tried to involve visual aids as much as possible.

One of these teachers expressed her experience in using visuals for language teaching as follows:

Learning from the given visual materials, students could have an opportunity to gain a profound and reasoned comprehension about what they were learning…using visual techniques in the language classroom is very much like the task of motivating students to interact in the target language (Teacher 20).

When talking about the use of teaching strategies, all the teachers stressed the need to develop the children’s ability to use the skills that contribute to children’s competence in Vietnamese, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing. They believed that these four basic skills speaking, listening, reading, and writing were interrelated (Teacher 1-20). “Depending on the students’ ability, the age, and the stage of schooling, the teacher is able to match teaching strategies to students’ needs” (Teacher 18).

With regard to listening and speaking skills, Teacher 8 stated:

One of the purposes of the speaking activity is to increase students’ interaction; so it is necessary to give every student in the classroom an opportunity to speak to other students, e.g. they should be able to employ a range of basic expressions (asking directions, telling the time, express opinions, etc). Students need to develop listening competence, they need to be helped to practice using a variety of materials (Teacher 8).
Teacher 16 stated: “in order to develop the students' listening skills, the teacher should prepare the listening materials relevant to the students' needs”.

Reading plays an important role in any language program. Teacher 11 stated:

I think one of the purposes of the reading is to develop reading skills to obtain information. In order to enhance the students' reading skills, the teacher should prepare the students for the reading through visual aids, basic texts accompanied by questions on comprehension, discussion of stories, etc. The reading will be done both aloud and silently (Teacher 11).

Apart from the speaking, listening, and reading skills, students needed to develop writing skills.

I think one of the purposes of the writing is to develop writing skills to practise a structure, and to check the comprehension. The teacher should prepare the students for the writing through visual aids, and writing model. The writing will be done by both the individually and in pairs. The most effective way is that the students' writing must be corrected by another student, and checked by the teacher (Teacher 3).

In addition to the four basic skills, children needed to be aware of the importance of the skills of spelling.

I think spelling in Vietnamese is very important. Children cannot write and read unless they can use standard spelling. Because of the limit of time, I only teach spelling and pronunciation incidentally (as the need arises) then
children are provided the opportunity to practise pronunciation and spelling of new words (Teacher 12).

When asked questions related to classroom activities, the most telling response was that the use of a combination of pair work and group work activity was an important strategy to cater for children in language learning (Teacher 1-20). They believed that the strategies that are employed will depend on the particular needs of children within a whole class situation.

Focusing on communication goals, one teacher said:

The teacher can give children an opportunity to interact in the classroom with the teacher and with other children, and it is necessary to relieve pressure from the individual, to allow more advanced students to help other, particularly to minimise teacher domination, I often use the pair work or group work activity (Teacher 14).

In order to discuss topics of interest or topics of learning, e.g. the exchange of information, ideas, opinions, feelings, etc..., the teachers used a mixture of group work and pair work activity. Teacher 12 stated: "Depending on the stage of schooling, for example, in Stage 3, the group work activity is effective. It provides maximum student talking time. But I often use the mixture of the pair work and the group work”.

3.6.3. Teaching strategies used by teachers

When talking about the teaching strategies that the teachers often used in the classroom, of the 20 teachers, 18 teachers (90%) claimed that they often used student-centred and communicative approaches in class, and 2 teachers (10%) reported that they used a mixture of teacher-centred and student-centred techniques.

In order to help children develop their effective language skills a majority of the teachers used communication activities and student-
centred techniques in the classroom. Teacher 4 said: “Through active participation students learn Vietnamese and use Vietnamese for communication wherever possible in the class. It is important that teacher and students are participants in such activities”. “The appropriate activities should be used for students in order to develop their skills” (Teacher 6). “Students need to practise communicative activities in order to develop their thinking skills” (Teacher 5). “When I prepare a lesson, I always keep in mind that a lesson is successful when it involves the children in learning actively” (Teacher 3). “A lesson should contain more student activity” (Teacher 9).

3.6.4. The use of reinforcement techniques

Regarding the use of reinforcement techniques, a majority of teachers agreed that positive reinforcement techniques enhanced children’s attention and maintained motivation. They reported that they used different reinforcement techniques, such as verbal, gestural, contact, activity, proximity, and token.

Of the 20 teachers, 14 teachers (70%) reported that they often used a mixture of verbal, gestural and contact, 10% used activity, 10% used proximity, and 10% of these teachers used token.

One teacher stated that:

When using reinforcement techniques, it is necessary to know the children’s needs, their culture and use the reinforcement in a way that is to be most effective with that group of children (Teacher 4).

Some of the following comments reflected the general opinion of all the teachers:

“I have used several means of reinforcement, giving children mark, stamps and stickers, and occasionally free time for whatever activity they choose” (Teacher 2). “I have found that an appropriate
reinforcement has encouraged Vietnamese children's communication skills" (Teacher 11). "I think verbal is the most important one" (Teacher 5).

Teacher 9 stated:

One of the most popular activities reinforcement in my classroom has become "getting Vietnamese signs and symbols" as a reward and asking children to design or create a story. This enhances their interest as well as their ability in narration and story making (Teacher 9).

Teacher 13 stated that:

The use of contact and proximity reinforcement is very useful with Vietnamese children. Although, perhaps I concentrate more on verbal reinforcement being self-conscious about their likes and dislikes. However, I know the children respond very well to this, even if it is in form of a discussion about their design and story or any other class work (Teacher 13).

One teacher said:

In my observation of the Vietnamese children in New South Wale primary schools, they are less comfortable with the verbal reinforcement used by the teacher. Perhaps of their cultural anticipation is either different or verbal reinforcement is considered as an interruption (Teacher 7).

"Any form of verbal interruption while speaking is considered very rude and impolite for a Vietnamese child. Instead, gestural reinforcement is more successful with them" (Teacher 19).
Teacher 15 stated:

My personal experience is that the Vietnamese children respond very comfortably with the gestural reinforcement by gentle head shakes and nodding -as- an approval instead of an eye contact, which makes them very self-conscious, and feel shy (Teacher 15).

“The gestural reinforcement is better than verbal reinforcement for the Vietnamese children but not as successful as activity reinforcement” (Teacher 20).

In summary, the teachers often provided positive reinforcement for appropriate performance, encouraged students to monitor their own performance, and used rewards, e.g. stickers, merit cards, verbal, gestural, etc, to encourage and acknowledge performance.

3.6.5. Teacher’s role and teacher qualities

The teachers believed that their role as teachers was to be interested in the skills, attitudes and interests of students, to develop and maintain positive attitudes towards students, and to make all the students participate in learning. However, they thought that, students’ progress could also be affected by the attitudes of parents. So, they seemed to conclude, an effective teacher should be a link between home and school.

An effective teacher must provide a link between home and school

The teachers were generally aware of the relationship between home and school. They stressed the importance of interactions between teachers and parents. Of the 20 teachers, 18 teachers (90%) reported that they often had contact with parents, and 2 teachers (10%) indicated that had contact with parents “sometimes”.

A majority of the teachers believed that the link between teachers and parents was a key to effective teaching and learning.
Teacher 8 stated: “I think the cooperation between teachers and parents is necessary to encourage children in learning”. “The link between parents and teachers provides parents with opportunities to discuss with teachers about their children’s progress in learning” (Teacher 6). Teacher 4 said, “I think the teacher must provide support for parents in understanding the teaching strategies to enable them to assist their children’s learning at home”. “School must enhance parental participation within the school through developing positive relationships with the teachers” (Teacher 13). The teachers, however, believed that “the positive interactions between teachers and parents contribute to teacher enthusiasm and motivation. Parents will understand the role of the teacher in teaching their children’s language learning” (Teacher 1). “I have the opportunities to discuss with parents about their children’s learning” (Teacher 19).

**An effective teacher must be interested in the skills, attitudes and interests of students**

All teachers (100%) were concerned about the attitudes and interests of students. The teachers involved in the interviews indicated that they used various actions to encourage, support, and enhance students’ learning.

One teacher reflected the general feeling of all teachers when he stated that he employed a variety of teaching strategies to stimulate students’ interest:

> In my class, I try to combine group work, and pair work activity. I think an effective teacher must not use one particular method of teaching, but select appropriate methods, learning styles, and strategies to suit the needs, interests and abilities of students (Teacher 20).

Generally speaking, the teachers felt they used the most appropriate teaching strategies according to their students’ learning needs. The teachers were interested in improving their children’s competence in
Vietnamese. Teacher 14 stated: “Children need the opportunity to discuss what they have learned”.

**An effective teacher must develop and maintain positive attitudes towards students**

All teachers (100%) involved in the interviews revealed that they generally had positive attitudes towards their students. They tried to be fair when dealing with students. They attempted to be positive when commenting on their students’ work. They tried to say something positive about their students’ work. Teacher 8 said: “I think the teachers must have positive attitudes to their students”. “The teacher does not treat students like infants” (Teacher 3). “In my opinion, the teacher must encourage students, and must be fair, treat them equally” (Teacher 15). “In my class, I often provide positive comments and encouragement to the children along with helpful feedback about progress” (Teacher 17). “In my class, I often encourage students to have positive attitudes to reading Vietnamese books and newspapers” (Teacher 18).

One teacher reflected the opinion of all the teachers when he said:

I always make any student feel encouraged and praised. I think it is no good to criticise students without trying something good. I always have positive praise for students’ work (Teacher 19).

**An effective teacher must make all students participate in learning**

All teachers wanted to maintain and develop effective classroom communication, provide a supportive learning environment, provide opportunities for students to develop the learning skills that enhance efficient communication.

They tried to utilise a variety of strategies in the classroom, including group work, cooperative learning, and practical activities to encourage students to participate in classroom activities.

Teacher 18 stated: “I encourage my students and provide opportunities for them to participate in classroom activities”. “I always
provide students with opportunities to practice their developing reading and speaking skills in a warm and friendly environment” (Teacher 10).

One teacher reflected the expectations of all the teachers when she said:

When I prepare a lesson I always think of the teaching activities, the procedures for teaching, and the sequence of questions that would make students take part in the lesson (Teacher 14).

In summary, the teachers indicated what they felt were the role and the qualities that an effective teacher needed to have as follows:

* providing a link between home and school for Vietnamese children.
* being interested in the skills, attitudes and interests of students.
* developing and maintaining a positive attitudes towards students.
* making all the students participate in learning.

3.6.6. Teachers’ perceptions of special teaching strategies

The teacher interviews also provided information about the teachers’ perceptions of specific teaching strategies. Three strategies were generated from the teachers’ comments.

Over-correcting mistakes in the children’s language patterns assists them to write Vietnamese correctly

Of the 20 teachers, 19 (95%) did not support the strategy that over-correcting mistakes in the children’s language patterns assisted them to write Vietnamese correctly, and 5% said that they did support this strategy.

The teachers generally thought that “over-correcting mistakes can be discouraging initially” (Teacher 9), and “Over-correcting mistakes may cause students to lose confidence when speaking and writing” (Teacher 1).

One teacher reflected the opinions of all the teachers when she said:
In my opinion, the constant correction of errors usually undermines self-confidence. But the teacher has to give feedback to the students, so that the students may learn from their mistakes (Teacher 10).

**Children learn best when they are provided with opportunities to participate in decisions about their own learning**

Of the 20 teachers, 3 teachers (15%) did not support the strategy that children learn best when they are provided with opportunities to participate in decisions about their own learning, and 17 teachers (85%) strongly supported the strategy.

The following perceptions reflected the general opinion of all the teachers: “Opportunities to participate in decisions on learning will make learning interesting and give children a sense of empowerment” (Teacher 18). “I think it is important for students to participate in decisions about their own learning. Students' participation in decisions on learning helps them to develop negotiation skills” (Teacher 8).

Teacher 1 said: “I agree with this strategy, but only to a certain extent. However, there are times when the teachers have to show the children how to learn and the best ways to learn”. Teacher 6 said: "Children need the opportunity to discuss what they have to learn, and how to learn".

**A teacher who tries his or her very best to get children interested in a story he or she is reading to them, assists children to use language more fully**

Of the 20 teachers, 18 teachers (90%) did not support the strategy that the teacher who tries his/her very best to get children interested in a story he/she is reading to them, assists children to use language more fully, and 2 teachers (10%) supported this strategy.

A majority of teachers did not believe that a teacher who tries his or her very best to get children interested in a story he or she is reading, assist children to use language more fully. They believed that “children
will use language more fully when the language is relevant to their needs” (Teacher 19). Teacher 3 stated: “However, reading of stories can be helpful, provided what is read is at a level that the children can understand”.

One teacher reflected the opinion of all the teachers when he said: “I think this strategy is not relevant to the student needs, as the language produced can only be limited to the topic area of the story. Also, this is only listening practice” (Teacher 12).

In summary, this section examined a number of findings relating to teacher background, teachers’ perceptions of teaching methods, teaching strategies used by teachers, teachers’ perceptions of the use of reinforcement techniques, teachers’ perceptions of the teacher’s role and teacher qualities, and teachers’ perceptions of special teaching strategies.

3.7. Some conclusions

This chapter summarised numerous factors contributing to the level of the children’s Vietnamese language proficiency. A number of points should be stressed:

- There was an improvement of children’s competence in Vietnamese.
- A majority of parents had high competence in Vietnamese.
- A majority of parents had positive attitudes to Vietnamese language learning.
- A majority of children had positive attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning.
- A majority of teachers had from 4 to 9 years of teaching experience. They had tertiary qualifications in teaching in Vietnam and in Australia. The teachers used appropriate teaching strategies to improve their children’s competence in Vietnamese (i.e. student-centred and communicative approaches, the use of Vietnamese in classroom activities, the use of reinforcement techniques...). They had positive
attitudes to their children and maintained the relationship between home and school.

The next chapter presents the extent to which these factors contributed to the children’s Vietnamese language learning.
CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

As indicated in the results of the first Basic Skills Test and the second Basic Skills Test, there was an improvement in the children’s competence in spoken and written Vietnamese.

Is Vietnamese teaching generally effective?

In order to answer to this question, we can point to a number of factors, which seem to make a contribution to children’s Vietnamese language competence.

The research findings also showed that parents, children and teachers had a positive attitude towards Vietnamese learning. It is felt that parent factors, student factors, and school factors contributed to the children’s competence in Vietnamese.

In March 1994, the New South Wales Department of School Education released a discussion paper entitled *Quality teaching-Quality learning.* Quality teaching and Quality learning were considered to be important factors of effective teaching in schools. The document also recognized the other important factors that may influence children’s language learning outcomes. These included the family, school community relationships, and the child himself or herself.

The focus of this paper is on teaching and learning as they occur in schools. Factors like the amount of net learning time and the use of structured teaching have been shown to have a significant impact on quality learning outcomes. Nevertheless, ...many other factors also have a profound impact on successful teaching and learning. These include the family,
school community relationships and individual differences, including the determination to succeed (NSW Department School Education: Quality teaching-Quality learning: A discussion paper for teachers, principals and parents, 1994: 2).

The focus of this chapter is the extent to which the following factors had a significant impact on children’s Vietnamese language learning: The home environment (i.e. parents’ competence in Vietnamese, parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese), parental involvement in school, children’s attitudes and motivation to the Vietnamese language, and school factors.

4.1. Parent factors: The influence of the home environment on children's language learning

As we have seen in the literature review, several researchers support the contention that the role of families in language learning is an important element in children’s home language progress. Some researchers have made the role of the parents in their children's language learning a focus for investigation (Potter, 1995; Makin et al, 1995; Stevens et al, 1993; Debela, 1994). The researchers affirm that some special factors within the home environment also influence the children’s language learning process, in particular the books or magazines in the home, and the use of the media.

Four major findings were drawn from this section: (a) The influence of the parents’ competence in Vietnamese on their children's Vietnamese language competence, (b) The influence of parents' use of Vietnamese at home on their children's Vietnamese language competence, (c) The influence of parents' reading of Vietnamese books or newspapers to their children on their children's Vietnamese language competence, (d) The influence of parents' listening to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) with their children on their children’s competence in Vietnamese, and (e) The influence of parents’
watching television (Vietnamese programs) with their children on their children's competence in Vietnamese.

4.1.1. The influence of parents' competence in Vietnamese on their children's competence in Vietnamese

The literacy of the parents in the Vietnamese language is one of the factors influencing their children's competence in Vietnamese. There is an influence of the parents' competence in Vietnamese on their children's competence in Vietnamese. Research findings indicate that children's competence in spoken and written Vietnamese is related to their parents' high competence in Vietnamese. From the results above for parents' high and very high competence in Vietnamese, it can be expected that many of these parents could support their children in learning Vietnamese, help their children with their homework, read Vietnamese books or newspapers to them and so on. The parents' competence in the Vietnamese language can contribute to their children's progress in learning Vietnamese.

The findings are supported by a past study. Wei (1993), in a study of mother tongue maintenance in a Chinese community school in Newcastle Upon Tyne (England), indicates that children's ability in the mother tongue is linked to their parents' competence in that language, i.e. children whose parents "have better command of the English language seem to maintain their mother tongue better than those parents have confined themselves to the immediate family and to their ethnic community both socially and linguistically" (Wei, 1993: 211).

4.1.2. The influence of parents' attitudes to learning Vietnamese on their children's Vietnamese language competence

In trying to understand how parents' attitudes to learning Vietnamese affect children's competence in Vietnamese, the researcher focused on the
parents' use of Vietnamese at home, parents' reading of books or newspapers to children, parents' listening to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) with their children, and parents' watching television (Vietnamese programs) with their children.

The findings indicate that parents' attitudes to Vietnamese language learning are related to their children's Vietnamese language competence.

Parents' use of Vietnamese at home

The research findings provide considerable evidence of the contribution of the parents' use of Vietnamese at home to their children's progress in learning Vietnamese. Parents' use of Vietnamese at home is related to children's competence in Vietnamese (93% of parents used Vietnamese at home “often” or “very often”).

The findings support the view that when parents speak the mother tongue at home and use this language with their children, their children generally communicate with their parents in the same language (Cummins, 1993). It is argued that the home language is acquired by children mainly or only from the home environment (Saunders, 1982). The parents in this study, in general, were supportive of learning and provide their children with assistance for learning.

Some Vietnamese parents indicated in the parent-teacher interviews that they tried to support and motivate their children in learning Vietnamese. Some parents employed Vietnamese tutors to assist their children in learning Vietnamese at home, and their children's competence in Vietnamese may have been improved.

These findings are supported by a number of researchers. Parents play a positive role in their children's learning, and children's mother tongue learning skills begins to develop in the home (Duquette, 1995). According to Keepes and Keepes (1979) and Stevens et al (1993), parents have an influence on the initial development of language in a child. Makin et al (1995: 10) argue that "families, particularly parents, are recognised as
partners in their children's early language learning, and their experiences and
cultural and linguistic skills are acknowledged. Their input is highly valued
and utilized". Stevens et al (1993: 344) state, "it is through the natural-
language environment of the home - functional spoken and written language
- that parents contribute to their children's literacy development". According
to Saunders (1982), the acquired qualities of the children's mother tongue
depend on the quality of language they hear from family members such as
parents, grandparents and siblings. In short, parents play a role in the
development of proficiency in the second language of their children
(Gardner, 1985).

Parents' reading of Vietnamese books or newspapers to their children

Parents' reading Vietnamese books or newspapers to their children is
related to their children's Vietnamese language competence. The research
findings indicate that there is a contribution of the frequency of parents' reading Vietnamese books or newspapers to their children's competence in Vietnamese. The findings indicate that a majority of parents (75%) read Vietnamese books or newspapers at home "often" or "very often", and this may help explain the increase of 41.4% in the children's competence in spoken Vietnamese, and the increase of 28.12% in the children's competence in written Vietnamese. Some Vietnamese parents indicated in teacher-parent interviews that they often read Vietnamese newspapers and bilingual storybooks to their children (i.e. storybooks written in both the Vietnamese and the English languages).

These results are supported by a number of studies. Storybook reading in
the mother tongue is a potent factor enhancing children's literacy
development (Lennox, 1995). Parents' reading to their children will
contribute to their children's literacy development, so that story reading is a
powerful factor affecting children's early literacy development (Stevens et
al, 1993). According to Gillett and Bernard (1988), parents provide the first
major teaching experience for children. The important reason why parents
need to help their children with reading books or newspapers is that within the classroom there is not enough time for the teacher to work comprehensively with each child. Another reason for parents to help their children is that some primary schools have initiated the home-school reading program. It provides children with the opportunity to develop their reading skills in a warm and friendly environment at home.

The results also support a number of previous studies. Fuerverger (1994) argues that children who have high competence in their home language will develop high levels of ability in English literacy. Gibbons (1992: 225) states, "a well-developed first language is one of the most important factors in successfully learning a second language; the first language provides a framework for the second". According to Beardsmore (1986), children who have low competence in their mother tongue will have low competence in a second language. All language minority children must be supported to maintain their mother tongue to attain sufficient bilingual competence in order to make progress in academic tasks. In order to improve children's reading skills, parents should supply children with books, storybooks and newspapers suitable to their age and interests. Parents should be encouraged to listen to their children read (Saunders, 1988). To help second language children to develop language competence, Ebbeck (1991) suggests that teachers must find books written in the children's own language and encourage parents to read these stories to their children.

In Vietnamese families, parents play an important role in improving their children's Vietnamese language competence. The children's learning attitudes and behaviour are affected by the power of parents. The Vietnamese family is still considered to be the basic social and economic unit. Collective family responsibility is of central importance to family life, and parental responsibility is recognised and accepted by all family members. Similarly, the children must be obedient and respectful to their parents and maintain the good family name. Most Vietnamese parents set high expectations for their children's school achievement.
Parents’ listening to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) and parents’ watching television (Vietnamese programs) with their children

Parents’ attitudes to specific factors in the home environment are related to children's language learning, particular attitudes towards using the media. It is clear that there is a contribution of the frequency of parents' listening to SBS radio or watching television (Vietnamese programs) with their children to their children's competence in Vietnamese.

About 71.8% of parents in the survey listen to SBS radio, and 72.6% of parents watch television (Vietnamese programs) with their children "often" or "very often". The findings indicate that there was an improvement of children' competence in Vietnamese. It is believed that parents’ listening to SBS radio and watching television (Vietnamese programs) with their children help their children in learning Vietnamese better.

The results are supported by previous studies. With regard to the positive effects of the electronic media (radio and television), Berry (1993) agrees that the media play an important part in the culture of a country, and it is also an attractive medium to children. According to Saunders (1982), the use of television or radio is one of the most effective ways of improving children's mother tongue learning. Harding and Riley (1986) state that when listening and watching television, children can improve their accents, voices, and situational and functional uses of languages. Murray (1993) and Keepes and Keepes (1979) emphasize the positive role of the media: that radio and television may expose the child to important forms of language which otherwise may not be encountered. One of the simplest, effective, and obvious ways of putting students in touch with languages and cultures is through the use of television and other audiovisual channels. Parental involvement in the plans for using television in the curriculum is very important, because parents play an important role in assisting and guiding their children's viewing behaviour (Berry, 1993; Lian, 1995).
On the negative side, the language of television and radio may influence the students' writing. Some researchers believe that watching television is one of the direct causes of children's poor academic achievement (Wlodkowski and Jaynes, 1990; Peng and Wright, 1993).

As we have seen in the literature, researchers have argued both the potential positive and negative effects of the media, in particular television. It is impossible to conclude whether television viewing is good or bad. Its effects depend on the variety of ways people interpret what they see on TV (Luke, 1990). In this study we only examine the influence of the frequency of parents' listening to SBS radio or watching television (Vietnamese programs) on their children's competence in Vietnamese. Children often listen to SBS radio and watch television with assistance of their parents. The role of parents can be more supportive of their children’s learning.

We did not examine the influence of the negative effects of the media such as children's television viewing time and television or radio program contents on the children's development of language. These issues require further research.

In summary, parents' competence in Vietnamese, and parents' attitudes to Vietnamese language learning (parents' use of Vietnamese at home, parents' reading Vietnamese books or newspapers to their children, parents' listening to SBS radio and parents' watching television with their children) contribute most to their children's Vietnamese language learning.

4.2. Parental involvement in school: The influence of parental involvement in their children's school on their children’s competence in Vietnamese

Researchers affirm that schools can improve their students' learning if they can involve parents in supporting their children's school learning. With regard to parental involvement in their children's school, researchers argue
that parental involvement may take many forms. In this study, however, we only examine the following areas in which parents are involved: Parents’ contact with their children’s Vietnamese language teachers and parents’ helping their children with homework.

4.2.1. Parents' contact with their children’s Vietnamese language teachers

There is an influence of parental involvement in their children’s school on their children’s competence in Vietnamese. Of the respondents, 55.4% reported that they often and very often had contact with their children’s Vietnamese language teachers. The findings also indicate that there was an improvement in these children’s competence in Vietnamese. The research findings suggest that there was a contributing effect of parents' contact with their children’s Vietnamese language teachers and their children's Vietnamese language competence.

4.2.2. Parents’ helping children with their homework

In relation to children’s learning Vietnamese, a majority of parents (67.2%) emphasized that they supported their children’s completion of homework “often” and “very often”. These children’s progress in learning Vietnamese was affected by parental support.

The positive interaction between parents and teachers provides opportunities for parents to become familiar with school activities. The parent’s positive contact with Vietnamese language teachers enabled parents to discuss issues about their children’s progress with their teachers and assisted their children in developing literacy and learning at home.

These findings of the study are supported by a number of previous studies.

The cooperation between teachers and parents in their children's education has an important effect on children's learning. Where there is
positive cooperation between home and school, school progress may result (Baker, 1988). Cummins (1986: 26) affirms that "when educators involve minority parents as partners in their children's education, parents appear to develop a sense of efficacy that communicates itself to children, with positive academic consequences". Toomey (1989) argues that children's school learning is associated with the level of contact between home and school. High-contact parents offer more support to the children's learning at home. By contrast, the low-contact parents tend to have a home environment less supportive of their children's learning. According to Marjoribanks (1980) and Berger (1995), parents' active support and positive parent-teacher relationships enhance and contribute to the children's success in school. Partington and McCudden (1992) argue that communication between home and school is crucial for effective schooling. According to Watts and Henry, "because of the lack of communication between school and home and because of the failure of the school to recognise and value the specific contribution of the home, we have cut many children off from the sources of their experiences and emotions" (Watts and Henry, 1978: 5).

It is encouraging that a majority of Vietnamese parents were involved in both "contact with their children's Vietnamese language teachers" and "helping children with their homework". This finding confirms the importance of the parental function in assisting their children's learning. Traditionally, in the Vietnamese educational system, schools and teachers played an important role in students' learning. The teacher passed on experience and knowledge and played a key role in his/her students' learning process. Traditionally, parental involvement in the children's school was not considered an important role. Some Vietnamese parents indicated that Parent-Teacher interviews made them feel more confident in taking part in school activities because the school atmosphere was welcoming, comfortable and supportive. In parents' responses to the open question, parents reported that they encouraged and assisted their children in learning Vietnamese at home. Parents expressed confidence in assisting their children's learning
Vietnamese at home because of the positive relationships established with teachers and the school. Some parents stated:

- Vietnamese parents should encourage their children to learn the Vietnamese language (Parent 7).
- I have enough time to assist my child in learning Vietnamese at home (Parent 22).
- Parents should encourage their children to learn the Vietnamese language and speak Vietnamese at home (Parent 34).
- Give children the opportunities to learn the Vietnamese language (Parent 40).
- Parents and teachers should help children to take pleasure in learning the Vietnamese language (Parent 56).
- I often encourage my child to speak Vietnamese at home (Parent 65).
- I think that children should often speak Vietnamese at home (Parent 69).
- Parents should encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning the Vietnamese language (Parent 119).

There seemed to be a change in parents' opinions about the relationship between their own responsibilities and their children's learning, and between the teachers' responsibilities and the children's learning. In fact, many schools now encourage parents to be involved in school activities by providing interpreters for parent-teacher interviews and parent-meetings. Schools and teachers recognise that parental involvement or the support of parents is a vital factor in the success of students' learning as "it not only generates positive attitudes for both the teachers and the children but also helps strengthen the teachers' confidence in what they are doing" (Clyne et al, 1995: 100). In addition, in some cases, it can contribute to the improvement of the teaching strategies being used at the school.
4.3. Student factors: The influence of children’s attitudes and motivation to learning Vietnamese on their Vietnamese language competence

The research sought to examine the influence of children’s attitudes towards learning Vietnamese on their Vietnamese language proficiency in order to answer the question as why some children are successful at Vietnamese language learning while others are not? In other words, how do children’s attitudes and motivation to the Vietnamese language relate to the effectiveness of their Vietnamese language learning?

There are two kinds of attitudes. First, children’s positive attitudes towards using Vietnamese at home and at school. Second, children’s negative attitudes to using Vietnamese at home and at school (i.e. children’s positive attitudes to using English at home and at school).

4.3.1. Children’s use of Vietnamese at home and school

It is clear that there is a contribution of children’s use of Vietnamese at home and at school to children’s competence in spoken and written Vietnamese. The research findings indicate that children showed interest in using Vietnamese at home and at school. A majority of the children (67.2%) often and very often used Vietnamese at home, and 41.4% of children often used Vietnamese at school.

These findings are supported by a number of previous studies (Debela, 1994; Lightbown and Spada, 1993; Gardner, 1985; Gibbons, 1992). According to the researchers, children’s positive attitudes and motivation are important factors that enhance children’s Vietnamese language proficiency.
4.3.2. Children’s use of Vietnamese outside the home and school

Another interpretation of the findings involves the contribution of children’s use of Vietnamese outside the home and school to their competence in Vietnamese. A majority of children (67.2%) often and very often used Vietnamese outside the home and school.

The research findings suggest that in terms of speaking Vietnamese outside the home and school, children had opportunities to practise language learning and took advantage of the resources available in the community (i.e. parents and people who spoke Vietnamese played a key role as a language resources). Mathews and Fehring (1987:21) argue that "the social setting makes an important contribution to the learning of values and attitudes and cooperative skills". If learners have positive attitudes towards the speakers of the target language they will seek more contact with them. The more contact with the speakers of the target language, the more effective skills will be developed (Lightbown and Spada, 1993).

Indeed, most people believe that learning a second language in a language natural context is more effective than learning a second language in the classroom.

In fact, in the primary schools, learning in a language natural context is impossible. It is important to distinguish two kinds of language skills: social language skills and academic language skills. Children can develop quickly their social language skills in the natural context (i.e. in the streets and in the playground through informal conversations and interactions with peers). However, the language necessary for academic learning is "the language related to higher-order thinking skills and conceptual development, and it is this language which students must become fluent in if they are to reach their potential" (Gibbons, 1992: 226). In the schools involved in this survey, that language was English.
The primary purpose of classroom communication involves gathering children together for the purpose of learning. So, there needs to develop "an approach to school language learning that approximates as closely as possible the setting in which a language is learnt naturally" (Scarino et al, 1988a: 9).

4.3.3. Reasons for learning Vietnamese

In addition, the reasons for learning Vietnamese reflect the children’s attitudes and motivation to the Vietnamese language. Reasons given by the children were that the Vietnamese language was their mother tongue, they spoke the language their parents spoke (54.7%), and they believed that learning Vietnamese at primary school was necessary to be able to continue Vietnamese at high school (85.2%). The findings support the contention that attitudes and motivation orient children to seek out the opportunities to learn the target language. Past research has shown the contribution of children’s positive attitudes to the Vietnamese language to their Vietnamese language competence. Debela (1994) in research on attitudes towards the Vietnamese language in a primary school located in the Western suburbs of Adelaide (Australia) reveals that all children who speak Vietnamese with their parents displayed high competence in Vietnamese. This accorded with Wei’s (1993) argument that “minority children’s maintenance of their ethnic language is influenced by their immediately social environment of which the parent is an important part” (Wei, 1993: 211).

From the researcher’s experience, a number of Vietnamese parents indicated in the teacher-parent interviews that their children benefited from the home environment as they learnt and checked Vietnamese words and expressions with their parents and their siblings.

It is true that in the Vietnamese language classrooms, the Vietnamese language is used as a medium of instruction and is the language their parents speak at home, however, a majority of the children surveyed were born or
had grown up in Australia; therefore they had to be given opportunities to
develop their communication skills. It is noted that the primary purpose of
LOTE is for communication. Communication involves the development of
both spoken communication (speaking, listening, viewing) and written
communication (reading, writing). So, the potential imbalance in the
improvement of students' Vietnamese language competence must be one of
the teachers' concerns.

4.4. School factors: The influence of school factors on the
children's Vietnamese language competence

As indicated earlier, the discussion paper entitled "Quality teaching-
Quality learning" which was issued by the New South Wales Department of
School Education (1994) described ten characteristics for quality teaching
and ten characteristics for quality learning. Quality teaching is characterized
by effective teachers who can apply a wide range of teaching strategies in
the classroom, which are appropriate to children's learning styles, including
cooperative learning, group work, and individual work. Quality learning is
most likely to occur when effective teachers are able to use creative
strategies to stimulate the learner's engagement with the work of the
classroom. This document affirms that the effectiveness of teaching and
learning strategies employed by teachers will exert influence on children's
learning outcomes.

In this section, an attempt is made to examine the contribution of the
teaching strategies used by teachers, and the qualities and the role of a
teacher to the improvement of children's Vietnamese language competence.
The following points form the basis for the discussion:

4.4.1. Teacher background.
4.4.2. Teachers' perceptions of the teaching strategies.
4.4.3. Teaching strategies used by Vietnamese language teachers.
4.4.4. The use of reinforcement techniques.
4.4.5. Teacher qualities and the role of a good teacher.

4.4.6. Teachers' perceptions of special teaching strategies.

4.4.1. Teacher background

It is noted that all teachers acquired the Vietnamese language at home and through formal education. A majority of teachers had tertiary qualifications in teaching from Vietnam; after arriving in Australia they continued their studies and all received tertiary qualifications in teaching and the Teaching Languages Other Than English certificate (LOTE). The teachers who had teaching qualifications in Vietnam and in Australia indicated that they wanted to shift from traditional approaches to teaching to modern approaches.

4.4.2. Teachers’ perceptions of teaching strategies

The use of Vietnamese in the classroom

The ways of teaching being used by teachers varied from teacher to teacher, but all teachers (100%) emphasised the maximum use of Vietnamese in classroom activities. They believed that they not only provided as much Vietnamese input as possible but also encouraged their children to practise their skills in speaking as well as listening.

The findings are supported by a number of researchers. Scarino et al (1988b: 5) suggest that "teachers encourage and facilitate experience of community events and direct contact with people in the target language community ... opportunities are provided for learners to talk with people who have lived in the target language community, and to see films, videos, and slides which illustrate the contemporary culture of the target language community". Gibbons (1992: 222) affirms that "learning a second language is most effective when the focus is on using the language to learn about
something else...children learning a second language have opportunities to listen to and to use spoken language".

Not only is the use of Vietnamese in classroom activities important, the use of reinforcement techniques, and a focus on and practice of the four basic skills such as talking, listening, reading and writing skills are also significant. Particularly, listening and talking need to be accompanied by visual aids.

A lot of focus on and practice of the four basic skills

All teachers placed more emphasis on the four basic skills (talking, listening, reading and writing) as well as spelling in Vietnamese.

The findings are supported by implications made by several researchers. Brown (1994) suggests that children must be given opportunities to practise speaking, listening, reading, writing, and using the grammar, words, and linguistic knowledge, including knowledge of their first language. According to Ebbeck (1991: 108), in order to help second language children develop language competence, one of the ways is that "in language learning children need opportunities to talk about interesting things and practise language learning in a variety of situation".

It is suggested that depending on the students' ability, their age, and their stage of schooling, the teacher may match teaching strategies to student needs. However, it is not necessary to teach in such an order.

The use of visual materials

In developing the children's learning skills, teachers used visual materials in the language classrooms. Several researchers agree that the use of visual materials enhances students' learning not only in the basic skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) but in communication skills, cultural learning and cognitive skills as well.

Gibbons (1992) suggests teachers must exploit the pictures and encourage children to talk about the pictures that can be of great help in
teaching new vocabulary and structures. Scarino et al. (1988b) indicate that the use of pictures in language teaching has proven one of the best ways to teach not only the target language but also the target culture. Pictures can be used as a basis for the practice of specific language forms. "The teacher can use a picture to focus on particular vocabulary, or alternatively on language related to actions, situations ... and teachers can direct the learners to particular features of the target culture in a picture" (Scarino et al., 1988b: 34).

**Classroom interaction: Pair work- Group work**

With regard to the classroom interaction, all teachers often used the mixture of pair work and group work. They believed that children must have opportunities to participate in the lesson. A number of researchers support these findings. According to Richards (1994: 141), "the teachers need to be able to manage their interaction with the class in a way which allows all students equal opportunities to participate. Learners also need to learn how they are expected to interact in the classroom". Depending on the kind of lesson they were teaching, the teachers used whole class teaching, individual work, pair work and group work. Some researchers believe that pair work enables children to have better interaction. The children can share information to solve a problem or complete a task. With regard to group work, Richards (1994) states that group work also has a number of additional advantages such as reducing the domination of the teacher over the class and giving students opportunities to participate, practise and use new features of the target language. Group work enables children to be active in learning and the teacher to work more as a facilitator and consultant.

According to Gibbons (1991), group work enables children to be responsible to the group for providing the information in his or her reading, encourages children to listen to each other and work cooperatively and collaboratively. It also supports children of different reading abilities to work
together. It enables children to be confident in participating in a group, and it is a student-centred way of teaching and learning.

There is little disagreement that "Pair work and group work sometimes produce a very high level of learner concentration and activity, but can also do exactly the opposite. A high degree of teacher sensitivity is needed here, together with very clear instructions, simple and well-structures tasks and careful monitoring" (Ur, 1996: 283).

Is it true that the use of pair-work or group-work has significant effects in Vietnamese language classrooms?

Based on the results that there is a difference between the improvement of children's competence in spoken Vietnamese and the improvement of children's competence in written Vietnamese, we would argue that the use of pair-work or group-work strategies might be better for the acquisition of spoken Vietnamese than written Vietnamese. Although there is an improvement in written Vietnamese, but we believe that a third factor exists. This consists of the use of individual work in Vietnamese language classrooms. According to the document Quality teaching, Quality learning (1994), effective teachers must "provide opportunities for students to work individually and in small groups as well as with the whole class, teach students how to work collaboratively, provide opportunities for students to seek help from and work with peers" (NSW Department of School Education: Quality teaching-Quality learning: A discussion paper for teachers, principals and parents, 1994: 5).

The influence of the use of an individual work strategy and the development on children's Vietnamese competence requires further research.

In short, in order to enhance and improve their learning skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing), children must be provided with opportunities to listen to and talk with people who have lived in the target language community. Particularly, in language learning classrooms, teachers should use Vietnamese as much as possible. Depending on the students' ability, their age, and their stage of schooling, the teacher can match the ways of
teaching to the children needs. In addition, the use of visual aids and class interaction, and the use of reinforcement techniques must be considered.

4.4.3. Teaching strategies used by Vietnamese language teachers

Teaching cannot be effective without the use of appropriate teaching strategies. Student-centred and communicative approaches are adopted by a majority of the teachers surveyed. All responses noted that the use of the student-centred and communicative approaches enabled children to acquire communication skills. It is believed that teaching approaches may have an influence on children's competence in Vietnamese.

The findings are supported by a number of researchers. According to the researchers Cook (1991), Scarino et al (1988b), Cummins (1986) Hughes (1999), the communicative approach enables students to acquire communication skills in the target language and to use language in conversation with other people. Gibbons (1992: 229) affirms that the student-centred approach is one of the best strategies to enhance students' learning processes: "An implication for classroom practice is the creation of classrooms that are not teacher-centred and transmission-based but encourage student-to-student talk in a collaborative learning context". According to Clyne et al (1995:160), "in student-centred classroom the pupils have more possibility of participating in decision-making on the nature of the discourse, take more turns, and are freer to move from one activity to another".

It is true that the improvement of students' Vietnamese language competence is related mainly to student-centred and communicative teaching strategies being used. The student-centred and communicative approaches enable students to acquire communication skills. Rather than dominate the whole class, the teacher gives clear instructions, initiates some questions for the students to discuss, etc. But depending on the stage of schooling, for example, in Stage 3, the student-centred approach is more effective. For very
young children, for example, in Stage 1 or Stage 2, the teacher must take a leading role when necessary.

4.4.4. The use of reinforcement techniques

Several studies have found that motivation is related to success in second language learning. A majority of teachers reported that they used a mixture of verbal, gestural and contact approaches. It is noted that everyone in the class will not necessarily have the same motivation. Motivation is a mixture of different factors that may effect a student's learning. According to Hughes (1999: 7), when students who are interested in an activity have been intrinsically motivated "Teachers can help students to be intrinsically motivated to learn and thereby enjoy the experience. Teachers do not always have to motivate by external means...Intrinsic motivation is much more effective". Mathews and Fehring (1987) also agree that extrinsic rewards such as verbal approval and encouragement assist students to participate in a classroom activity. However "intrinsic rewards, which come from the activity itself, are more motivating to the learner... The teacher needs to identify the reward most likely to motivate a particular learner" (Mathews and Fehring, 1987: 21).

It is argued that when using reinforcement, it is necessary to know the children's needs, their culture and use reinforcement in a way that will be most effective with that group of children. It is noted that different children respond to different kinds of reinforcement. For example, some teachers reported that Vietnamese children in NSW primary schools are less comfortable with verbal reinforcement from the teacher. They are very comfortable with gestural reinforcement by gently shaking hands or nodding as an approval mechanism rather than eye contact, which makes them very self-conscious and shy. Gestural reinforcement for these children appears to be better than verbal reinforcement.
In general, in order to reinforce children’s learning, it is important that teachers must select techniques that suit children’s needs rather than relying exclusively any one technique. In other words, flexibility in using reinforcement techniques is very necessary, and depending on the children’s ability, the appropriate teaching strategies must be used. It is also clear that the use of the appropriate teaching strategies is related to teacher qualities.

4.4.5. The teacher’s role and teacher qualities

The analysis of teachers’ comments in the interviews reveals that a majority of teachers indicated the following qualities that an effective teacher needed to have:

- Providing a link between the home and school.
- Interested in the skills, attitudes and interests of students.
- Developing and maintaining positive attitudes towards students.
- Making all students participate in learning

These qualities of teachers are related to the improvement of students' Vietnamese language competence. These findings are supported by a number of researchers. With professional pedagogical skills and knowledge, teachers can contribute to students' progression towards the objectives of an educational program (Watts and Henry, 1978). An effective teacher does not use a particular way of teaching, he or she will select appropriate methods, learning styles and strategies to suit students' needs, interests and abilities (Fry and Morrow, 1994; Nunan, 1991). Mathews and Fehring (1987) argue that an enthusiastic teacher employs a variety of methods and teaching strategies to stimulate students' interests, which should encourage students to extend their knowledge and competencies. An effective teacher must have positive attitudes towards learning, encourage students in learning and maintain interaction between teachers and parents (McInerney and McInerney, 1994; Evans, 1992; Scarino et al, 1988b; Cole and Chan, 1987; Westwood, 1996). Baker (1988) argues that successful learning outcomes
are influenced by the co-operation between parents and teachers. The positive co-operation between teachers and parents has a significant effect on students' learning. According to Partington and McCudden (1992), communication between home and school is crucial for effective schooling and will enhance a child's education. From the researcher's experience, this is not a simple task for many reasons. One reason is that in a number of Vietnamese families, many parents expect teachers and schools to have the full responsibility for educating their children. This is their experience in Vietnam. Traditionally, according to the educational system in Vietnam, teaching was considered a noble occupation; the teacher was a model for people to follow. The teacher passed experience and knowledge to his/her students. Partington and McCudden (1992: 210) suggest that a "teacher should take such expectations into account in parent contact, but should continue to work towards their participation in schooling because it enables a lot of misconceptions to be eliminated (on both sides) and promotes home support of school programs".

Generally speaking, the qualities of teachers and their role contribute to the improvement of children's competence in Vietnamese. It is argued that the improvement of children's competence in Vietnamese is related to the teachers' perceptions of teaching strategies.

4.4.6. Teachers' perceptions of special teaching strategies

The teacher interviews provided the information for the following list of special teaching strategies relating to the improvement of children's Vietnamese language competence. These are:
- Over-correcting mistakes in the children's language patterns assists them to write Vietnamese correctly.
- Children learn best when they are provided opportunities to participate in decisions about their own learning.
- A teacher who tries his/her very best to get children interested in a story
he/she is reading to them assists children to use language more fully.

**Over-correcting mistakes**

An examination of inter-language and psycholinguistic approaches is beyond the scope of this study. However, a number of researchers’ perceptions of errors made by second language learners will be indicated.

For the behaviourist, “errors are seen as first language habits interfering with the acquisition of second language habits. This psychological learning theory has often been linked to the contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH)” (Lightbown and Spada, 1993: 23). As a result of this analysis, if two different languages have the same structures, the learner will acquire a target language without difficulty. In contrast, if there are differences, the learner will have difficulty. The following is a summary of the differences between Vietnamese and Australian kinship terms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Australia</strong></th>
<th><strong>Vietnamese</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grandfather</td>
<td>Ông nội (parental grandfather), Ông ngoại (maternal grandfather)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother</td>
<td>Bà nội (paternal grandmother), Bà ngoại (maternal grandmother)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Cha, Bố, Ba, Thầy, Cậu, Chú, Tía (Father)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Mẹ, Má, U, Bu (mother)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle</td>
<td>Bác (father’s older brother), Chú (father’s younger brother), Cậu (mother’s brother), Dương (husband of father’s sister),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aunt</td>
<td>Cô, O (father’s sister), Đi, Già (mother’s sister, Bác gái (wife of father’s older brother), Thím (wife of father’s younger brother)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>Anh (older brother), Em (younger brother)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>Chị (older sister), Em (younger sister)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nephew</td>
<td>cháu gái (niece), cháu trai (nephew)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the southern Vietnamese dialect, "the above kinship terms followed by the demonstrative "áy" "that" take the dipping-rising "hội" tone to function as third person pronouns, e.g. Ông (he), Bà (she), Cô (she), Chị (she). The words indicating a given point or position in space or time also display this morphophonemic trait, e.g. "trong áy" becomes "trọng" (in there), "ngoài áy" becomes "ngoài" (out there), "trên áy" becomes "trên" (up there)... (Nguyen, 1990).

A number of studies have criticized the CAH because it can only predict a limited range of errors. In fact, many errors are not predictable on the basis of the CAH (Lightbown and Spada, 1993). According to Hamers and Blanc (1989: 268), "interference refers to learning problems in which the learner unconsciously and inappropriately transfers elements or rules from the first to the second language".

On the other hand, a number of studies have showed that errors are not only caused by interference. The errors are caused partly by developmental processes, partly by lack of knowledge of second language (L2) rules, and partly by first language (L1) transfers.

Lightbown and Spada (1993:121) argue that developmental error refers to errors that are similar to L1 acquisition errors. "An error in learner language which does not result from the first language, but which reflects the learner's gradual discovery of the second language system. These errors are often similar to those made by children learning the language as their mother tongue". Sometimes, errors are caused by lack of second language rules, ignorance of rule restrictions. The errors are called overgeneralization or simplification. "This type of error is the result of trying to use a rule in a context where it does not belong, for example, a regular -ed ending on an irregular verb" (Lightbown and Spada, 1993: 124).

In short, as we have seen, there is a general agreement on the existence of errors in second language learning. These errors refer to interference, the
developmental stage or the tendency to overgeneralization. But the question is often asked, "Should these errors be corrected?"

In the present study, a majority of teachers (95%) did not support the strategy that "Over-correcting mistakes in the children's language patterns assists them to write Vietnamese correctly". This finding confirms the theory that mistakes are a normal part in the development of learning; teacher might prefer not to correct a learner's mistakes. The learner will best to understand or produce any aspect of a language through experience and practice. This finding has been supported by a number of researchers. Such researchers believe that the correction of the mistakes does not contribute to the acquisition of language. According to Ebbeck (1991), students must be given opportunities to make their own corrections. Constant correction of errors usually undermines self-confidence. Brown (1994) states that one of the learning or teaching strategies that good learners must adopt when learning a second language is to take risks and learn from errors. Hughes (1999) affirms that effective communication requires each student to have the confidence to make mistakes and learn from mistakes. Hughes suggests that

We must not block the students' ability to hypothesise about language by over-correcting mistakes. This does not mean that we never correct at all... students must be encouraged to take risks - make sure that the communication is not stopped by over-correcting every mistakes (Hughes, 1999: 5-8).

Scarino et al (1988b) and Oxford (1993) agree that the learner must be given opportunities to develop the four specific skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing by getting information for themselves, taking risks and learning from mistakes. In communicative language teaching classrooms, error correction is made when the teacher repeats what the student has said in the correct form. However, "this correction is not consistent or intrusive as
the focus is primarily on letting students express their meanings" (Lightbown and Spada, 1993: 77).

In Vietnamese, it is necessary to correct the errors that may easily lead to a lack of comprehension, which may make the speech "hard" to listen to, which may directly affect the meaning of words and may affect the implications conveyed by speech. For example, the word "Mả" in Vietnamese differs from English since each syllable has a tone of its own: the tone going with the Vietnamese syllable "ma" is as much a part of it as the consonant "m" and the vowel "a". The syllable "ma" may be said in six different tones and mean six different things. The tones, each of which is an integral part of a Vietnamese syllable, are called tones. Here is a brief description of the tones, in the frequently followed order: ma, mà, mà, mà, mà, mà. If the learner pronounces or writes "ma" that means "ghost", "Mả " means "cheek or mother", "Mả" means "but", "Mả" means "tomb", "Mả" means "code", "Mả" means "rice-seedling" (Nguyen, 1987).

Generally speaking, in Vietnamese, correction will contribute to the real acquisition of the Vietnamese language. Correction should be focussed on the use of the proper sound system, spelling, accent marks or tone marks. But, it is suggested that in fluency work, for example during fluent speech, immediate correction would disturb and discourage rather than help. Depending on the situation, in oral work or written work the techniques of correction will tend to be those preferred by the teacher. The use of correction techniques is important to give students the chance to get the new language right.

Children learn best when they are provided with opportunities to participate in decisions about their own learning.

About 85% of teachers agreed with the strategy "children learn best when they are provided opportunities to participate in decision about their own learning". A number of researchers support these teachers' perceptions.
Scarino et al (1988b) and Ebbeck (1991) affirm that one of the principles of language learning is to provide children opportunities to manage their own learning. "Teachers encourage learners to take increasing responsibility for their own learning, by providing them with opportunities to ...monitor and evaluate their own learning" (Scarino et al, 1988b: 6). According to Gibbons (1992), in a classroom, children learning a second language need opportunities to practise speaking and listening skills. Teachers should avoid the use of teacher-centred and transmission-based teaching, but it is necessary to encourage student-to-student-talk. Gibbons (1992: 229) states, "an interactive classroom allows students to be more actively involved in their own learning ... students are encouraged and given opportunities to assume greater control over setting their own learning goals". The document *Quality teaching, Quality learning* (1994) states: "Quality learning is most likely to occur when students are involved in the planning of their work and take responsibility for their learning" (NSW Department of School Education: *Quality teaching-Quality learning: A discussion paper for teachers, principals and parents*, 1994:18).

In general, the participants agreed that teachers can allow students to make decisions and take responsibility for their own learning. The aim of teaching should be to help students become independent learners, and to a certain degree, students, particularly students in primary schools, need the opportunity to discuss what they need to learn, and how to learn.

**A teacher who tries his/her very best to get the children interested in a story he/she is reading to them, assists children to use language more fully**

A majority of surveyed teachers (90%) did not support the strategy. This finding confirms several researchers' opinion that children need to be given the opportunity to negotiate much of their reading materials to suit their own interests, needs and abilities. The surveyed responses of a majority of
teachers supported the contention that children learnt language best if there was something in the task relevant to them, not the teacher.

Hughes (1999) suggests that community language teachers must pay attention to the principle that language learning is best when the language is relevant to the student needs. "It becomes extremely important to motivate the students to want to learn the language and to provide activities which as much as possible make the language learning relevant to the students' experience and needs" (Hughes, 1999: 4).

According to Scarino et al (1988b), in learner-centred teaching, learners play an active role in the learning process. The teacher is sensitive to the needs of the learners. The learners are encouraged to express their views about what they are learning and how they are learning. Scarino et al state:

Learners can be encouraged through negotiation and through the development of learning-how-to-learn skills to take some of the responsibility for their own learning - teachers and learners can work together with a sense of direction and confidence which results from an understanding of the learning activities (Scarino et al, 1988b: 1).

It is important to remember that children should learn to become better readers and listeners rather than simply to read some stories in books. It is more important for children to be able to function successfully in real-life listening situations such as greeting people, introduction, personal details, shops, telephoning, daily routine, family life and so on.

Generally speaking, as shown in the literature review, several researchers argue that there is no one best method for all students and all subject matter. The implication is that one method that may be best for one teacher and group of students will be inappropriate and unsuccessful in another context. However, the teacher also plays an important role in the children's learning.
Fry and Morrow (1994: 1) state, “effective teachers are able to accommodate different learning styles and provide their students with time to experiment with applications from a diverse range of strategies and technologies”.

An important problem that confronts Vietnamese language teachers is a potential conflict between parents’ expectations about the teaching strategies being used and the traditional Vietnamese approach to teaching Vietnamese. From their experience in Vietnam, some Vietnamese parents believe that effective learning is learning by heart or rote learning. Classroom activities are not considered important nor a part of the teaching or learning process, and teachers play the key role in the children’s learning process. This expectation can lead parents to undervalue new methods of teaching Vietnamese. Contemporary language teaching can seem to be in opposition to the traditional Vietnamese teaching method. In communicative language teaching classrooms the teacher’s function is as a provider of materials and conditions for learning. The teacher is considered to be an instructor and facilitator in the classroom. The role of the teacher is to facilitate classroom activities, while the student takes responsibility for his or her own performance (Ur, 1996; Scarino et al, 1988b).

In general, the teaching methods or strategies identified here have significant impacts on children’s Vietnamese learning progress. The improvement of Vietnamese language competence of children may be due to the teachers’ use of a variety of teaching strategies and their use of materials or resources.

4.5. Summing up

In summary, from an educational and social point of view, the role of parents in a family is very important. They can be considered to be experienced teachers of children. From the child’s earliest days, their parents have been teaching them the first lessons of language, and important language skills. Parents may not only help their children if they are experiencing educational difficulties (i.e. reading skills, etc.) as school does,
but the influence of parents upon their children's behaviour, good manners
and all the qualities that are necessary for their children's life is crucial. It is
right to say that a good child may well be a good student or a good citizen.
According to Vietnamese culture, a son is considered to be a good son when
he is dutiful towards his parents. A Vietnamese proverb says, "Without
being preserved with salt, fish will be rotten. Children who are not obedient
to their parents will be ill-bred" (Cá không ăn muối cá uơn, Con cái cha
mẹ trăm đường con hu).

Today, as in the past, Vietnamese place great value on
scholarship, education and formal qualifications. This
attitude is deeply rooted in the Confucian tradition. So
Vietnamese parents, rich and poor alike, sophisticated and
unsophisticated, tend to make great sacrifices to educate
their children and strongly encourage them to enter tertiary
education, especially those who display intellectual
talents. This may seem harsh but education is also seen as
a gateway to upward social mobility. There are many
instances where the mothers do all the household chores,
like cooking and cleaning, so as their children can devote
all their time to study (Tran, 1995: 13).

Another important role of parents is to assist children in developing the
home language. The home language is acquired by children mainly or only
from the home environment (Saunders, 1982). The extent of the influence of
the home environment on children's Vietnamese language competency
depends primarily on the interplay of three factors: the parents' literacy,
parents' attitudes learning Vietnamese, and parental involvement in school.
The results found in the present study of the children's competence in
Vietnamese revealed that children's Vietnamese competence is related to
their parents' literacy.
Children can learn a great deal from parents. Children need to be given opportunities to develop their learning Vietnamese skills, "If children are given opportunities to explore, manipulate and interact with their environment, language growth will be facilitated and enhanced" (Makin et al, 1995: 126). Parental attitudes to learning Vietnamese are one of the important factors influencing children's Vietnamese language competence. The parents' use of Vietnamese at home seems to make a contribution to the children's competence in Vietnamese. The results of the present study remind us that the frequency of the parents' use of Vietnamese at home influences their children's competence in Vietnamese. When parents speak a minority language at home and use that language exclusively with their children, their children generally communicate in the same language (Cummins, 1993). The findings also reveal that Vietnamese books or newspapers and the electronic media contribute to the improvement of children's proficiency in Vietnamese. By reading books or newspapers, telling stories to children, and listening to SBS radio or watching television (Vietnamese programs) with children, parents assist their children in improving and developing Vietnamese learning skills.

Generally speaking, where children's Vietnamese competency is concerned, the parental involvement in their school will be important.

In analysing parental involvement in schooling, the findings show that the children's Vietnamese language learning is related to the frequency of parents' contact with Vietnamese language teachers and parents' helping their children with homework. A majority of Vietnamese parents has contact with their children's Vietnamese teachers to express their concerns relating their children's learning Vietnamese. From the author's experience, Vietnamese parents often have contact with me as a language teacher to ask about their children's progress in learning, and the teaching methods to support their children's learning at home. Unfortunately, some Vietnamese parents do not recognise the importance of parent-teacher contact. This following comment seems correct: "The experience of teachers I know at
parent-teacher nights is that parents who come along are often the ones who are concerned with their child's work, but usually have no reason for concern" (Baldauf, 2001: 3).

It should be noted in the new settler society the collective responsibility between parents and school should be emphasised. School communication with parents and parents' involvement in schools are the important facets of school-parent interaction. Parental involvement can take many forms, such as parent-meetings, parent-teacher interviews, home reading to children, listening to children and so on. Some primary schools have a special program in which parents of children in particular classes have been invited to attend those classes and listen to their children read. This is an occasion for active communication between parents and classroom teachers.

With regard to the contribution to the improvement of children's competence in Vietnamese, the children's attitudes to the use of the Vietnamese language must be considered as one of the important factors.

The findings of the study remind us that there is a contribution made by children's attitudes to the use of the Vietnamese language for their Vietnamese language proficiency. Children's attitudes to language learning are likely to be important in determining their success in improving Vietnamese language skills. This is because children's positive attitudes to the language will influence their ways of learning. In contrast, children who have negative attitudes towards learning languages have difficulties in improving their language skills. In addition, if parents insist on children learning Vietnamese when they feel that they have been forced to learn, then their competency in Vietnamese suffers. Children tend to be encouraged to speak Vietnamese at home and in the Vietnamese classrooms. It is also important that parents and teachers reassure children that developing Vietnamese at home enables them to learn English, not hinder their English language development.

The use of appropriate teaching methods or strategies has a great influence on the improvement of the children's Vietnamese language
competence. As we have seen, in the Vietnamese educational system the teaching approach emphasises teacher-centred learning, and the use of memorization and rote learning. In contrast, the teaching strategies used in the Australian classrooms are more student-centred than teacher-centred. The role of the teacher is to facilitate communication in the classroom. This connects well with the purpose of learning language, which is for communication. Children learn to use language through an interaction process that involves the skills of talking, listening and viewing, reading and writing.

The following skills are emphasised by the K-6 Generic Syllabus: Spoken communication (Speaking, Listening and Viewing), Written communication (reading, writing), the language system, and socio-cultural context. All community languages teachers surveyed adopted this communicative language teaching method.

The question is: Should we either reconcile the traditional Vietnamese teaching approach and the communicative language teaching approach or completely adopt the communicative approach in the Vietnamese classrooms?

The traditional Vietnamese teaching approach has focused on the study of vocabulary words, grammar and sentence structure; children are asked to learn all the words and sentences by heart. Little attention is paid to the training of children’s communicative competence. This way of teaching insists students pore over their books and lessons and try to remember abstract matters.

From the researcher’s experience, some Vietnamese parents indicated in the teacher-parent interviews and in the personal contacts, that learning by heart is a good way for their children to remember difficult words and sentences. One parent expressed his opinion as follows:

I can remember and recite all Vietnamese proverbs and recitations that I learned by heart in primary schools (i.e.
nearly 30 years). While my son who is being taught by the new teaching strategies, cannot remember all sentences and lessons given by teachers.

On the other hand, some parents indicated that the new teaching strategies assisted their children in having competency in Vietnamese.

My son’s competence in spoken and written have been improved and developed. After 5 years at primary school, he can participate in casual conversation and group discussion. He can write correct sentences and short informal letters.

The above parents’ concerns indicate that disagreements about the relative merit of different teaching strategies continue. Should we integrate the two teaching methods into one?

The aim of communicative approach is to train learners for communicative efficiency. The student-centred approach enables learners to participate in classroom activities. Learners must be provided with opportunities to practise and learn how to use the language. The use of discussion, group work or pair work has a significant effect in the Vietnamese classrooms.

The suggestion is that the teacher provides the children with opportunities to practise communicative activities in which they acquire the words or sentences and learn how to use the language in real life. The more they do this the better they have proficiency in Vietnamese. That means, the communicative approach is very helpful and successful for children learning Vietnamese.

In general, the findings of this study offer strong evidence that the improvement of children’s Vietnamese language competence is related to many factors. These include parents’ competence in Vietnamese, parents’
attitudes to learning Vietnamese, parental involvement in school, children's attitudes and motivation to the Vietnamese language, and school factors. It is felt that these factors play a key role in improving children’s competence in Vietnamese.

On the basis of the research findings collected, this study suggests the recommendations listed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As we have seen, it is clear from the findings of this study that children’s competence in Vietnamese is related to parent factors, parental involvement in school, children’s attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese learning, and school factors (i.e. the teaching strategies and the role of teachers and their qualities).

5.1. Parent factors: The influence of parent factors on children’s competency in Vietnamese

The following points can be made about the contribution of parent factors to children’s Vietnamese language learning:
- Parents’ literacy in the Vietnamese language is related to their children’s competence in Vietnamese.
- The frequency of parents’ use of Vietnamese at home is related to their children’s Vietnamese language competence.
- Parents’ listening to SBS radio or watching television (Vietnamese programs) with their children, and parents’ reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers to their children improve their children’s Vietnamese language competence.

5.1.1. Parents’ literacy in the Vietnamese language

Research findings indicate that children’s competence in Vietnamese is related to their parents’ competence in Vietnamese. As we have seen in the discussion chapter, children’s competence in their mother tongue is related to
their parents' competence in the language, i.e. children whose parents "have better command of the English language seem to maintain their mother tongue better than those parents who have confined themselves to the immediate family and to their ethnic community both socially and linguistically" (Wei, 1993: 211).

On the basis of this information, one can argue that parents' literacy influence their children's Vietnamese language learning.

5.1.2. The frequency of parents' use of Vietnamese at home is related to their children's competence in Vietnamese

There is a contribution of the frequency of parents' use of Vietnamese at home to the children’s competence in Vietnamese (i.e. the findings show that the increase in the proportion of the children’s competence in Vietnamese is related to the majority of parents' use of Vietnamese at home).

5.1.3. The influence of parents' listening to SBS radio, parents’ watching television (Vietnamese programs), and parents' reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers on children's competence in Vietnamese.

The improvement of children’s competence in Vietnamese is related to parents' listening to SBS radio or watching television (Vietnamese programs). In addition, parents' reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers also influences their children's competence in Vietnamese (the findings show that a majority of parents listen to SBS radio and watch television with their children, and read Vietnamese books/newspapers "often" or "very often". This may help explain the increase of 41.4% in the surveyed children’s competence in spoken Vietnamese, and the increase of 28.12% in the children’s competence in written Vietnamese).

In short, the findings are interesting in that they show the importance of the parental role in children's Vietnamese language learning.
It is believed that:

- Parents' literacy in the Vietnamese language is the greatest influence on the improvement of children's Vietnamese learning. Parents whose children were born in Australia or had grown up in Australia are more fluent in English than those Vietnamese who are not able to use English in communicating with their children. As a result, when parents insist on their children speaking Vietnamese at home all the time, children feel that they have been forced to learn the Vietnamese language therefore their competence in Vietnamese falters.

- Parents' speaking of Vietnamese at home, listening to SBS radio or watching television (Vietnamese programs) with their children, reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers to their children influence their children competence in Vietnamese.

The researcher therefore recommends that:

**Recommendation 1.** Parents should be encouraged to acquire an appropriate knowledge of both the English and the Vietnamese languages. Instead of insisting on their children speaking Vietnamese at home all the time, parents should sometimes use English in communicating with them and help them understand the lessons given by teachers. This is a significant opportunity for parents to assist their children in improving both the Vietnamese and the English languages.

**Recommendation 2.** Parents should be encouraged to use both English and Vietnamese at home when assisting their children in doing homework or in language learning. In their daily activities, however, parents should use Vietnamese often in order to enhance their children's understanding.¹

¹ Recommendation 1 and 2: While the use of the English language at home was not a focus of this research, it was felt that the greatest opportunity for parents to assist their children with Vietnamese language learning was for their to be the fullest communication and engagement between parents and schools.
Recommendation 3. In the primary schools, a home-school reading program has been designed to encourage children to read at home and to promote reading as a leisure activity. The program can provide a link between parent and school. The aim of the program is to provide children with the opportunity to develop their reading skills in a warm home environment. Parents should be encouraged to take this opportunity to assist their children in reading both English and Vietnamese. Vietnamese language teacher(s), parents and children should work together to select the Vietnamese or bilingual books/newspapers (i.e. books/newspapers written in both Vietnamese and English) which children want to read. Teachers should try to discuss with parents the home-reading strategies. The point is that children should be encouraged and motivated to read at home both English and Vietnamese books/newspapers. Gibbons (1992: 225) argues that "a well-developed first language is one of the most important factors in successfully learning a second language; the first language provides a framework for the second".

Recommendation 4. Listening to the radio or watching television is a significant strategy for learning language. This is a good way for improving language understanding. Listening to SBS radio or watching television (Vietnamese programs) will provide children with opportunities to practise listening and to find it pleasurable. Parents should be encouraged to listen to SBS radio or watch television (Vietnamese programs) with their children. After listening to the radio or watching television, it is a good idea to talk about the story or the news; parents can explain what a word or the main idea of the story or the news is when their children ask for help.

Without English language skills, at least to some degree, parents would tend to be isolated from the English dominated school system and be less able to assist their children with crossover between languages and interpretation. Further research is required to examine the extent to which parents’ use of English at home to communicate with their children, influences their children’s competence in the language.
It is recognised that most programs tend to be more suitable for adults rather than for children. So, the schools (or the Department of Education) need to cooperate with the SBS radio or television services to organise a number of programs for Vietnamese children.

5.2. Parental involvement in school: The influence of parental involvement in school on children's Vietnamese language competence

A number of points about the contribution of parental involvement in school should be stressed:

5.2.1. The influence of parents' contact with their children's Vietnamese language teachers on their children's Vietnamese language competence

The findings reveal that children's progress in Vietnamese is related to the frequency of parents' contact with their Vietnamese teachers (i.e. 55.4% of parents have contact with Vietnamese language teachers “often” and “very often”, and there was an increase of 41.4% in competence in spoken Vietnamese, and an increase of 28.12% in competence in written Vietnamese).

5.2.2. The influence of parents’ helping children with their homework on their children's Vietnamese language competence

The children’s progress in learning Vietnamese is affected by this type of parental support. A majority of parents reported that they supported their children with their homework “often” and “very often”.

5.2.3. Parents’ concerns about Vietnamese language learning

Regarding the open question in the survey, a majority of parents (63.28%) expressed their concerns about Vietnamese language learning. Their concerns reflected their positive attitudes to their children’s Vietnamese language learning.

It is believed that there is a contribution of parents’ involvement in their children’s schools to their children’s Vietnamese language competence. In general, parents’ contact with their children’s Vietnamese language teachers, and parents’ helping their children with their homework have a significant impact on the children’s progress in Vietnamese.

It is recommended that

**Recommendation 5**

- **For parents**: Parents can do many activities to assist children in developing their Vietnamese language learning. Parents should be encouraged to attend all school meetings. Attendance at school meetings is an occasion for contact with children’s Vietnamese language teachers to express concerns about children’s progress in Vietnamese. Parents can contribute their experience and knowledge to the school community; in particular, parents may share ideas and experience in the learning program.

- **For teachers and schools**: To enhance parent-participation and to increase contact with parents, schools should be encouraged to make home visits and to invite parents to participate actively in the life of the school. Parents should be considered as partners with teachers in the teaching and learning processes at school. The document *Quality teaching, Quality learning* (1994) states: “Quality learning is most likely to occur when students know that their family and community members are welcome in the school” (NSW Department School Education: *Quality teaching-Quality learning- A discussion paper for teachers, principals and parents*, 1994: 23).
5.3. Student factors: The influence of children’s attitudes and motivation to learning Vietnamese on their competence in Vietnamese

The following findings are drawn from the study to explain the reason why some children are successful at Vietnamese language learning while others are not:
- The frequency of students' use of Vietnamese at home and school.
- The children's use of Vietnamese outside the home and school.
- The reasons for learning Vietnamese (i.e. Vietnamese being the mother tongue, and the need to start studying Vietnamese at primary school for later language learning).

5.3.1. Children’s use of Vietnamese at home and school influences the improvement of children's competence in Vietnamese

The findings show that children’s level of Vietnamese language competence is related to the use of Vietnamese at home and school (i.e. children who use Vietnamese at home and school "often" or "very often" make considerable progress in learning Vietnamese).

Generally speaking, there is a contribution of children’s attitudes towards the use of the Vietnamese language to the improvement of children's Vietnamese language competence

5.3.2. The children’s use of Vietnamese outside the home and school influences the improvement of children’s competence in Vietnamese

The research findings show that a majority of children’s improved competency in Vietnamese was related to the use of Vietnamese outside the home and school. As we have seen in the discussion chapter, learning a
second language in a "language natural context" is more effective than learning a second language in the classroom. The resources available in the community also provide students with the opportunity to practise their speaking skills in a "language natural context" (e.g. parents and people who speak Vietnamese and English play a key role as a language resources).

5.3.3. Reasons for learning Vietnamese

The reasons for learning Vietnamese reflect the children’s attitudes and motivation to the Vietnamese language. Reasons for learning Vietnamese given by a majority of children included that the Vietnamese language is their mother tongue and they believed that learning Vietnamese at primary school was necessary to be able to continue Vietnamese at high school. Debela (1994) and Wei (1993) argue that the social environment of which the parent is an importance part influences language minority children's maintenance of their ethnic language. In general, children’s attitudes and motivation led them to seek out the opportunities to learn the Vietnamese language.

In short, there is a contribution of children’s attitudes to the Vietnamese language to their competence in Vietnamese.

It is believed that:
- Children’s competence in Vietnamese is related to the frequency of children’s use of Vietnamese at home and school.
- Children’s competence in Vietnamese is related to the frequency of children’s use of Vietnamese outside the home and school.
- Children’s reasons for learning Vietnamese influence their competence in Vietnamese.

It is therefore recommended that:

**Recommendation 6.** Children should be encouraged to use Vietnamese to communicate with parents or other family members. As mentioned in recommendation 1, instead of insisting on their children speaking
Vietnamese at home all the time, parents should use both English and Vietnamese in communicating with their children. It is important to take time to help children develop their competence in Vietnamese. Gradually, through daily interaction and communication, children should be encouraged to use Vietnamese as much as possible in communicating with their parents.

**Recommendation 7.** The classroom teacher could play a vital role in supporting students to develop listening and speaking skills in Vietnamese. Vietnamese should be the medium of teaching. Vietnamese lessons must involve the students in practicing communicative activities in order to develop effective listening and speaking skills. Teacher should encourage students to speak Vietnamese during class activities.

**Recommendation 8.** The natural language context is a vital area for learning language. Children need to be given opportunities to interact with more competent Vietnamese speakers (e.g. children should be allowed to go shopping with their parents on several occasions, as when going shopping they have opportunities to practise speaking and listening skills in Vietnamese). The findings indicate that children considered parents and Vietnamese speakers as the reasons for learning Vietnamese. Parents, family members and other Vietnamese speakers should be encouraged to use Vietnamese to talk with children "often", read Vietnamese newspapers or books and tell stories to them and encourage them to ask questions. The document *Quality teaching, Quality learning* (1994) states: “Quality learning is most likely to occur when students are able to develop positive relationships with teachers, students and other adults”. (NSW Department School Education: *Quality teaching-Quality learning: A discussion paper for teachers, principals and parents*, 1994: 25).
5.4. School factors: The influence of school factors on children’s competence in Vietnamese

With regard to teaching strategies, several conclusions can be drawn from the results:

The teachers involved in the interviews indicated that classes were conducted mainly in Vietnamese. They focused on the four macro-skills in Vietnamese used, classroom interaction such as pair work and group work. The teachers used student-centred and communicative approaches. They believed that student-centred and communicative approaches enabled children to acquire communication skills and enhanced the children’s language learning.

The following reinforcement techniques were used by a majority of teachers: verbal, gestural, and contact. The teachers relied on the following role and qualities that an effective teacher needs to have: (a) providing a link between home and school, (b) being interested in the skills, attitudes and interests of children, (c) developing and maintaining positive attitudes towards children, and (d) making all children participate in learning.

A majority of teachers did not support the statement that "over-correcting mistakes in the children's language pattern, assists them to write Vietnamese correctly " and "teacher who tries his/her very best to get children interested in a story he/she is reading to them, assists children to use language more fully". They supported the strategy that children should be given opportunities to participate in decisions about their own learning.

It is believed that the following teaching strategies influenced the improvement of children’s Vietnamese language proficiency:

- Student-centred and communicative approaches.
- The use of Vietnamese in classroom activities.
- The use of reinforcement techniques: verbal, gestural and contact.
- The teachers' perceptions of special teaching strategies (i.e. avoiding over-correcting mistakes, reading appropriate stories, encouraging children participation in decision about their own learning).

It is therefore recommended that:

**Recommendation 9.** Although the use of the student-centred and communicative approaches enhanced the children's communication skills, however, depending on the stage of schooling, the teacher may use a mixture of teacher-centred and student-centred approaches. For example, in Stage 3, the student-centred approach seemed most effective, but for very young students in Stage 1 or Stage 2, the teacher may need to take a leading role when necessary.

**Recommendation 10.** The Vietnamese children needed reinforcement to learn Vietnamese, and the use of reinforcement techniques is important. There is no evidence for the claim that all types of reinforcement lead to an improvement in children's Vietnamese language competence. In the author's opinion, when using reinforcement techniques, it is necessary to know what the children's needs are in order to determine which reinforcement techniques are more appropriate with Vietnamese children.

**Recommendation 11.** Most important will be the differences in the roles and qualities that an effective teacher displays when he/she teaches Vietnamese children. The findings show that all the following roles and qualities are important: (a) providing a link between home and school, (b) being interested in the skills, attitudes and interests of students, (c) developing and maintaining a positive attitudes towards students, and (d) making all students participate in learning.

In fact, the researcher believes that attendance at a community language class for at least two or three hours per week is not enough for children to maintain and develop a language other than English (e.g. the Vietnamese
language). As shown above, the role of parents is very effective at improving their children's Vietnamese learning skills. It is suggested, therefore, that teachers should "provide a link between home and school".

Generally speaking, the present study should be important in the field of learning and teaching the Vietnamese language as part of a multicultural education.

Based on the contribution of the major factors outlined above to the children’s competence in Vietnamese, this study offered various recommendations to those who are involved in teaching or learning Vietnamese. It is insufficient to pay attention to only one of these factors, but the focus of attention should be on the association and interplay of these factors.

The influence of parent factors, student factors, and school factors on children’s competence in Vietnamese can be summarised in the flow chart as follows:
Figure 5.8 The influence of parent factors, student factors, and school factors on children’s competence in Vietnamese
KEY

Parent factors includes:

P1 = parents' literacy in Vietnamese is related to their children's competence in Vietnamese (C1)

P2 = parents' use of Vietnamese at home influences their children's competence in Vietnamese (C2)

P3 = parents' reading of Vietnamese books/newspapers is related to their children's competence in Vietnamese (C3)

P4 = parents' listening to SBS radio or watching television (Vietnamese program) influences their children's competence in Vietnamese (C4)

The home environment (Parent factors) influences children's competence in Vietnamese (CV1)

Parents' involvement

IV1 = Parents' contact with their children's teachers is related to children's competence in Vietnamese (C5)

IV2 = Parents' help children with their homework is related to children's Vietnamese language competence (C6)

Parents' involvement in school influences their children's competence in Vietnamese (CV2)

Student factors includes:

S1 = Children's use of Vietnamese at home and school is related to their competence in Vietnamese (C7)

S2 = Children's use of Vietnamese outside the home and school influence their competence in Vietnamese (C8)
S3 = Children’s reasons for learning Vietnamese: “The Vietnamese language is the mother tongue” influences their competence in Vietnamese (C9)

S4 = Children’s reasons for learning Vietnamese: “It is good to start studying Vietnamese at primary school” is related to their competence in Vietnamese (C10)

Children's attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese learning influence their Vietnamese language competence (CV3)

**School factors includes:**

SC1 = Teaching strategies are related to children’s competence in Vietnamese (C11)

SC2 = The teacher’s role and teacher qualities influence children’s competence in Vietnamese (C12)

School factors influence students' competence in Vietnamese (CV4)

In summary, parent factors (P), parent involvement (IV), student factors (S), and school factors (SC), influence children’s competence in Vietnamese (C).

**Recommendations for further research**

Several issues arising out of the present study require extensive further research. The following areas should be focused on. There is a need for further research to be conducted into the following recommendations:

**The home environment and children's competence in Vietnamese**

This study did not examine the individual concerns that parents may have when assisting their children learning Vietnamese. For example, in some Vietnamese families, children who were born in Australia or have grown up
in Australia are more fluent in English than Vietnamese, while parents are not able to use English in communicating with their children. As a result, parents may insist on children using Vietnamese at home all the time. Children could feel that they have been forced to learn the Vietnamese language, therefore their competence in Vietnamese falters. Further research might examine the influence of parents' individual concerns on their children's Vietnamese learning.

The students' attitudes to language learning and students' competence in Vietnamese

The age of the students may correlate with their attitudes and motivation to Vietnamese language learning. The present study did not examine the influence of the age of the students on their attitudes to learning Vietnamese. This issue requires further research.

The relationship between the first and the second language

The present study did not examine the relationship between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2) that might have a significant effect on students' language learning. Further research is required to examine the extent to which students' acquisition of the English language is related to their Vietnamese proficiency.

The teaching strategies and students' competence in Vietnamese

The following intervening factors must be considered: the variety in teaching strategies and the use of materials or resources. The present study had two major limitations:

First, the present study only used teacher interviews to find out how well the teachers tried to vary their teaching strategies during lessons. Further
studies based on the triangulation method - class observation, interview and questionnaires - would be useful.

Second, the use of teaching materials or resources that might have a significant effect on students' language learning was not studied. The present study did not examine the influence of teaching materials on the improvement of students' Vietnamese language competence. The following are two issues that require further research:

1. Children may learn Vietnamese best when they only read books written in Vietnamese (books written in English are not necessary).

2. Is it important to use materials or resources that relate to the interests and experiences of children in Australia?

**Parental involvement in the schools and children's competence in Vietnamese**

Finally, future research is required to examine the extent to which parental involvement influences classroom teaching strategies, and the content of the K-6 Vietnamese programs.
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APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Students learning Vietnamese in New South Wales primary schools

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<td>-</td>
<td>2993</td>
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<td>4917</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5311</td>
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* Source: From The NSW Department of Education and Training-Languages Unit- Curriculum Support Directorate (7/2000).

** Source: Estimated details about Vietnamese language schools (Ethnic Schools) in Sydney. Data collected from interviewing Presidents/Supervisors, Principals/Head Teachers of the relevant associations, committees or schools (7/2000).
APPENDIX 2
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Bản tham khảo ý kiến
(Ý kiến của Phù Huỳnh học sinh)


Hướng dẫn: Xin trả lời bằng cách ghi dấu [v] vào ô [ ] thích hợp.

Tên học sinh: (Tự ý ghi hoặc không ghi)
Phái tính: Nam [ ] Nữ [ ]
Tuổi [ ]
Lớp học: [ ]

Tiết 1. Trình độ Việt- ngữ

1. Câu hỏi 1. Khả năng hiểu biết về Việt- ngữ của Ông/Bà như thế nào?

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<td>Trung bình</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giỏi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rất giỏi</td>
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</table>

Nói [ ]
Nghe [ ]
Đọc [ ]
Việt [ ]
Tiết 2. Thái độ về việc học Việt - ngữ và phương tiện truyền thông

2. Câu hỏi 2: Ông/Bà có thường nói tiếng Việt tại nhà không?
   1  2  3
   Không bao giờ [ ] Hầu như không bao giờ [ ] Thịnh thường [ ]
   4  5
   Thường thường [ ] Luôn luôn [ ]

3. Câu hỏi 3. Ông/Bà có thường đọc sách báo Việt - ngữ cho con em nghe hay không?
   1  2  3
   Không bao giờ [ ] Hầu như không bao giờ [ ] Thịnh thường [ ]
   4  5
   Thường thường [ ] Luôn luôn [ ]

4. Câu hỏi 4: Ông/Bà có thường nghe đài phát thanh SBS (Chương trình tiếng Việt) với con em hay không?
   1  2  3
   Không bao giờ [ ] Hầu như không bao giờ [ ] Thịnh thường [ ]
   4  5
   Thường thường [ ] Luôn luôn [ ]

5. Câu hỏi 5: Ông/Bà có thường xem truyền hình (Chương trình tiếng Việt) với con em hay không?
   1  2  3
   Không bao giờ [ ] Hầu như không bao giờ [ ] Thịnh thường [ ]
   4  5
   Thường thường [ ] Luôn luôn [ ]
Tiết 3. Sự tham gia của Phụ-Huynh tại trường học

6. Câu hỏi 6: Ông/Bà có thường tiếp xúc với giáo viên dạy Việt-nya của con em để trình bày những quan tâm liên quan đến việc học tiếng Việt của con em hay không?

1 2 3
Không bao giờ [ ] Hầu như không bao giờ [ ] Tình thôằng [ ]

4 5
Thường thường [ ] Luôn luôn [ ]

7. Câu hỏi 7: Ông/Bà có thường giúp con em làm bài tập tại nhà hay không?

1 2 3
Không bao giờ [ ] Hầu như không bao giờ [ ] Tình thôằng [ ]

4 5
Thường thường [ ] Luôn luôn [ ]

8. Câu hỏi 8: Điều gì làm Ông/Bà quan tâm nhất khi giúp con em học tiếng Việt?

Thành thật cảm ơn sự hợp tác của quý Ông/Bà

Van BON NGUYEN
Appendix 3

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Questionnaire

(To be completed by Parents)

This questionnaire is designed to survey a research of the improvement of Vietnamese Community Language in NSW primary schools. This questionnaire is anonymous and all information will be treated as confidential. Your cooperation would be very much appreciated.

Instruction: Please read the question and tick (v) the appropriate box which describes your responses to each statement.

Name of child.(Optional).................................

Gender: Boy [ ] Girl [ ]

Age [ ]

Class [ ]

Section 1: Parent’s competence in Vietnamese

1. Question 1: How would you rate your competence in Vietnamese?

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<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
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<td>Average</td>
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<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

-Speaking skills [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

-Listening skills [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

-Reading skills [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

-Writing skills [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
Section 2: Attitudes to Vietnamese language learning and the media.

2. **Question 2**: How often do you speak Vietnamese in your home?

   1  2  3  4  5
   Never [ ] Hardly ever [ ] Sometimes [ ] Often [ ] Very often [ ]

3. **Question 3**: How often do you read Vietnamese books/newspapers to your children?

   1  2  3  4  5
   Never [ ] Hardly ever [ ] Sometimes [ ] Often [ ] Very often [ ]

4. **Question 4**: How often do you listen to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) with your children?

   1  2  3  4  5
   Never [ ] Hardly ever [ ] Sometimes [ ] Often [ ] Very often [ ]

5. **Question 5**: How often do you watch Television (Vietnamese programs) with your children?

   1  2  3  4  5
   Never [ ] Hardly ever [ ] Sometimes [ ] Often [ ] Very often [ ]

Section 3: Parental involvement

6. **Question 6**: How often do you have contact with your children’s Vietnamese language teacher to express your concerns relating to your children’s learning Vietnamese?

   1  2  3  4  5
   Never [ ] Hardly ever [ ] Sometimes [ ] Often [ ] Very often [ ]

7. **Question 7**: How often do you help your children with their homework?

   1  2  3  4  5
   Never [ ] Hardly ever [ ] Sometimes [ ] Often [ ] Very often [ ]

8. **Question 8** (open-question): The most pressing concerns you have when you assist your children to learn the Vietnamese language?

Thank you for your cooperation

Van Bon Nguyen
Appendix 4

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Questionnaire

(To be completed by students)

This questionnaire is designed to survey a research of the improvement of the Vietnamese language in NSW primary schools. This questionnaire is anonymous and all information will be treated as confidential. Your cooperation would be very much appreciated.

**Instruction:** Please read the question and tick (v) the appropriate box to show your answer.

**Section 1: Student profile**

- Name: (optional) .................
- Name of school: (optional) .................
- Age: [ ]
- Class: [ ]
- Gender: Boy [ ] Girl [ ]

**Section 2: Attitudes and Motivation**

1. **Question 1:** How often do you speak Vietnamese in your home?
   
   1  2  3  4  5
   
   Never [ ] Hardly ever [ ] Sometimes [ ] Often [ ] Very often [ ]

2. **Question 2:** How often do you speak Vietnamese at school?

   1  2  3  4  5
   
   Never [ ] Hardly ever [ ] Sometimes [ ] Often [ ] Very often [ ]
3. **Question 3**: How often do you speak Vietnamese outside the home and school?

   1 2 3 4 5

   Never [ ] Hardly ever [ ] Sometimes [ ] Often [ ] Very often [ ]

4. **Question 4**: Studying the Vietnamese language is important for me because it is my mother tongue.

   1 2 3 4

   Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neutral [ ] Agree [ ]

   5

   Strongly Agree [ ]

5. **Question 5**: It is good to start studying Vietnamese at primary school, because it enables me to continue learning Vietnamese in High School.

   1 2 3 4

   Strongly Disagree [ ] Disagree [ ] Neutral [ ] Agree [ ]

   5

   Strongly Agree [ ]

**Section 3: Competence in Vietnamese** *(To be completed by the teacher and the researcher)*

The four outcomes according to which the students' oral and written language ability were assessed are as follows:

*Spoken communication*

1 [ ] understand some basic greetings, give name, age, address etc...

2 [ ] express daily requirements, ask simple questions and make simple statements.

3 [ ] participate in casual conversation (e.g. discussion familiar topics among friends)

4 [ ] understand SBS radio and television programs (including Vietnamese films, and videos), and take part in any group discus and speak fluently.
Written language

1 [ ] read some Vietnamese signs and short words through the observation of pictures.
2 [ ] locate and recognize known words in the text.
3 [ ] write words and correct sentences.
4 [ ] read books, newspapers, magazines etc, and write informal letters, write a story with a simple sentence.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Van Bon Nguyen
APPENDIX 5

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

THE VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE BASIC SKILLS TEST

This test is designed to survey a comprehension research of the improvement of the Vietnamese Language in NSW primary schools. This test is anonymous and all information will be treated as confidential. Your cooperation would be very much appreciated.

Section 1: Student profile

Please tick [v] the appropriate box
- Name: (optional) .......... 
- Name of school (optional) .......... 
- Age: [ ]
- Class: [ ]
- Gender: Boy [ ] Girl [ ]

Section 2: Students' competence in spoken Vietnamese [assessed by teacher]

Please tick the appropriate box.

1 [ ] understand some basic greetings, give name, age, address...
2 [ ] express daily requirements, ask simple questions and make simple statements
3 [ ] participate in casual conversation (e.g. discussion familiar topics among friends)
4 [ ] understand SBS radio and television programs (including Vietnamese films, and videos), and take part in any group discussion and speak fluently.

Section 3: Students' competence in written Vietnamese (completed by students)

Outcome 1: Nhìn hình về sau đây. Viết tên của mỗi hình bằng cách sắp xếp lại các chữ (Look at these pictures. Label the following pictures by rearranging the jumbled words)

- One iov
- One hco
- Cia qaut

- One ob
- Cia hna
- Cno ag

- Cno ed
- Con ac
**Outcome 2:** Đọc đoạn văn ngắn sau đây và ghi đầu tick [v] vào câu trả lời thích hợp (Read this following paragraph and tick (v) the appropriate answer).

Kỳ nghỉ hè của chúng tôi kéo dài sau tuần lễ. Suốt tuần cuối của kỳ nghỉ, chúng tôi chuẩn bị cho tết trường. Chúng tôi mua bột chì, bột mực, giấy, sách vở mới. Ngày đầu tết trường chúng tôi gặp lại tất cả các bạn cũ, và kể cho họ nghe về ngày nghỉ.

Kỳ nghỉ hè kéo dài:
- [ ] Ba tháng
- [ ] Hai tháng
- [ ] Sau tuần lễ

Chúng tôi mua:
- [ ] Đồ chơi
- [ ] Bánh kẹo
- [ ] Bột chì, bột mực, giấy, sách vở mới

Chúng tôi gặp lại và kể cho họ nghe những ngày nghỉ:
- [ ] Người thân
- [ ] Tất cả thầy cô giáo
- [ ] Hai câu trên đều sai

**Outcome 3:** Nhìn những hình sau đây. Đặt mỗi chữ dưới mỗi hình.

(Look at the pictures. Write a word under each picture).
Đặt mổ chữ trong một câu ngắn. (Write sentences. Use each word in a short sentence).
1/ ............................................................
2/ ............................................................
3/ ............................................................
4/ ............................................................

Outcome 4: Đọc đoạn văn ngắn sau đây và ghi dấu tick[v] vào câu trả lời thích hợp.
(Read the paragraph below and tick [v] the appropriate answer)
Trả lời (answer)
A/ Ghi [v] vào câu thích hợp. (Tick the statements that say what the writer actually said)
[ ] Trở mưa đồng không đẹp lắm
[ ] Chúng tôi xuống nước tâm
[ ] Chúng tôi đi dạo chơi ở biên và ngắm những con tàu
B/ Ghi [v] vào câu thích hợp. (Tick the statement which you think the writer meant)

[ ] Không nên đi dạo bờ biển ngày chưa nhủt
[ ] Chúng tôi tâm bến rất vui
[ ] Đi dạo bờ biển và ngắm những con tàu rất vui

C/ Ghi [v] vào câu thích hợp. (Tick the statements which you think the writer believes)

[ ] Thơm tiệt mưa đồng âm áp
[ ] Thơm tiệt luôn thay đổi
[ ] Không nói đau bằng nhà mình
APPENDIX 6

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS

Question 1: Years of Teaching experience:
1-3 years [ ] 4-6 years [ ] 7-9 years [ ] 9+ years [ ]
Indicate the highest teaching qualification you hold either in Australia or in Vietnam?
-Postgraduate
-Higher school certificate (HSC)
-Other (specify)

Question 2: What teaching methods do you think are effective for your students to learn Vietnamese?

Question 3: What teaching strategies do you use to teach Vietnamese in your school?

Question 4: What reinforcement techniques you think are effective for your students in the classroom?

Question 5: What role and qualities do you think an effective teacher needs to have?

Question 6: In order to help children to develop language competence, some researchers think that children need opportunities to take part in decisions about their own learning, need to be given the opportunities to negotiate of their reading materials, and need to be given opportunities to make their own correction of mistakes. How do you feel about this? What did you do about this?
APPENDIX 7

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Pilot study: Basic Skills Test Students' competence in Vietnamese

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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N of Cases = 25.0

<table>
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Variance = .0008

Inter-item Correlations | Mean | Minimum | Maximum | Range | Max/Min |
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Reliability Coefficients 2 items

\[ \text{Alpha} = .9547 \quad \text{Standardized item alpha} = .9554 \]
APPENDIX 8

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of
Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Pilot study: Parents’ competence in Vietnamese

**RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)**

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N of Cases = 25.0

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Variance

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Variance

.0608

Reliability Coefficients

4 items

**Alpha = .6718**  Standardized item alpha = .7209
APPENDIX 9

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Pilot study: Parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

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N of Cases = 25.0

Statistics for Scale

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N of Variables = 4

Item Means

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Variance

.0725

Item Variances

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Variance

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Inter-item Correlations

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Variance

.0198

Reliability Coefficients

4 items

Alpha = .9152
Standardized item alpha = .9134
APPENDIX 10

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Pilot study: Parents’ involvement in school

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

<table>
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N of Cases = 25.0

Statistics for Scale

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N of Variables = 2

Item Means

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Variance .0032

Item Variances

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Variance .0228

Inter-item Correlations

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</table>

Variance .0000

Reliability Coefficients

2 items

Alpha = .6699 Standardized item alpha = .6729
APPENDIX 11

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of
Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Pilot study: Students’ attitudes and motivation to learning
Vietnamese

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

<table>
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<th></th>
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<th>Cases</th>
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N of Cases = 25.0

Statistics for Scale
- Mean: 16.6400
- Variance: 19.4067
- Std Dev: 4.4053
- N of Variables: 5

Item Means
- Mean: 3.3280
- Minimum: 2.5600
- Maximum: 3.9600
- Range: 1.4000
- Max/Min: 1.5469

Variance: .4299

Inter-item Correlations
- Mean: .5626
- Minimum: .2686
- Maximum: .9186
- Range: .6500
- Max/Min: 3.4196

Variance: .0358

Reliability Coefficients
- 5 items

Alpha = .8406
Standardized item alpha = .8655
APPENDIX 12
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Main study: First Basic Skills Test: Students’ competence in Vietnamese

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

N of Cases = 128.0

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<th>Max/Min</th>
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Variance .0003

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Variance .0000

Reliability Coefficients 2 items

Alpha = .8333

Standardized item alpha = .8361
APPENDIX 13
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Main study: Second Basic Skills Test: Students’ competence in Vietnamese

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

<table>
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<th>Cases</th>
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N of Cases = 128.0

Statistics for Scale

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Item Means

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Variance .0564

Inter-item Correlations

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Variance .0000

Reliability Coefficients 2 items

Alpha = .7511 Standardized item alpha = .7556
APPENDIX 14
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Main study: Parents’ competence in Vietnamese

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

<table>
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<th>Cases</th>
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N of Cases = 128.0

Statistics for Scale
Mean 16.8047
Variance 5.9694
Std Dev 2.4432
N of Variables 4

Item Means
Mean 4.2012
Minimum 3.9063
Maximum 4.3516
Range .4453
Max/Min 1.1140

Variance .0441

Inter-item Correlations
Mean .4927
Minimum .3706
Maximum .6203
Range .2498
Max/Min 1.6740

Variance .0089

Reliability Coefficients 4 items

Alpha = .7893 Standardized item alpha = .7953
APPENDIX 15

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Main study: Parents’ attitudes to learning Vietnamese

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

<table>
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N of Cases = 128.0

Statistics for Scale

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Item Means

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Variance

.1174

Inter-item Correlations

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Variance

.0507

Reliability Coefficients

4 items

**Alpha = .7829**

Standardized item alpha = .7793
APPENDIX 16

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Main study: Parents' involvement in school

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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N of Cases = 128.0

Statistics for Scale

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<th>Std Dev</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>7.4688</td>
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N of Variables 2

Item Means

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<th>Max/Min</th>
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Variance .1250

Inter-item Correlations

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<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Max/Min</th>
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Variance .0000

Reliability Coefficients 2 items

Alpha = .5421 Standardized item alpha = .5532
APPENDIX 17

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Main study: Students’ attitudes and motivation to learning Vietnamese

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Cases</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>VAR00011</td>
<td>3.8906</td>
<td>1.0290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>VAR00012</td>
<td>3.0469</td>
<td>1.0184</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>VAR00013</td>
<td>3.7969</td>
<td>.7772</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>VAR00014</td>
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<td>1.2724</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>VAR00015</td>
<td>4.0859</td>
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N of Cases = 128.0

Statistics for Scale

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<tr>
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<td>18.2656</td>
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Item Means

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<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Max/Min</th>
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<td>4.0859</td>
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Variance

.1688

Inter-item Correlations

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<th>Range</th>
<th>Max/Min</th>
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<td>.5107</td>
<td>.3593</td>
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Variance

.0205

Reliability Coefficients

5 items

Alpha = .8267

Standardized item alpha = .8392
APPENDIX 18

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

Paired t-test: Children’s competence in spoken Vietnamese

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>First BST: Children's competence in spoken</th>
<th>Second BST: Children's competence in spoken</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>3.34</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>128</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.770</td>
<td>.669</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>Std. Error Mean</td>
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</table>

Paired Samples Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>First BST: Children's competence in spoken</th>
<th>Second BST: Children's competence in spoken</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.933</td>
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<td>SIG.</td>
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<td>.000</td>
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Paired Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>First BST: Children's competence in spoken - Second BST: Children's competence in spoken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.91</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.281</td>
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Paired Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>First BST: Children's competence in spoken - Second BST: Children's competence in spoken</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-36.753</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>127</td>
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<tr>
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APPENDIX 19

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

Paired t-test: Children’s competence in written Vietnamese

**T-Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>First BST: Children’s competence in written</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>128</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second BST: Children’s competence in written</td>
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<td>.768</td>
<td>.068</td>
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**Paired Samples Correlations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Pair 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First BST: Children’s competence in written &amp; Second BST: Children’s competence in written</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>.645</td>
<td>.000</td>
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**Paired Samples Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
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<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>Std. Error Mean</td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>First BST: Children’s competence in written - Second BST: Children’s competence in written</td>
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<td>-.71</td>
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**Paired Samples Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>-10.993</td>
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APPENDIX 20
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

NHỮNG QUAN-TÂM CỦA PHỤ-HUYNH VỀ HỌC TIẾNG VIỆT (N=128)

Trong số 128 phụ-huynh trả lời câu hỏi về sự quan tâm của phụ-huynh về dạy và học tiếng Việt, có 82 phụ-huynh bày tỏ sự quan tâm của họ như sau: (ph= phụ huynh=parent)

1. DUY TRỊ TIẾNG VIỆT VA GIÁ-TRỊ VĂN-HÓA (23 câu trả lời)

1. Tôi muốn con tôi duy trì tiếng mẹ đẻ. (ph1)
2. Qua việc học tiếng Việt, con tôi sẽ duy trì truyền thống văn hóa. (ph10)
3. Học tiếng Việt giúp cho con tôi bảo tồn văn hóa Việt (ph20).
4. Tôi muốn con tôi trở thành dân preached văn hóa Việt (ph21)
5. Con tôi nhận hiểu hai nền văn hóa Việt và Úc (ph52)
6. Tôi muốn con tôi giữ gìn văn hóa Việt và học hai ngôn ngữ Việt và Anh (ph55)
7. Trẻ em Việt nên học tiếng Việt để duy trì văn-hoa Việt (ph59)
8. Tôi muốn con tôi duy trì văn hóa Việt (ph62)
9. Trẻ em Việt nên học hai ngôn ngữ Việt và Anh (ph63)
10. Trẻ em Việt nên học tiếng Việt để duy trì mối liên hệ với cha mẹ (ph64)
11. Học tiếng Việt sẽ giúp con tôi duy trì văn hóa Việt (ph70)
12. Trẻ em Việt Nam nên học tiếng Việt để duy trì giá trị văn hóa Việt (ph71)

13. Trẻ em Việt Nam nên học văn hóa Việt (ph72)

14. Qua việc học tiếng Việt, con tôi sẽ duy trì đặc tính của người Việt trong xã hội đa văn hóa (ph76)

15. Học tiếng Việt sẽ giúp cho trẻ em duy trì văn hóa Việt (ph79)

16. Tôi muốn con tôi học tiếng Việt và duy trì văn hóa Việt (ph81)

17. Tôi muốn con tôi duy trì văn hóa Việt (ph83)

18. Tôi muốn con tôi hiểu về văn hóa Việt và văn chương Việt (ph96)

19. Để duy trì văn hóa Việt, trẻ em Việt nên học tiếng Việt (ph101)

20. Qua việc học tiếng Việt, trẻ em Việt Nam sẽ hiểu văn hóa Việt (ph107)

21. Học tiếng Việt giúp cho trẻ em Việt Nam sẽ hiểu về văn hóa Việt (ph113)

22. Qua việc học tiếng Việt, trẻ em Việt Nam sẽ hiểu và bảo tồn giá trị văn hóa Việt (ph107).

23. Để duy trì văn hóa Việt, phụ huynh nên khuyến khích con em học tiếng Việt (ph120).

2. Môi trường gia đình (17 câu trả lời)

Vai trò của gia đình trong việc học tiếng Việt (12 câu trả lời)

1. Phụ huynh nên khuyến khích con em học tiếng Việt (ph7)

2. Tôi có đủ thời giờ giúp con tôi học tiếng Việt tại nhà (ph22)

3. Cha mẹ nên khuyến khích con em học tiếng Việt (ph31)

4. Phụ huynh nên khuyến khích con em học tiếng Việt và nói tiếng Việt tại nhà (ph34)

5. Nên cho trẻ em cơ hội học tiếng Việt (ph40)
6. Phu huynh và thầy cô giáo nên giúp trẻ em cảm thấy vui khi học tiếng Việt (ph56)
7. Tôi luôn luôn khuyếnh khích con tôi nói tiếng Việt tại nhà (ph65)
8. Theo tôi nghĩ, trẻ em Việt nên nói tiếng Việt tại nhà (ph69)
9. Phu huynh có đủ thời giờ giúp con tôi học tiếng Việt tại nhà (ph89)
10. Phu huynh nên giúp đỡ con em học tiếng Việt tại nhà (ph102)
11. Phu huynh nên khuyên khích con em có bốn phương tieng tiếng Việt (ph119)
12. Phu huynh nên khuyên khích con em học tiếng Việt tại nhà và tham gia những sinh hoạt gia đình (ph125).

Những yếu tố đặc biệt của môi trường gia đình

Sách và báo chí / 3 câu trả lời
1. Tôi muốn con tôi đọc được sách báo Viêt ngữ (ph16)
2. Tôi muốn con tôi đọc được báo Viêt ngữ (ph29)
3. Tôi muốn con tôi đọc được sách Viêt ngữ (ph87)

Phát thanh SBS/Truyền hình (chương trình bằng tiếng Viêt): 2 câu trả lời
1. Trẻ em nên được khuyên khích thường xuyên đọc sách Việt và nghe đài SBS (chương trình tiếng Việt) (ph36)
2. Phu huynh nên nghe đài SBS và xem truyền hình (chương trình tiếng Viêt) với con em (ph110).

3. Khả năng Viêt ngữ của con em (31 câu trả lời)

1. Tôi muốn con tôi hiểu tất cả nghĩa của chữ Viêt đang được dạy tại trường (ph2)
2. Tôi muốn con tôi phát âm đúng khi nói tiếng Viêt (ph5 3)
3. Khả năng đọc và nói rất quan trọng (ph 6).
4. Tôi muốn khả năng đọc và nói của con tôi được cải tiến (ph. 8)
5. Quan tâm của tôi là con tôi nói tiếng Việt với giọng tiếng Anh.
   Chúng nó lẩn lốn việc xử dụng đầu khi viết chữ Việt (thí dụ: dấu sắc, huyền, hỏi ngã, nặng) (ph. 17)
6. Tôi muốn con tôi hiểu tất cả nghĩa của chữ Việt đang được dạy tại trường (ph. 19)
7. Khả năng đọc và nói rất quan trọng (ph. 23)
8. Hiểu về văn chương Việt Nam rất quan trọng (ph. 25)
9. Khả năng viết và nói của con tôi nên được cải tiến (ph. 28)
10. Tôi muốn con tôi hiểu tất cả nghĩa của chữ Việt đang được dạy tại trường và phát âm đúng khi nói tiếng Việt (ph. 30)
11. Con tôi cần xử dụng đúng những âm điệu tiếng Việt (thí dụ: sá, huyền hỏi, ngã, nặng) (ph. 46)
12. Tôi muốn con tôi phát âm đúng khi nói tiếng Việt (ph. 39)
13. Tôi muốn con tôi học toán và khoa học bằng hai ngôn ngữ Việt Anh (ph. 43)
14. Tôi muốn con tôi phát âm đúng khi nói tiếng Việt (ph. 44)
15. Phù huynh và thầy cô giáo nên giúp con em hiểu tất cả nghĩa của chữ Việt (ph. 54)
16. Tôi muốn con tôi dù khả năng ít nhút là khả năng đọc và viết (ph. 58)
17. Khả năng đọc và viết cần được quan tâm khi dạy con em học tiếng Việt (ph. 49)
18. Khả năng viết và nói của con tôi nên được cải tiến (ph. 50)
19. Khả năng nói và viết rất quan trọng (ph. 51)
20. Tôi muốn khả năng đọc và viết của con tôi được cải tiến (ph. 73)
21. Con tôi thường lẩn lốn trong việc xử dụng các dấu trong tiếng Việt (thí dụ: sá, huyền, hỏi, ngã, nặng) (ph. 82)
22. Tôi muốn con tôi phát âm đúng khi nói tiếng Việt (ph. 84)
23. Khả năng nói, đọc và viết tiếng Việt cần được cải tiến (ph85)
24. Con tôi cần phải biết đánh văn những chữ Việt (ph86)
25. Tôi muốn con tôi được dạy đánh văn chất Việt, và đúng đúng các
dấu gióng trong tiếng Việt (ph88)
26. Khả năng đọc và nói rất quan trọng (ph92)
27. Tôi nghĩ rằng khả năng đọc và viết rất quan trọng (ph95)
28. Việc đánh văn chữ Việt cần phải được quan tâm (ph98)
29. Tôi muốn con tôi hiểu tất cả nghĩa của chữ Việt đang được dạy
tại trường (ph99)
30. Việc đánh văn chữ Việt đang được dạy tại các trường cần được
duyệt xét lại vì nó quá khó cho các em học sinh (ph102)
31. Việc đúng đúng các dấu gióng trong tiếng Việt (thí dụ: sắc, huyền,
hỏi, ngã, nặng) cần được quan tâm (ph105)

4. Vai trò của giáo viên và nhà trường (5 câu trả lời)

1. Các giáo viên dạy ngôn ngữ công đồng có trách nhiệm dạy các
học sinh tại trường, nhưng phụ huynh phải có trách nhiệm dạy
các em ở nhà (ph4)
2. Giáo viên nên giúp đỡ cho con tôi hiểu tất cả nghĩa của chữ Việt
(ph57)
3. Phụ huynh và giáo viên có trách nhiệm giúp cho con em hiểu
được tiếng Việt (ph75)
4. Phụ huynh và giáo viên có trách nhiệm khuyên khích và giúp đỡ cho con em học tiếng Việt (ph118)
5. Giáo viên nên giúp đỡ cho con tôi hiểu tất cả nghĩa của chữ Việt
(ph103)
5. Nhung quan tam khac (5 cau traloi)

1. Toi mong muốn các trường dạy ngôn ngữ cộng đồng (tiếng Việt)
dọc duy trì (ph18).
2. Trẻ em không thường xuyên đọc và viết chữ Việt tại nhà (ph53)
3. Toi mong muốn các trường dạy tiếng Việt đọc duy trì (ph61).
4. Các trẻ em cần được học tiếng Việt từ bậc tiểu học (ph91)
5. Học hai giờ mỗi tuần không đủ để duy trì và phát triển ngôn ngữ
cộng đồng (ph104)
Translation

APPENDIX 21

PARENTS' CONCERNS ABOUT THE VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE LEARNING (N=128)

Among the 128 parents, 82 parents indicated their concerns as follows: (p=parent)

1. Maintenance of the Vietnamese language and cultural virtues (23 responses)

1. I want my children to maintain their mother tongue (p. 1).
2. Through learning the Vietnamese language, my child will maintain their traditional culture (p. 10).
3. Learning the Vietnamese language will enable my child to maintain Vietnamese culture (p. 20).
4. I want my child to preserve our cultural heritage (p. 21).
5. Children should understand both Vietnamese and Australian culture (p. 52).
6. I want my child to maintain Vietnamese culture and learn both Vietnamese and English (p. 55).
7. Children should learn the Vietnamese language to maintain their culture. (p. 59)
8. I want my child to maintain Vietnamese culture (p. 62).
9. Children should learn both Vietnamese and English (p. 63)
10. Children should learn the Vietnamese language to maintain the relationship between parents and children (p. 64).
11. Learning the Vietnamese language will enable children to maintain Vietnamese culture (p. 70).
12. Children should learn the Vietnamese language to maintain Vietnamese virtues (p. 71).
13. Vietnamese children should learn their traditional culture (p. 72).
14. Through learning the Vietnamese language, my child will able to maintain Vietnamese characteristics in a multicultural nation (p. 76).
15. Learning the Vietnamese language will enable children to maintain Vietnamese culture (p. 79).
16. I want my child to learn the Vietnamese language and maintain Vietnamese culture (p. 81).
17. I want my child to maintain Vietnamese culture (p. 83).
18. I wish my child to understand Vietnamese culture and Vietnamese literature (p. 96).
19. In order to maintain Vietnamese culture, children should learn the Vietnamese language (p. 101).
20. Through learning the Vietnamese language, Vietnamese children will able to understand their culture (p. 107).
21. Learning the Vietnamese language will enable my child understand Vietnamese culture (p. 113).
22. Through learning the Vietnamese language, my child will understand and preserve Vietnamese culture (p. 114).
23. To maintain Vietnamese culture, parents should encourage children to learn the Vietnamese language (p. 120).

2. Home environment (17 responses)

The role of families in the language learning (12)
1. Vietnamese parents should encourage their children to learn the Vietnamese language (p. 7).
2. I have enough time to assist my child to learn Vietnamese at home (p. 22).
3. Parents should encourage their children to learn the Vietnamese language (p. 31).
4. Parents should encourage their children to learn the Vietnamese language and speak Vietnamese at home (p. 34).
5. Give children the opportunities to learn the Vietnamese language (p. 40).
6. Parents and teachers should help children to take pleasure in learning the Vietnamese language (p. 56).
7. I often encourage my child to speak Vietnamese at home (p. 65).
8. I think that children should often speak Vietnamese at home (p. 69).
9. Parents have enough time to assist their children at home (p. 89).
10. Parents are responsible to assist their children to learn Vietnamese at home (p. 102)
11. Parents should encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning the Vietnamese language (p. 119).
12. Parents should encourage their children to speak Vietnamese at home and participate in all activities at home (p. 125).

The specific factors of the home environment
Books/Newspapers (3 responses)
1. I want my child to be able to read Vietnamese books/newspapers (p. 16).
2. I want my child to be able to read Vietnamese newspapers (p. 29).
3. I want my child to read Vietnamese books (p. 87).

SBS radio/Television (Vietnamese programs): 2 responses
1. Children should often read Vietnamese books and listen to SBS radio (Vietnamese programs) (p. 36).
2. Parents should listen to SBS radio and watch Television (Vietnamese programs) with their children (p. 110).

3. Vietnamese language competence (31 responses)

1. I want my child to understand all the meanings of Vietnamese words being taught at school (p. 2).
2. I want my child to have a good pronunciation when speaking Vietnamese (p. 5).
3. Reading and speaking skills are important (p. 6).
4. I want my child’s reading and speaking skills to be improved (p. 8).
5. My concern is that children often speak Vietnamese with an English accent. They confuse the use of the accent when they write the Vietnamese words, e.g. acute accent, grave accent, circumflex accent, rising accent, drop tone (p. 17)
6. I want my child to understand the meanings of all Vietnamese words being taught at school (p. 19).
7. Reading and Writing skills are important (p. 23)
8. Understanding Vietnamese literature is important (p. 25)
9. My child’s writing and speaking skills should be improved (p.28).
10. I want my child to be able to understand all the meanings of the Vietnamese words being taught at school and have good pronunciation when speaking Vietnamese (p.30).
11. My child need use correctly all the Vietnamese accents (e.g. acute, grave, drop tone) (p. 46).
12. I want my child to have a good pronunciation (p. 39).
13. I want my child to learn mathematics and sciences in both the Vietnamese and English language (p. 43).
14. I want my child to have a good pronunciation when speaking Vietnamese (p. 44).
15. Teachers and parents should help children to understand the meanings of the Vietnamese words (p. 54).
16. I wish my child to be competent at least in reading and writing skills (p. 58).
17. Reading and Writing skills should be considered when we teach children to learn the Vietnamese language (p. 49).
18. I want my child’s speaking and writing skills must be improved (p. 50).
19. Speaking and writing skills are very important (p. 51).
20. I want my child’s reading and writing skills to be improved (p. 73).
21. My child often confuses the use of the accents, e.g. acute accent, grave accent, drop tone, rising accent, circumflex accent (p. 82).
22. I want my child to have a good pronunciation when speaking Vietnamese (p. 84).
23. My child’s speaking, reading and writing skills should be improved (p. 85).
24. Children should learn how to spell the Vietnamese words (p. 86).
25. I want my child to be taught how to spell the Vietnamese words and use correctly all Vietnamese accents (p. 88).
26. Reading and speaking skills are important (p. 92).
27. I think that reading and writing are important skills (p. 95).
28. The Vietnamese spelling should be considered (p. 98)
29. I expect my child to understand the meanings of any Vietnamese words being taught at school (p. 99).
30. The Vietnamese spelling being taught at school should be reviewed because it is very difficult for children to learn Vietnamese (p. 102).
31. The use of Vietnamese accent, e.g. acute accent, grave accent, drop tone, circumflex…should be considered (p. 105).

4. The role of the teacher and the school (5 responses)

1. Community language teachers are responsible to teach children at school but parents are responsible to teach their children at home (p. 4).
2. Teachers should help children to understand all the meanings of the Vietnamese words (p. 57).
3. Parents and teachers should assist children to have a good ability in understanding the Vietnamese language (p. 75).
4. Parents and teachers should encourage and assist children to learn the Vietnamese language (p. 118).
5. Teachers should help children to understand all the meanings of the Vietnamese words (p. 103).

5. Other concerns (5 responses)

1. I expect all community language (Vietnamese) schools to be maintained (p. 18).
2. Children do not often read and write Vietnamese at home (p. 53).
3. I expect that all community Vietnamese language schools to be maintained (p. 61).
4. Children should learn the Vietnamese language since they attend primary schools (p. 91).
5. Attending a community language school for at least two hours a week is not enough to maintain and develop a Language Other Than English (p. 104)
Transcript (Bản ghi chép về phòng vấn giáo viên)

Interviews with teachers

APPENDIX 22

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of
Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.
Phòng vấn Giáo Viên

Kinh nghiệm và trình độ học vấn

Người phòng vấn

Thầy/Cô đã dạy học được bao lâu? Xin cho biết vân bằng cao nhất mà Thầy/Cô có tại Việt Nam hoặc tại Úc? (Vân bằng Hậu Đại Học, Tú Tài, vân bằng khác).

Giáo viên

* Tôi đã dạy Việt- ngữ khoảng 4 năm (GV1), 6 năm (GV 7, GV10), 7
năm (GV 8, 9, 11, 15, 18, và 20)., và 9 năm (GV 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12,
13, 14, 16, 17, và 19).

* Tôi có văn bằng Su-Phẩm (Hậu Đại Học) tại Việt-Nam và tại Úc (GV 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19).

* Tôi có văn bằng Su-Phẩm (Hậu Đại Học) tại Việt-Nam và chứng chỉ
dạy ngôn ngữ không phải là tiếng Anh (LOTE) tại Úc (GV 2, 3, 5, 10,
12, 14, 16, và 20).
Ý kiến của Giáo Viên về phương pháp giảng dạy

Người phòng vấn

Phương pháp giảng dạy nào mà Thầy/Cô cho là hữu hiệu để giảng dạy các học sinh học tiếng Việt? Thầy Cô dùng một phương pháp hay uyên-chuyên thay đổi? Xin Thầy Cô chia xẻ kinh nghiệm với các đồng nghiệp.

Giáo Viên

* Dùng tiếng Việt trong các giờ sinh hoạt, chú trọng đến tự ngụ và câu trúc vấn phạm. Thường xuyên dùng phương pháp này để phát triển khả năng suy nghĩ của học sinh (Giáo viên 1-20).
* Chú trọng đến khả năng nghe và nói. Luyện khả năng nghe và nói cần kèm theo hình ảnh và trợ huấn cụ (Giáo viên 1-20).
* Học bằng phương pháp nhìn hình ảnh sẽ giúp cho học sinh hiểu rõ ràng những điều các em đang học, đây cũng là phương pháp tác động các em giao tiếp với ngôn ngữ đang học (Giáo viên 20).
* Bốn kỹ năng nói, nghe, viết và đọc được coi như giao tiếp hỗ trợ (Giáo viên 1-20).
* Tùy theo khả năng, tuổi tác và cấp lớp của học sinh, Thầy Cô uyên chuyển áp dụng phương pháp đáp ứng được nhu cầu của học sinh (Giáo Viên 18).
* Theo tôi nghĩ, đánh vần rất quan trọng, học sinh không thể viết và đọc nếu không học vần. Vì thế, giảng dạy bij hạn chế, nên tôi chỉ dạy đánh vần và phát âm khi cần thiết, và học sinh được cho tập đánh vần và phát âm các chủ mô tả học (Giáo viên 12).
* Một trong mục đích của tập nói là nâng cao khả năng giao tiếp của học sinh, do đó nên tạo cho các học sinh có nhóm nói chuyện với các bạn khác, thí dụ: Các em tập xử dụng những câu phát biểu cần bản như hỏi thăm đường, nói về giờ, phát biểu cảm tường, ...Các
học sinh cần phát triển khả năng nghe, và cần được giúp đỡ để thực tập xử dụng các trò huấn luyện (Giáo viên 8).
* Để giúp cho học sinh phát triển khả năng nghe, Thầy Cô nên chuẩn bị các trò huấn luyện thích hợp với nhu cầu của chúng (Giáo viên 16).
  * Tối nghĩ rằng mục đích của tập đọc là phát triển khả năng đọc cho các học sinh. Vậy giáo viên chuẩn bị cho các học sinh các bài tập đọc qua các hình ảnh, có các câu hỏi, câu thảo luận. Tập đọc được thực hiện bằng cách đọc lén hoặc đọc thầm (Giáo viên 11).
  * Tối nghĩ rằng mục đích của tập viết là phát triển khả năng viết cho các học sinh, tập kiểm tra câu trúc, và khả năng hiểu biết. Vậy giáo viên chuẩn bị cho các học sinh các bài tập viết, qua các hình ảnh. Tập viết được thực hiện bằng cách tập viết của cá nhân hoặc nhóm hai học sinh. Phương pháp hưu hiệu nhất là bài viết của học sinh phải được các học sinh khác sửa, và giáo viên kiểm tra lại (Giáo viên 3)

* Áp dụng sự kết hợp nhóm 2 học sinh và nhóm nhiều học sinh.
Phương pháp được áp dụng tùy theo nhu cầu của học sinh trong lớp (Giáo viên 1-20).
* Tối áp dụng pair work (nhóm hai người) hay group work (nhóm nhiều người) nhằm mục đích cho các học sinh có hỗ trợ tiếp với thầy hoặc với học sinh khác trong lớp, dây là cách giảm áp lực cho các cá nhân và tạo cơ hội cho học sinh giới giúp đỡ học sinh kém hơn, và giảm bớt sự điều khiển của giáo viên (Giáo viên 14).
  * Tuy theo cấp lớp, thí dụ, cấp 3, sinh hoạt toàn lớp có hiệu quả hơn, vì nó cho học sinh cơ hội nói nhiều. Nhưng tôi kết hợp pair work và group work (Giáo viên 12).
Phương pháp giảng dạy được giáo viên đang áp dụng

Người phụ vấn

Thầy có đang áp dụng phương pháp nào để giảng dạy?

Giáo viên

* Để đạt được mục tiêu cho việc giảng dạy, phương pháp sau đây đang được áp dụng: Student-centred và Communicative approach (Học sinh là trung tâm và phương pháp giao-tiep) (Giáo viên 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, và 20).

* Qua việc tham gia sinh hoạt lớp, học sinh học và xử dụng tiếng Việt để thông đạt nhau. Giáo viên và học sinh cùng tham gia vào sinh hoạt lớp rất quan trọng (Giáo viên 4).

* Phương pháp giảng dạy thích hợp cần được áp dụng. Nhằm mục đích phát triển khả năng suy nghĩ của học sinh, tôi dùng phương pháp Học sinh là trung tâm và phương pháp giao tiep (Giáo viên 6).

* Tôi nghĩ, học sinh cần thực tập các sinh hoạt thông đạt để phát triển khả năng ngôn ngữ (Giáo viên 5).

* Khi soạn bài học cho học sinh, tôi luôn nghĩ là muốn cho bài học có kết quả thì bài học đó phải làm sao cho học sinh tham gia vào sinh hoạt học tập một cách tích cực (Giáo viên 3).

* Một bài học phải có phần sinh hoạt (Giáo viên 9).

Việc áp dụng phương thức khuyến khích học tập

Người phụ vấn

Thầy có có áp dụng phương thức khuyến khích học tập trong lớp học hay không? Theo ý kiến của Thầy Cô, phương thức nào hữu hiệu nhất cho các học sinh?
Giáo viên

* Áp dụng sự kết hợp Verbal, Gesture, và contact (Giáo viên 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19, và 20). Áp dụng activity (Giáo viên 15). Áp dụng proximity (Giáo viên 16). Áp dụng token (Giáo viên 7).

* Khi áp dụng phương thức khuyến khích, điều cần nhất là phải biết nhu cầu và văn hóa của học sinh, và áp dụng theo phương thức hữu hiệu nhất cho học sinh (Giáo viên 4).

* Tối áp dụng nhiều phương thức khuyến khích khác nhau, có lúc cho các em điểm, tem, và đôi khi cho các em xã hội, theo cách mà các em chọn (Giáo viên 2).

* Tối nhận thấy việc áp dụng phương thức khuyến khích thích hợp sẽ khuyến khích học sinh phát triển kỹ năng thông đạt (Giáo viên 11).

* Theo tôi Verbal hữu hiệu nhất (Giáo viên 5).

* Một trong những phương thức khuyến khích các học sinh là cho các em những dấu hiệu mang hình ảnh Việt Nam. Hình ảnh khen thưởng này thúc đẩy học sinh dựa vào đó mà sáng tác các truyện cổ tích, và còn thúc đẩy các em phát triển khả năng phân tích và viết truyện (Giáo viên 9).

* Áp dụng contact và proximity là phương cách khuyến khích các em hữu hiệu. Tôi tập trung vào việc khen thưởng bằng lời nói. Khi các em trả lời hoặc thảo luận hay sáng tác một câu chuyện nào đó, việc khen bằng lời nói rất hữu hiệu (Giáo viên 13).

* Theo sự quan sát của tôi tại các trường tiểu học tại New South Wales thì các em học sinh không thích sự khen thưởng bằng lời nói. Có lẽ vì văn hóa của các em khác nhau (Giáo viên 7).
* Bắt cứ lời nói nào làm khó chịu cho học sinh đều bị coi là vi phạm, thô bạo đối với học sinh Việt Nam. Khen thưởng bằng cử chỉ rất hữu hiệu (Giáo viên 19).

* Theo kinh nghiệm của tôi, học sinh Việt Nam rất thích khen bằng cử chỉ, bổ điều, chứng tỏ không thích nheo mắt, cử chỉ này làm chứng mặt có (Giáo viên 15).

* Tôi đồng ý, nhưng đối với các học sinh Việt Nam, khuyến khích, khen bằng cử chỉ tốt hơn lời nói, nhưng không bằng cho các em được sinh hoạt (Giáo viên 20).

Nhiệm vụ và đức tính của giáo viên

Người phòng vấn

Theo ý kiến của Thầy/Cô, một giáo viên tốt (day học có hiệu quả) cần có nhiệm vụ và đức tính gì?

Giáo viên

Là gạch nối giữa phụ huynh và học đường

* Giáo viên có trách nhiệm dạy các em học tiếng Việt, cón cha mẹ chỉ có nhiệm vụ khuyến khích các em. Sự quan tâm này liên hệ đến nhiệm vụ và đức tính của một giáo viên giỏi (Giáo viên 1-20).

* Theo tôi nghĩ sự cộng tác giữa giáo viên và phụ huynh rất cần thiết để khuyến khích các em học (Giáo viên 8).

* Sự liên kết giữa phụ huynh và giáo viên tạo cơ hơ lô cho phụ huynh có dịp thảo luận với giáo viên về sự tiến bộ trong việc học tập của các em (Giáo viên 6)

* Giáo viên nên giúp cho phụ huynh hiểu biết về phương pháp giảng dạy để các phụ huynh có thể giúp con em học tốt tại nhà (Giáo viên 4).
Nhà trường nên đẩy mạnh việc tham gia của phụ huynh vào sinh hoạt học đường, bằng cách liên hệ với các giáo viên (Giáo viên 13).

* Sự kết hợp tích cực giữa phụ huynh và giáo viên góp phần vào việc động viên và tạo hứng khởi cho các giáo viên. Nhờ vậy, phụ huynh sẽ hiểu biết nhiệm vụ của giáo viên (Giáo viên 1)

* Tối có cơ hội thảo luận với phụ huynh về việc học của con em (Giáo viên 19).

Quan tâm đến năng khiếu, thái độ và lợi ích của học sinh

* Trong lớp học, tôi kết hợp hình thức sinh hoạt nhóm và sinh hoạt giữa hai học sinh (group work và pair work). Theo ý kiến của tôi, muốn dạy hữu hiệu, thì giáo viên không nên áp dụng một phương pháp, mà nên chọn phương pháp thích hợp phù hợp với nhu cầu, thích hợp và khả năng của học sinh (Giáo viên 20)

Phát triển và duy trì thái độ tích cực của học sinh

* Giáo viên phải có thái độ tích cực đối với học sinh (Giáo viên 3)

* Giáo viên phải khuyến khích học sinh, phải cộng bằng và đối xử bình đẳng giữa các học sinh (Giáo viên 15)

* Trong lớp học, tôi luôn có những lời phê bình xây dựng và sự khuyến khích xây dựng về sự tiến bộ của các học sinh (Giáo viên 17).

* Trong lớp học, tôi luôn khuyến khích các học sinh có thái độ tích cực đối với sách, báo viết bằng Việt-ngữ (Giáo viên 18).

* Tôi luôn luôn làm cho học sinh cảm thấy mình được khuyến khích và được khen ngợi. Tôi nghĩ phê bình không xây dựng là điều không tốt. Tôi luôn có lời khen tích cực đối với các bài làm của học sinh (Giáo viên 19).
Làm cho các học sinh tham gia vào sinh hoạt học tập

* Tồi luôn luôn tạo cơ hội cho các học sinh thực tập để phát triển khả năng đọc và nói trong môi trường âm cung và thân mật (Giáo viên 10).

* Khi soạn bài học cho học sinh, tôi luôn nghĩ tới phương pháp sinh hoạt, tiến trình giảng dạy, và những sự liên kết của các câu hỏi để cho các học sinh cảm thấy thoải mái tham gia vào bài học (Giáo viên 14).

Quan niệm của giáo viên về phương pháp đặc biệt

Người phỏng vấn

Nhận phát triển khả năng ngôn ngữ của các học sinh, nhiều nhà nghiên cứu nghĩ rằng các học sinh cần cơ hội tham gia vào quyết định việc học tập của mình, cần có cơ hội thảo luận về tài liệu đọc và cần có cơ hội để tự sửa chữa các lỗi trong việc học ngôn ngữ. Thấy cơ nghĩ thế nào về các vấn đề này? Thấy/ Có đã làm gì liên quan đến vấn đề này?

Càng sửa chữa các lỗi trong lúc học ngôn ngữ của học sinh càng giúp cho học sinh viết đúng tiếng Việt

Giáo viên

* Tôi nghĩ, sửa các sai sót trong việc đúng ngôn ngữ một cách quả đàng, càng làm cho học sinh nản chí (Giáo viên 9).

* Sửa các sai sót trong việc đúng ngôn ngữ một cách quả đàng, làm cho học sinh mất tự tin khi viết và nói (Giáo viên 1).

* Theo quan niệm của tôi, sửa các sai sót trong việc đúng ngôn ngữ một cách quả đàng, làm giảm lồng tự tin của học sinh. Giáo viên
nên trao dồi về kết quả bài làm của học sinh để cho chúng có thể rút ra bài học từ những lỗ hổng (Giáo viên 10).

Cho học sinh cơ hội tham gia vào quyết định việc học tập của mình

Giáo viên

* Cho học sinh cơ hội tham gia vào quyết định về việc học sẽ làm cho các em thấy thích thú và cảm thấy tự tin hơn (Giáo viên 18).
* Cho học sinh tham gia vào quyết định về việc học sẽ làm cho các em phát triển năng lực thiếu thốn (Giáo viên 8).
* Giáo viên cần thấu hiểu để chỉ cho học sinh học như thế nào và bằng cách nào là tốt nhất (Giáo viên 1).
* Học sinh cần cơ hội thao luận những gì phải học và học bằng cách nào (Giáo viên 6).

Giáo viên có gang bát các học sinh chăm chú đến truyền do giáo viên đồ sẽ giúp cho việc đúng ngôn ngữ của các em được đầy đủ hơn

Giáo viên

* Tới nghĩ là học sinh chỉ xử dụng ngôn ngữ có hiểu quả khi ngôn ngữ đó có liên quan đến nhu câu của chúng (Giáo viên 19)
* Theo tôi nghĩ, phương pháp trên không đáp ứng nhu câu của học sinh, vì ngôn ngữ mà các em học được chỉ giới hạn trong phạm vi chữ đê của cót truyền được kẻ. Mà đây chỉ là khả năng nghe mà thôi (Giáo viên 12)
* Tuy nhiên, đọc truyện cũng rất hữu ích, miễn sao những điều được đọc phù hợp với trình độ hiểu biết của các em (Giáo viên 3).
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS

Teacher background

The researcher:

How many years have you been in teaching?
Please indicate the highest teaching qualification you hold either in Australia or in Vietnam? (Postgraduate, Higher school certificate, other)

Teachers:

*I have taught Vietnamese about 4 years (Teacher 1), 6 years (Teacher 7, and 10), 7 years (Teacher 8,9,11,15,18, and 20), and 9 years (Teacher 2,3,4,5,6,12,13,14,16,17, and 19).
* I had diploma of teaching in Vietnam and I have diploma of teaching in Australia (Teacher 1, 4, 6,7,8,9,11,13,15,17,18,19).
* I had diploma of teaching in Vietnam, and I have certificate in Teaching Languages Other than English (LOTE) in Australia (Teacher 2, 3, 5, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 20).
The researcher:

What teaching methods do you think are effective for your students to learn Vietnamese? I mean, the teaching strategies that you have used to teach Vietnamese.

Have you used a variety of teaching strategies” sometimes” or you used only one strategy that you think is effective for your students’ learning Vietnamese? Would you please share your experience about this with your colleagues?

Teachers:

* Use Vietnamese in classroom activities with a focus on lexical items, grammatical structures. Use these strategies very often in order to develop the thinking skill for the students (Teacher 1-20).

* Focus and practice on listening and talking. Talking and listening should be accompanied by visual aids e.g. pictures, concrete material (Teacher 1-20).

* Learning from the given visual materials, students could have an opportunity to gain a profound and reasoned comprehension about what they were learning...using visual techniques in language classroom is very much like the task of motivating students to interact in the target language (Teacher 20).

* The four basic skills such as talking, listening, writing and reading are seen as being interrelated (Teacher 1-20). Depending on the students' ability, the age, and the stage of schooling, the teacher is able to match teaching strategies to student needs (Teacher 18).

* I think spelling in Vietnamese is very important. Students cannot write and read unless they can use standard spelling. Because of the limit of time, I only teach spelling and pronunciation incidentally (as the need arises) then students are provided opportunity to practise pronunciation and spelling of new words (Teacher 12).

* One of the purposes of the speaking activity is to increase student’s interaction so it is necessary to give every student in the classroom an
opportunity to speak to other students, e.g. they should be able to employ a range of basic expressions (asking directions, telling the time, express opinions, etc). Students need to develop listening competence, they need to be helped to practise using a variety of materials (Teacher 8).

* In order to develop the students' listening skills teacher should prepare the listening materials relevant to the students' needs (Teacher 16)

* I think one of the purposes of the reading is to develop reading skills to obtain information. In order to enhance the students' reading skills, the teacher should prepare the students for the reading through visual aids, basic texts accompanied by questions on comprehension, discussion of stories. The reading will be done both aloud and silently. (Teacher 11)

* I think one of the purposes of the writing is to develop writing skills to practice a structure, and to check the comprehension. The teacher should prepare the students for the reading through visual aids, and writing model. The writing will be done by both the individually and in pairs. The most effective way is that the students' writing must be corrected by another student, and checked by the teacher (Teacher 3).

* Often use the combination of pair work and group work activity to cater for the children in the language learning. The strategies are employed will depend on the particular needs of children within in a whole class situation (Teacher 1-20).

* With regard to pair work or group work, I think the teacher can give children an opportunity to interact in the classroom with the teacher and with other children, it is necessary to relieve pressure from the individual, to allow more advanced students to help other, particularly to minimize teacher domination, I often use the pair work or group work activity (Teacher 14).

* Depending on the stage of schooling, for example, in Stage 3, the class-work is used effectively. It provides maximum student talking time. But I often use the mixture of pair work and group work (Teacher 12).
Teaching strategies used by teachers

The researcher:

What teaching strategies do you use to teach Vietnamese in your school?

Teachers

* As an attempt to enable students to achieve the aims and objectives of the course, the following methods are used: Student-centred and Communicative teaching approach (Teacher 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, and 20)
* Through active participation students learn Vietnamese and use Vietnamese for communication wherever possible in the class. It is important that teacher and students are participants in such activities (Teacher 4).
* The appropriate activities should be used for students in order to develop their skills. I use the communicative approach and student-centred approach very often in order to develop the thinking skill for the students (Teacher 6).
* I think children need to practice communication activities to develop their language skills (Teacher 5).
* When preparing a lesson, I always keep in mind that a lesson is successful when it involves the children in learning actively (Teacher 3).
* A lesson should contain more student activity (Teacher 9).

The use of reinforcement techniques

The researcher

Have you ever used reinforcement techniques in your classroom? What reinforcement of techniques you think that are effective for your students?
Teachers:

* Use the mixture of Verbal, Gesture, and contact (Teacher 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19, and 20). Use activity (Teacher 15). Use proximity (Teacher 16). Use token (Teacher 7).
* When using reinforcement techniques, it is necessary to know the children's needs, their culture and use the reinforcement in a way that is to be most effective with that group of children (Teacher 4).
* I have used several means of reinforcement, giving children mark, stamps and stickers, and occasionally free time for whatever activity they choose (Teacher 2).
* I have found that an appropriate reinforcement has encouraged Vietnamese children's communication skills (Teacher 11).
* I think" verbal" is the most important one (Teacher 5).
* One of the most popular activities reinforcement in my classroom has become getting Vietnamese signs and symbols as a reward and asking children to design or create a story. This enhances their interest as well as their ability in narration and story making (Teacher 9)
* The use of contact and proximity reinforcement is very useful with Vietnamese children. Although, perhaps I concentrate more on verbal reinforcement being self-conscious about their likes and dislikes. However, I know the children respond very well to this, even if it is in the form of a discussion about their design and story or any other class work (Teacher 13)
* In my observation of the Vietnamese children in New South Wales primary schools, they are less comfortable with the verbal reinforcement used by the teacher. Perhaps their cultural anticipation is different or verbal reinforcement is considered as an interruption (Teacher 7).
* Any form of verbal interruption while speaking is considered very rude and impolite for a Vietnamese child. Instead, gestural reinforcement is more successful with them (Teacher 19).
* My personal experience is that Vietnamese children respond very comfortably with the gestural reinforcement by gentle head shakes and
noding -as- an approval instead of an eye contact, which makes them very self-conscious, and feel shy (Teacher 15).
* The gestural reinforcement is better than verbal reinforcement for the Vietnamese children but not as successful as activity reinforcement (Teacher 20).

**Teacher’s role and teacher qualities**

**The researcher**

What role and qualities you think an effective teacher need to have?

**Teachers:**

**An effective teacher must provide a link between home and school**

* The teacher is responsible to teach their children, the parents only encourage their children in learning Vietnamese. This concern is related to the role and the qualities of a teacher need to have (Teacher 1-20).
* I think the cooperation between teachers and parents is necessary to encourage children in learning (Teacher 8).
* The link between parents and teachers provides parents with opportunities to discuss with teachers about their children’s progress in learning (Teacher 6).
* I think the teacher must provide support for parents in understanding the teaching strategies to enable them to assist their children’s learning at home (Teacher 4).
* School must enhance parental participation within the school through developing positive relationships with the teachers (Teacher 13).
* The positive interaction between teachers and parents contributes to teacher enthusiasm and motivation. I think parents will understand the role of the teacher (Teacher 1).
An effective teacher must be interested in the skills, attitudes and interests of students

* I have the opportunities to discuss with parents about their children’s learning” (Teacher 19)

* In my class, I try to combine group work, pair work, and individual learning. I think an effective teacher must not use one particular method of teaching, but select appropriate methods, learning styles, and strategies to suit the needs, interest and abilities of students (Teacher 20). “Children need the opportunities to discuss what they have learned” (Teacher 14).

An effective teacher must develop and maintain positive attitudes towards students

* I think the teachers must have positive attitudes to their students (Teacher 8).
* The teacher does not treat students like infants (Teacher 3).
* In my opinion, the teacher must encourage students, and must be fair, treat them equally (Teacher 15).
* I encourage my students and provide opportunities for them to participate in classroom activities (Teacher 5).
* In my class, I often provide positive comments and encouragement to the children along with helpful feedback about progress (Teacher 17).
* In my class, I often encourage students to have positive attitudes towards Vietnamese books and newspapers (Teacher 18).
* I always make any student feel encouraged and praised. I think it is no good to criticise students without trying something good. I always have positive praise for students’ work (Teacher 19).

An effective teacher must make all students participate in learning

* I always provide students with the opportunities to practise their developing reading and speaking skills in a warm and friendly environment (Teacher 10).
*When I prepare a lesson I always think of the teaching activities, the procedures for teaching, and the sequence of questions that would make students take part in the lesson (Teacher 14).

**Teachers’ perceptions of special teaching strategies**

**The researcher**

In order to help children to develop language competence, some researchers think that children need opportunities to take part in decision about their own learning, need to be given the opportunities to negotiate of their reading materials, and need to be given opportunities to make their own correction of mistakes. How do you feel about this? What did you do about this?

**Correction of mistakes: Over-correction mistakes in the children’s language pattern assists them to write Vietnamese correctly**

**Teachers**

* I think over-correcting mistakes can be discouraging initially (Teacher 9).
* Over-correcting mistakes may cause students to lose confidence when writing and speaking (Teacher 1).
* In my opinion, the constant correction of errors usually undermines self-confidence. But the teacher has to give feedback to the students, so that the students may learn from their mistakes (Teacher 10).

**Children learn best when they are provided with opportunities to participate in decisions about their own learning**

*Opportunities to participate in decisions on learning will make learning interesting and give children a sense of empowerment (Teacher 18).
* I think it is important for students to participate in decisions about their own learning. Students’ participation in decisions on learning helps them to develop negotiation skills (Teacher 8).
* There are times when the teachers have to show the children how to learn and the best ways to learn (Teacher 1).
* Children need the opportunity to discuss what they have to learn, and how to learn (Teacher 6).

Teacher who tries his/her very best to get the children interested in a story he/she is reading to them, assists children to use language more fully

*I think children will use language more fully when the language is relevant to their needs (Teacher 19).
*I think this strategy is not relevant to the student needs., as the language produced can only be limited to the topic area of the story. Also, this is only listening practice (Teacher 12).
* However, reading of stories can be helpful, provided what is read is at a level that the children can understand (Teacher 3).
PERMISSION NOTES
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Bàn tham-khảo ý kiến Phú-Huynh Học Sinh

Kính thưa quý Phú-Huynh,


Sau khi hoàn tất các câu trả lời, xin cho vào phòng biên soạn và đưa cho con em trao cho giáo viên phân phối bản tham khảo này.

Xin quý Phú-Huynh vui lòng hoàn lại vào ngày 20/3/99. Nếu quý phụ huynh muốn biết thêm thông tin liên quan đến Bàn tham khảo hay dự án, xin vui lòng tiếp xúc với tôi qua số điện thoại 02 46 261 476

Dự án này được Ủy ban tiều-chuẩn đạo đức thuộc Viện Đại học Miền Tây Sydney (UWS) chấp thuận. Mọi kiến nghị liên quan đến dự án này, nếu có, xin tiếp-xúc với Ủy viên chấp hành của Ủy Ban, cô Claire Caspura (diện thoại số 02 4620 3641). Những kiến nghị được
hoàn toàn giữ kín và được điều tra đến nơi đến chốn và kết quả sẽ được thông báo cho người khuyết naì.

Thành thật cảm ơn sự giúp đỡ của quý Phú Huynh.
Translation

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

Dear Parents,
I am a student in the Doctor of Philosophy (Education) course at the University of Western, and I am investigating ways to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools. In order to do this I am interested in finding out about parents' perceptions of their role in their children's Vietnamese language learning. I would appreciate your participation in this research. This survey is anonymous. Please not write your name or the name of your child anywhere on the questionnaire. All responses will be treated confidentially and the data will be used only for the purpose of this research. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time.

You are kindly requested to complete the attached questionnaire and put it in the provided envelope. Then give it to your child who will take it back to the teacher who distributed the questionnaires.

I would be grateful if you could return the questionnaire by 20/3/99. Should you have any inquiries regarding the questionnaire or the research itself, please contact me on (02) 46 261 476.

This research project has been approved by the University of Western Sydney, Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects). Any complaints or reservations about this research may be directed to the Ethics Committee through the Executive Officer, Claire Caspura, phone (02) 4620 3641.
Any complaint you made will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Thank you for your time and help.
Kính thưa quý Phụ-Huynh,

Nếu quý phụ huynh muốn biết thêm mọi chi tiết liên quan đến
bàn tham khảo hay dự án, xin vui lòng tiếp xúc với tôi qua số điện
thoại 02 46 261 476

Dự án này được Ủy ban tiêu chuẩn đào tạo thuộc Viện Đại học
Miền Tây Sydney (UWS) chấp thuận. Mọi chi tiết liên quan đến dự
án này, nếu có, xin tiếp xúc với Ủy viên chấp hành của Ủy Ban, có
Claire Caspura (điện thoại số 02 4620 3641). Những chi tiết được
hoàn toàn giữ kín và được điều tra đến nơi đến chóng và kết quả sẽ
do được thông báo cho người khiếu nại.

Thành thật cảm ơn sự giúp đỡ của quý Phụ Huynh

Van Bon Nguyen
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

PHIẾU CHO PHÉP

(Permission note)

Tôi cho phép con tôi                             lớp                              trường
tham gia dự án nghiên cứu việc học và dạy Việt- ngữ do ông Nguyễn Văn Bon thực hiện.

Phụ Huynh/Giám Hợp (ký tên)               Ngày                  /1999

Dự án này được Ủy ban tiêu chuẩn đào tạo thuộc Viện Đại học Miền Tây Sydney (UWS) chấp thuận. Mỗi khiếu-nại liên quan đến dự án này, nếu có, xin tiếp xúc với Ủy viên chấp hành của Ủy Ban, có Claire Caspura (điện thoại số 02 4620 3641). Những khiếu-nại được hoàn toàn giữ kín và được điều tra đến nơi đến chốn và kết quả sẽ được thông báo cho người khiếu nại.
Translation

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Dear Parents,
I am a student in the Doctor of Philosophy (Education) course at the University of Western Sydney. I am investigating ways to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning.
In order to do this I am interested in finding out about students' reasons for studying Vietnamese language and the ability to use their mother tongue.
I would appreciate your child's participation in this research.
The survey is anonymous. Your child does not need to write his /her name nor the name of his/her school anywhere on the questionnaire. All responses will be treated confidentially and the data will be used for the purpose of the research. Your child is volunteering to take part in the research. He/she can withdraw at any time. This survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.
I am requesting your permission for your child to take part in this research. If both you and your child would like to participate please complete the permission note below along with the attached questionnaire and return it in the envelope provided to the teacher who distributed the questionnaire. Please be assured that strict confidentiality will be maintained and the permission slips will be separated from the questionnaire so that your child cannot be identified.
I may contact you at a later date to request your child's participation in a Basic Skills Test. However your consent will be sought at this time and you are under no obligation to participate.
I would be grateful if you could return the questionnaire by 20/3/99. Should you have any inquiries regarding the questionnaire or the research itself, please contact me on (02) 46 261 476.

This research project has been approved by the University of Western Sydney, Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects). Any complaints or reservations about this research may be directed to the Ethics Committee through the Executive Officer, Claire Caspura, phone (02) 46203641. Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Thank you for your help

Van BON NGUYEN
Translation

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

PERMISSION NOTE

I give permission for my child -----------------of class... school... to take part in the study of Vietnamese language learning / teaching conducted by Mr. Van Bon Nguyen.

Signed .................... Date .......

(Parent / Guardian )

Note: The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the University of Western Sydney, Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Executive Officer, Claire Kaspura (tel: 02 4620 3641). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and will be informed of the outcome.
Kính thưa quý Phụ-Huynh,
Chúng tôi đánh giá cao sự tham gia nhiệt tình của các em học sinh vào dự án nghiên cứu cải tiến phương pháp dạy và học Việt-ngữ. Chúng tôi vô cùng cảm kích khi nhận được các bàn tham khảo ý-kiên được các em trả lời đầy đủ.
Chúng tôi rất cảm phục các em trong giai đoạn kế tiếp liên quan đến Bài trắc-nghiệm khả năng Việt-ngữ. Các học sinh được chọn trong số học sinh tham gia giai đoạn 1 của dự án.
Nếu quý phụ huynh muốn cung cấp thêm mọi chi tiết liên quan đến Bài trắc-nghiệm hay dự án, xin vui lòng tiếp xúc với tôi qua số điện thoại 02 46 261 476.
Dự án này được Ủy ban tiêu chuẩn đào tạo thuộc viện Đại học Miền Tây Sydney (UWS) chấp thuận. Mọi khiếu nại liên quan đến dự án này, nếu có, xin tiếp xúc với Ủy viên chấp hành của Ủy Ban, có Claire Caspura (điện thoại số 02 4620 3641). Những khiếu nại được hoàn toàn giữ kín và được điều tra đến nơi đến chốn và kết quả sẽ được thông báo cho người khiếu nại.

Thành thật cảm ơn sự giúp đỡ của quý Phụ Huynh

Van Bon Nguyen
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

PHIẾU CHO PHÉP

(Permission note)

Tôi cho phép con tôi lớp trường
Tham gia làm bài trắc nghiệm khả năng Việt-ngữ (Vietnamese Language Basic Skills Test) do ông Nguyễn Văn Bon thực hiện.

Phụ Huynh/Giám Hộ (ký tên) Ngày /1999

Dự án này được Ủy ban tiêu chuẩn đạo đức thuộc Viện Đại học Miền Tây Sydney (UWS) chấp thuận. Mọi khiếu nại liên quan đến dự án này, nếu có, xin tiếp xúc với Ủy viên chấp hành của Ủy Ban, cô Claire Caspura (điện thoại số 02 4620 3641). Những khiếu nại được hoàn toàn giữ kín và được điều tra đến nơi đến chốn và kết quả sẽ được thông báo cho người khiếu nại.
Translation

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

THE VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE BASIC SKILLS TEST

Dear Parents,

I would appreciate your child's participation in this research. I am delighted with the completed questionnaires I received from all students. I am now seeking assistance in the stage of data gathering which involves the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test. Students will be selected to take part in a Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test. Students will be selected from those who consent to participate in the stage 1 of the research.

The Basic Skills Test will be treated with strict confidentiality and the data will be used only for the purpose of the research. Students are invited to voluntarily take part in the Basic Skills Test and they may withdraw at any time. The Basic Skills Test will take approximately 30 minutes.

I am seeking permission for your child to take part in the Basic Skills Test. If you and your child are willing to participate in the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test please complete the permission note below.

I would be grateful if you could return the permission note in the envelope provided to:

Mr. Van BON NGUYEN
162 Riverside Drive
Airds, NSW 2560

by 15/4/99

Should you have any enquiries regarding the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test or the research project itself, please contact me on 02 46 261 476
Note: The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the University of Western Sydney, Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Executive Officer, Claire Kaspura (tel: 02 4620 3641). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and will be informed of the outcome.

Thank you for your help

Van BON NGUYEN
Translation

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

PERMISSION NOTE

I give permission for my child ..........................of class ....
school..................to take part in the Vietnamese language Basic Skills
Test conducted by Mr. Van BON NGUYEN.
Signed...........................................Date....../....../ 1999
(Parent/Guardian)

Note: The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the University of Western Sydney, Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Executive Officer, Claire Kaspura (tel: 02 4620 3641). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and will be informed of the outcome.
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

TEACHER INFORMATION SHEET

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Dear colleague,

I would appreciate your participation in the research which I am conducting as part of my research for the degree of Ph.D. at the University of Western Sydney.

I am delighted with the completed questionnaires I already received from all parents and students in relation to the first stage of the research.

I am now seeking assistance in the last stage of data gathering that involves a research interview.

What is expected of you: I would be grateful if you could take part in an interview which I expect will take between thirty minutes and one hour. I will use Vietnamese, English or both languages, depending on your wishes.

Tape recording: I would like to tape record the interview, if you give me your permission. I will not use a tape recorder if you do not want me to. I will use the tape simply to remember details when I write my report, I will then erase the recording.

Risks and discomfort: I do not believe that the project will cause you any danger or discomfort.

Confidentially: I will ask all you to give me a pseudonym, so that your real name will not appear in my records. I will not record the names of any ethnic school or public school that you attend. The records will be kept by me in a secure cabinet at the University. Only the researcher and supervisor will have access to records.

Right to withdraw: Participation in the interview is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without having to give me any reasons.
Note: The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the University of Western Sydney, Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Executive Officer, Claire Kaspura (tel: 02 4620 3641. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and will be informed of the outcome.

If you would like to discuss this research please contact me or my supervisors: Dr. Madeleine Cincotta on phone (02 97772 9243) and A/Professor Stuart Campbell on phone (02 97726310)

Thank you for your kindness,

Researcher: **Van Bon Nguyen**

University of Western Sydney
School of Languages & Linguistics
Full Postal Address: 162 Riverside Drive, Airds, NSW 2560
Tel: 02 46 261476 (H)
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

CONSENT FORM

I have read and understand the information above. I agree to take part in an interview for the study titled An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time. I understand that all information provided will be treated as confidential and I will not be identified.

Signed .................................. Date ......................

(Teacher’s name......................)

Note: The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the University of Western Sydney, Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Executive Officer, Claire Kaspura (tel: 02 4620 3641. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and will be informed of the outcome.
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Van BON Nguyen
162 Riverside Drive
AIRDS NSW 2560
Tel (02) 46261476
10/5/99

To: Principal

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

Dear Principal,
I am a student in the Doctor of Philosophy (Education) course at the University of Western Sydney. I am investigating ways to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning.
In order to do this I am interested in finding out about strategies to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.
The purpose of the research is:
1. To identify factors that affect the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.
2. To recommend ways to improve the Vietnamese language learning/teaching in multicultural education.
The instruments involve the use of the Two Four-Point- scales; Questionnaires, the Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test and interviews with teachers of the Vietnamese language.
- Two Four-point scales scored from “One” to “Four” have been designed to measure individual students’ ability to use spoken communication, reading and writing.
- Questionnaires:
  - A questionnaire is designed for parents to examine the role of the parents in their children’s Vietnamese language learning.
  - A questionnaire is designed for students to find out students’ reasons for studying Vietnamese language and the ability to use their mother tongue.
  - The Vietnamese language Basic Skills Test: Students will be selected from those who consent to participate in the research.
  - Interviews with teachers: Teachers will be asked questions dealing with teaching experience, teaching qualifications, teaching strategies, teacher qualities, the reinforcement techniques, and the perceptions of teaching strategies.

I would be grateful if you could give permission for your students and your Vietnamese language teacher(s) to take part in the research.

The survey is anonymous. A participant does not need to supply his/her name nor the name of his/her school anywhere on the questionnaire. All responses will be treated confidentially and the data will be used for the purpose of the research. He/she is volunteering to take part in the research and can withdraw at any time.

Should you have any inquiries regarding the questionnaire or the research project itself, please contact me on 02 46 261 476.

*The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the University of Western Sydney, Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Executive Officer, Claire Kaspura (tel: 02 4620 3641. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and will be informed of the outcome.*

I would be happy to provide an executive summary of my report to your school.

Thank you for your time and help.

Yours sincerely

Van BON NGUYEN
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Research: An investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools.

Guarantees for privacy of participants

Confidentially and anonymity in the presentation and distribution of results.
1. The survey is anonymous. A participant does not need to supply his/her name nor the name of his/her school anywhere on the questionnaire / Basic Skills Test. All responses will be treated confidentially and the data will be used for the purpose of the research. He/She is volunteering to take part in the research and can withdraw at any time.
2. Identifying the schools involved in the survey only by general location and global descriptions.
3. Pseudonyms will be used to refer to particular individuals.
4. Using only identification numbers and codes for schools and students involved in the survey.
5. Audio/Visual media is not involved.
6. The records will be kept by researcher (locked cupboard at researcher's room. Only the researcher and supervisor will have access to records).
7. Information will be explained clearly. No information will be withheld.
8. Teachers, students and parents are all of Vietnamese background, and it is not expected that any other cultural groups will be involved.
9. The questionnaires that are being used are not psychological instruments and their administration is not restricted to such individuals. The procedures involve the completion of two questionnaires and the Basic Skills Test.
10. The researcher is Vietnamese. The researcher can speak the language and has an understanding of the Vietnamese culture. (The survey does not require the participants to address any culturally sensitive issues).
The researcher is also a teacher and has an understanding of the school system.

I declare the information given above is true. I will respect the personality, rights, wishes, beliefs, consent and freedom of the individual subject in the conduct of the research.

Signature of applicant..................................... Date   /   / 99
Van Bon Nguyen  

SERAP Number: 99024

Your application to conduct a research project in NSW government schools, *Investigation to Improve the Effectiveness of Vietnamese Language Learning in Primary Schools*, is approved. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been accepted.

You may now contact the principals of the approved schools (Attachment 1) to discuss their participation.

The proposal will remain valid until 19 April, 2000.

Please include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to schools. Attention is directed to the following requirements for all researchers in NSW government schools:

- Principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time.
- Approval of the principal for the specific method of gathering information for the study is required.
- Privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.
- Participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school's convenience.
- Proposals to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the Research Approval Officer before publication proceeds.

Once the study is completed, please forward your report marked to the Research Approval Officer, Department of Education and Training, Level 5, 35 Bridge Street, NSW 2000.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

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Strategic Information and Reporting
1999
guyen

SERAP Number: 99024

Your application for extension of your research project in NSW public schools entitled *Investigation to Improve the Effectiveness of Strategy Learning in NSW Primary Schools* has been approved.


Please forward your report to the Research Officer, Department of Education and Training, Level 6, 35 Bridge Street, Sydney, NSW 2000.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects)

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

To: Mr Van Bon Nguyen, Dr Madeleine Cincotta, Assoc Professor Stuart Campbell
   Education and Languages

Telephone:

Date: 13/04/2000

Project Title: Investigation to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning in NSW primary schools

Protocol No: 1999/001

The Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects) has approved the modification and/or renewal of the above protocol.

The Principal Investigator is required to:

(a) provide an Annual Report on matters including:
    - security of records
    - compliance with approved consent procedures and documentation.

(b) to report to the Committee immediately anything that might affect ethical acceptance of the protocol, including:
    - adverse effects on subjects/participants;
    - proposed changes in the protocol;
    - unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

The protocol is approved until 31/12/2000 subject to the protocol complying with the above. It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the first named investigator for ensuring ethical practice in research and for compliance with the above requirements.

The above protocol number must be quoted in all future correspondence regarding this protocol.

Dr Mary Hawkins
Chair