

**Achieving Cultural Competence in Vietnamese EFL Classes:
A Case Study from an Intercultural Communicative
Competence Perspective**

THI THU HIEN TRINH

BA, MA (University of Languages and International Studies - VNU)

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

The thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to the final version of my thesis being made available worldwide when deposited in the University's Digital Repository, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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ABSTRACT

The process of teaching and learning foreign languages in the era of globalisation aims to equip students with intercultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) (Sercu, Carmen, Garcia, & Castro, 2004). This goal is being conceptualised as a new requirement that teachers should promote among their students through the inclusion of intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes in foreign language education (Byram, 1993b). To achieve this goal, culture must be addressed as a core component in language programs and integrated with the teaching of linguistic elements. In Vietnam, the common goal for English language study noted in Decision No 1400/QĐ-TTg on 30 September, 2008, emphasises the training of young Vietnamese citizens to become communicative and intercultural English users. This objective of English language teaching requires Vietnamese English teachers to provide students with opportunities to achieve cultural competence alongside linguistic competence. This study looks at the teaching of culture in the contemporary context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching at the Vietnamese tertiary level, examining the presentation of culture in the official teaching materials and the teaching practices in terms of the ways and the extent to which they infuse culture into EFL lessons.

This study adopted a qualitative case study approach, and was conducted in two phases: Phase 1 (Document Collection and Analysis) and Phase 2 (Teachers' Interviews, Classroom Observations and Field notes). I employed various strategies to collect the data: document analysis, one-on-one interviews, individual interviews for member checking, classroom observations and field notes. The case study research revealed two key findings: the gap between how the cultural content is presented in Vietnamese tertiary English textbooks and the conceptualisations of cultural competence from an ICC perspective; and the gap between the Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers' teaching practices and the development of students' ICC. The shortcomings of the textbook content and the teachers' tendency to limit the teaching of culture influenced Vietnamese English students' development of ICC. This study provides a framework for the teaching of culture in the Vietnamese context, which will help teachers and policy makers improve English language teaching, with the aim of achieving the intercultural goals of language study in our globalised community.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN:	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEM:	Asia-Europe Meeting
ALTE:	Association of Language Testers in Europe
APEC:	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
CEFR:	Common European Framework of Reference
CEFRL:	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CLT:	Communicative Language Teaching
C1:	Learners' native culture
C2:	Target culture
EF EPI:	Education First English Proficiency Index
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
ESL:	English as a Second Language
ESL/EFL:	English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language
ESP:	English for Specific Purposes
ICC:	Intercultural Communicative Competence
ICT:	Information and Communication Technologies
IELTS:	International English Testing System
GE:	General English
L1:	Learners' first language
L2:	Target or second language
MOET:	Ministry of Education and Training
TOFEL:	Test of English as a Foreign Language
UK:	United Kingdom
ULIS-VNU:	University of Languages and International Studies – Vietnam National University
USA:	United States of America
WTO:	World Trade Organization

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND THE CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

English has travelled to many parts of the world and has been used to serve various purposes. The roles that English has played in the lives of individuals as well as communities range from marginalization and hegemony on the one side to empowerment and upward mobility to the other.

(Sharifian, 2009, p. 1)

This statement asserts the importance of English in today's modern world. English is an international language (McKay, 2002; L. H. Phan, 2008; Sharifian, 2009) and is a necessary means of communication in many contemporary societies. The quote also captures the capacity that English has to empower on the one hand, or to marginalise on the other, depending on speakers' facilities with the language and their ability to utilise it as linguistic capital. The mastery of English can facilitate intercultural interactions and the development of strong relations between individuals and communities from different countries, and can provide opportunities for international trade, science and technology, and socio-economic growth (Crysal, 2003). The broad use of the English language as a means of communication illustrates its unprecedented global expansion. Indeed, so ubiquitous is the English language that, on the launch of the Voyager spacecraft in 1977, it was chosen to be the principal language with which to record the greeting message given by the then United Nations Secretary-General, Kurt Waldheim (Pennycook, 1994). English helps facilitate social mobility granting access to other cultures, and can communicate new innovations through the mass-media (Pauwels, 1994). The global spread of English has resulted in the imperialisation of the language and has led to the development of World Englishes (Houghton, 2009). Success in the modern world thus seems dependent on a mastery of English. Therefore, English language education, which provides learners with basic communication skills and information, has become a key part of global education. Many countries around the world have consequently devoted resources to the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language. Some now use English as their medium of instruction, specifically in tertiary education.

In Vietnam, English plays a crucial part in education, science and technology, business and commerce, international relations and diplomacy. The need for highly skilled and competent

English speakers in all of these fields makes EFL instruction a major issue in Vietnamese education today. However, the quality of Vietnamese EFL education is low and students do not master an adequate knowledge of English (S. T. Le, 2011; Vu & B. H. Nguyen, 2004). Many Vietnamese EFL students cannot use English in their learning, working and everyday communication after 10 years of English training (Ha, 2007; Vu, 2007) . According to some scholars, one major reason for this low quality of EFL teaching and learning is that Vietnamese EFL instruction continues to emphasise the development of students' linguistic competence, through the improvement of four basic skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing), rather than aiming at the acquisition of cross-cultural communication (Ho, 2009; T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007; T. T. Nguyen, 2005; T. Q. Tran & Dang, 2014). The opportunities for Vietnamese students to achieve ICC alongside linguistic competence are limited (T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007; L. B. Truong & Tran, 2014). Consequently, these students face difficulties in relation to the cultural aspects of English teaching and learning, which has a dramatic impact on their potential to succeed in fields where English communication is essential.

1.2 Rationale of the Research Problem

This thesis is informed by my experience as an English student and teacher. I began studying English in Year 10 and have been a teacher of English for 10 years at a tertiary non-English major institution in Vietnam. The way I was taught English affected my perceptions of foreign language learning. As a student, I paid much attention to grammatical structures and vocabulary. I did many exercises to improve these aspects of my English. My teachers used what Howatt and Widdowson (2004) refer to as the “grammar-translation method” (p. 151), which focuses on the content of short English texts by an analysis of English grammar. Despite the promotion of communicative approach in EFL pedagogy at different levels in Vietnam, teachers used to their traditional teaching method by “spend[ing] most of their lesson time explaining abstract grammar rules and guiding their students in choral readings” (V. C. Le, 2002, p. 33). I was the product of this type of EFL education. By the time I began teaching, I was not familiar with English communicative interaction and particularly English language cultures. In my teaching, I tried to provide my students with an understanding of English grammar and the content of English language usage. In conversation, my students demonstrated misunderstandings, although they did not make any mistakes in grammar or vocabulary. While my students, for the most part, knew what native speakers were saying, they often failed to understand them because of their limited knowledge of English speaking cultures. My students' lack of success in communicating effectively in English motivated me to conduct this research project.

The following example from the first lesson in my General English course illustrates some of the problems that my students encounter. In this lesson, I ask students to work in pairs, reminding them to concentrate on the content of the conversation. Subsequent questions relating to age, family, job and housing, for example, are used by most of the students. These questions can be: *How old are you? Are you married? How much money do you earn from your job? or How much did you pay for your house?* It is through such questions that students want to show interest in the lives of their interlocutors. In the Vietnamese context, this kind of communication is acceptable and almost expected, because showing this level of interest is a traditional cultural value. However, English speakers may find this type of questioning invasive as these are questions generally reserved for close friends and family members. The use of such questions in communication may make English speakers feel confused, as privacy is highly respected in English speaking cultures (Q. Nguyen, 2000). My students may be unaware that their own conversational conventions, which are rational and appropriate to them, may not be so in a different speech community. Such personal conversations are often avoided in English speaking cultures, but in Vietnam, and many other Asian countries, they are common.

Another example concerns my students' confusion about English names and titles. They address English speakers using both titles and first names because they are familiar with the Vietnamese system of address, which consists of a title and name, for example, *Anh Nam (Brother Nam)* or *Bác Lan (Aunty Lan)*. They feel it is impolite to call older English speakers by their first name and they are not accustomed to using their surnames.

One final example relates to the differences in greeting conventions between English and Vietnamese people. In English communicative lessons, my students use Vietnamese greeting styles, such as *Bác ăn cơm chưa? (Have you eaten yet?)* or *Anh đi đâu đấy? (Where are you going?)*, instead of *Hello, good morning* or *How are you?* The challenges faced by myself and my students originate from cultural differences, and they can only be ameliorated if teachers and students acknowledge that, for EFL instruction to be effective, it should include cultural knowledge along with grammar and vocabulary.

In the case of my students, their limited knowledge of culture affects their success in EFL learning. In comparison with students of other countries in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Vietnamese students generally have a lower competency in English (Y. P. Hoang, 2014). Vietnam was one of twelve countries in the world that have **Very Low English Proficiency** according to The Education First English Proficiency Index 2011(EF EPI) (EF EPI, 2011). From 2012 to 2014, Vietnamese students' English competency improved somewhat (EF

EPI, 2012, 2013, 2014). The students' average English scores at each educational level are low and do not reach the standard requirements (Vu, 2007). At the tertiary level, students with varying English proficiencies study in the one class. Most start their English study with a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOFEL) score of 300 or an International English Testing System (IELTS) score of 3.0. After two years of study, they score 360–370 on TOFEL or in the 3.5 band on IELTS (Vu & B. H. Nguyen, 2004). Their limited English competency improves slowly. They only upgrade by 0.5 of a band on IELTS or 60–70 points on their TOEFL score after four semesters, whereas they are supposed to attain 400 on TOFEL or 4.0 band on IELTS when graduating. The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) requires graduate students to achieve 450 on TOFEL or 4.5 band on IELTS (Vu & B. H. Nguyen, 2004). Therefore, current EFL instruction does not help Vietnamese students develop their English competency to meet this requirement. With such low progress in learning English, Vietnamese students cannot meet the demands for proficient English use in today's globalised society.

Inadequate EFL education is the consequence of many factors. The moral economy of Vietnamese classrooms and the shortage of teaching facilities contribute to EFL learners' lack of success. Vietnam is a socialist country with different cultural values than English-speaking countries. Collectivism and Confucian philosophy in education influence the national school system (P. M. Nguyen, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2006; T. T. Tran, 2012). My teachers, colleagues, the students and I were educated to respect teachers' authority and to listen to teachers respectfully. My students are not an exception. They learn English passively and they enjoy listening to their teachers. They are afraid to make mistakes or to lose face in class. They tend to be silent and are hesitant to work out problems. They also expect the teacher to know everything about the subject and to control the class. This kind of classroom is problematic for communicative EFL activities, especially group-work (Kyung Soon & Angela, 2006; Xu, 2008). Furthermore, traditional Vietnamese EFL teachers lack teaching aids and reference materials with which to promote communicative competence. Books, newspapers, magazines and CD disks about the language use in of Anglophone countries are not readily available.

The process of EFL teaching and learning is also influenced by many factors. From my teaching experience, cultural misunderstandings inhibit the successful participation of students in speaking activities. The differences in cultures are likely to create unsuccessful interactions. In order to create an effective teaching and learning environment, and to improve EFL efficacy, teachers and learners should pay attention to the pragmatics of English language use. Bridging cultural gaps is an important part of succeeding in the teaching and learning of any foreign language.

For these reasons, I propose to examine to what extent cultural knowledge is embedded in Vietnamese teaching materials and which forms of cultural content are the most evident in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes. The study also elaborates on the ways, and the extent to which, Vietnamese tertiary teachers enact cultural knowledge in their EFL lessons. The study will be conducted from an ICC perspective, which will be discussed in more detail below.

1.3 Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions for a case study of EFL teaching at a higher educational institution in Vietnam:

- (1) Given that cultural competence is an important factor in EFL education, to what extent is cultural knowledge embedded in official curriculum/teaching materials?
- (2) Given that cultural content has many forms, as identified by Byram (1993a), which forms are the most evident in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes?
- (3) In what ways, and to what extent, do Vietnamese tertiary teachers infuse cultural knowledge into their EFL pedagogy?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study will provide an in-depth understanding of cultural content in EFL textbooks, and the teaching of culture by tertiary EFL teachers. It will also assist in making recommendations to the Vietnamese tertiary education institutions about appropriate EFL pedagogies for the purposes of improving cultural teaching and learning so as to develop students' cultural awareness and ICC. In turn, it may enhance the efficacy of English teaching and learning processes in Vietnamese tertiary education. Additionally, this study will assist in identifying the ways by which, and to what extent, teachers present the curriculum to reach the goals of the present English curriculum, so that the authorities can reconsider these issues. The study also offers suggestions for some changes to the present English language curricula, from the primary to the tertiary level.

In order to clarify the research problems, in the following sections I will examine briefly the history of EFL education in Vietnam and the current situation of Vietnamese tertiary EFL education. This information focuses on Vietnamese foreign language policies, the advantages of attaining good English proficiency, and the situation and issues of EFL teaching and learning in Vietnam, with specific reference to tertiary education.

1.5 The Contexts of the Study

1.5.1 The Context of EFL Education in Vietnam

Vietnam is a nation with a 4000 year history. Its national development has undergone many fluctuations during that time and this has affected its foreign language education policy. As with many countries which have been invaded by foreign peoples, Vietnam's linguistic history reflects its political history (Denham, 1992). Changes in foreign language teaching and learning in Vietnam are the result of the different periods in the long history of gaining and protecting independence, and building up a powerful and prosperous country. The shape of contemporary Vietnamese foreign language policy can be characterised by four distinct historical periods: English in Vietnam before 1954, English in Vietnam from 1954 to 1975, English in Vietnam from 1975 to 1986, and English in Vietnam from 1986 up to the present time (V. V. Hoang, 2010). These stages in Vietnamese education are marked by important events in its history. Vietnam gained independence in 1954, reunified the country in 1975 after the United States military withdrew from the south of the country, and adopted a socialist-oriented market economy under state management in 1986 (H. Q. Truong, Dinh, & Le, 2008). My review of Vietnamese EFL instruction combines the ideas taken from a number of researchers, (for example, H. T. Do, 1996, 2006; V. V. Hoang, 2010; Lam, 2011; S. T. Le, 2011) and adopts the sub-headings employed by V. V. Hoang (2010). The review of each stage will be illustrated in the sections that follow.

1.5.1.1 English in Vietnam before 1954

Before 1954, Vietnam was under centuries-long Chinese domination and decades-long French colonisation. For a long time, when the Vietnamese people did not have their own language, Chinese with Han script was used as the official language (M. H. Pham, 1994, cited in V. H. Dang, 2006; H. T. Do, 1996; X. Q. Le, 2013). After obtaining national independence in the tenth century from the Chinese, Vietnam continued to use Han as the major language in accordance with developing an alternative means of communication. Chu Nom (Nom script) was created, borrowing Chinese writing characters (X. V. Hoang, 2007; T. G. Nguyen, 2006). Chu Nom was the first language of Vietnam which could be said to represent the national identity of the country. Vietnamese people used Chu Nom as the language of literature to preserve their copious proverbs, folk songs, poetry and folk tales. However, this early writing system could not be popularised because it lacked completeness and standardisation (X. V. Hoang, 2007). For a period of over 1000 years under Chinese domination (from 111 B.C to 938 A.D), Chinese was used as the language of instruction nationwide in schools, while Chu Nom

was not considered to be the official language in the feudal education system. This situation was maintained from dynasty to dynasty, which caused barriers in the development of Vietnamese education (T. N. Nguyen, 2011).

In the sixteenth century, Quoc Ngu (the current version of the Vietnamese language) emerged as an additional writing system, and was based on the Latin alphabet. This form of language became a means of communication among Vietnamese people and played an important role in the process of gaining independence and building up the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. From 1858 to 1954, the French invaded Vietnam and dominated the whole country (D. L. Nguyen, 2007; N. C. Nguyen, 2004; H. Q. Truong, Dinh, & Le, 2005). The French colonial government issued a strict language policy in which French was the official language, and it was used as the medium of instruction in schools from primary to tertiary level; Vietnamese was the language of instruction at the pre-school and primary levels; Chinese was taught as an elective subject in junior high schools; and English was one of the compulsory subjects in senior high schools (Lam, 2011). The reason for supporting the significant role of English during this period was that “the French government was in clear need of English speakers who could work for commercial and trading services and diplomatic affairs in Vietnam” (Lam, 2011, p. 3), therefore they appointed English as an obligatory subject. Further, to meet the needs of their administration in Vietnam, the French colonialists promoted the development of French and downgraded the Chinese language. The formal feudal educational system, established under Chinese domination, was replaced by a French-style educational system with a number of major changes, as described by V. H. Dang (2006):

Chu Quoc Ngu and French replaced Chinese script. Curricula, learning materials, ways of teaching and learning, examination content and administration were all changed. Systems of schools from pre-school to secondary school level, and colleges and universities were gradually built. As a result, schools belonging to feudal regimes disappeared (p. 10).

During the period of colonisation, the French government introduced the schooling of English as a required foreign language subject in the secondary language curriculum. Scholars have identified two reasons for the introduction of English: (1) the French rulers wanted to restrict the influence of the Chinese culture, and (2) they wanted to enhance cooperation with other countries (Lam, 2011; X. Q. Le, 2013; T. G. Nguyen, 2006). In the colonial educational system, schools trained students to become French speakers and provided them with French culture. Many Vietnamese generations grew up and learned in the colonial educational system where “speaking French, thinking in the French way, adopting French lifestyles were part of the

French colonization plans set for the Vietnamese people” (T. N. Nguyen, 2011, p. 70). The French government endeavoured to increase the assimilation of French culture and eliminate the influence of Chinese culture in Vietnam society. Along with the strategy to increase the assimilation of French culture, the French rulers aimed to establish working staff with sound English competence so they could “work for commercial and trading services and diplomatic affairs in Vietnam” (Lam, 2011, p. 3). In his review of English in Vietnam, Lam (2011) indicates that “English assumed an important role in the secondary language curriculum and for the first time became a required subject in senior high schools. As stipulated in the educational reforms, the national examinations were designed such that the English language questions carried more weight than other languages” (p. 3). In general, during this era, English education was limited due to the promotion of French. However, it did occupy an important position and became an obligatory subject for high school students. Some English textbooks in use were designed by French authors such as *L’anglais Vivant: Classe de sixième*; *L’anglais Vivant Classe de troisième* (V. V. Hoang, 2010). These textbooks content focused on pronunciation and reading skill. During that time, EFL teachers employed grammar-translation method in their teaching practices.

1.5.1.2 English in Vietnam from 1954 to 1975

In 1954, Vietnam gained its independence after defeating the French army, marking a significant event in Vietnam’s long-term history (B. D. Tran, 2012). However, the country was divided into two parts, according to the conditions of the Geneva Agreement, on July 20, 1954,¹ namely the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (in the north), and the Republic of Vietnam (in the south). The northern region was governed by the Communist Party, with support from Russia and China, while the southern region followed capitalism, and was supported by France and the United States of America (USA) (H. Q. Truong et al., 2005). The differences in the political systems between the two regions exerted considerable influences on each region’s educational systems, and especially their policies for foreign language teaching and learning during that time.

English language education in North Vietnam: After liberation from the French colonialists, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam carried out a new strategy for post-war recovery. The government promoted the development of the economy, stabilised the society, eliminated

¹ The Agreement was signed by the countries participating in the war in Indochina in order to regain peace in the area. The Geneva Agreement was signed in Geneva in Switzerland. This agreement proclaimed that the French army could not continue occupying Indochina and that the French colonialism in Indochina was legally ended.

illiteracy, eradicated hunger and reduced poverty (Lịch sử Việt Nam, 2013; B. D. Tran, 2012). There was a broad consensus of community opinion on this strategy and, with support from the Soviet Union and China, North Vietnam was ready for its new process of national development.

Being an independent country, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh,² attempted to promote the Vietnamese language for the purposes of increasing the people's knowledge, fostering specific cultural values and a national identity, furthering national development and reunification. Vietnamese became the official language and was taught at all educational levels (X. V. Hoang, 2007; G. T. Nguyen, 2007). The government strongly recommended the teaching and learning of Vietnamese and decreed that "learning the Vietnamese language is compulsory and free for everybody" and "any Vietnamese citizen over 8 years old must have the ability to speak and write the Vietnamese language" (cited in T. G. Nguyen, 2006, p. 16, my translation). Being the common language spoken among the Kinh peoples and the residents of 53 other minority ethnicities, Vietnamese was considered to be "the essential means of communication among the ethnic groups, helping them with achieving close relationships and an equal development in economy, culture, science, technology, etc., and enhancing the great national unity" (ibid., p. 16).

With regards to foreign language policy, the government attached special importance to the teaching and learning of the Russian and Chinese languages rather than French and English. Russian and Chinese were conceptualised as high status foreign languages and were officially taught from primary to tertiary levels (T. H. Dang, 2004). The reason for this language hierarchy was the strong relationship between Vietnam and the two important neighbour countries in the socialist bloc, namely the Soviet Union and China. The Vietnamese people received much support from their neighbours in finance, trade, technology and education. The governments of China and the Soviet Union created comfortable conditions under which Vietnamese learners were trained in those countries, and they endeavoured to teach their languages in Vietnam. Thanks to the strong alliance with the Soviet Union, Vietnamese people could receive advanced and specialised training, and they could benefit from the provision of educational facilities. Tens of thousands of Vietnamese students achieved their first degrees in

² Ho Chi Minh (1890 - 1969) was a Vietnamese communist revolutionary leader. He was Prime Minister (1945 - 1955) and President (1945 - 1969) of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and a key figure in the foundation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945. He greatly contributed to the development of Vietnam and strengthened international unity. President Ho Chi Minh (also named as Uncle Ho) was the master of the Vietnamese revolution, the leader of the Vietnamese working class and the entire nation, a soldier, an activist of the international communist and national liberation movements (Duiker, 2000; Fall, 1967).

the Soviet Union (X. Q. Le, 2013). More importantly, those who had been trained in the Soviet Union were later to hold key positions in the Vietnamese administration.

On the other hand, the teaching and learning of French and English during this period were limited to a few educational institutions. They were learned by northern students at some universities which offered majors, such as in international relations or foreign trade. English was downplayed to the point of having an inferior status (V. V. Hoang, 2010). The teaching of English could only be undertaken at some secondary schools in big cities and in two foreign language institutions, namely The University of Languages and International Studies – Vietnam National University (ULIS-VNU), and Hanoi University, where students were trained to become teachers of English or interpreters.

The Second Educational Reform was implemented in August 1956 focusing on the development of national human resources. Foreign language education, especially the teaching and learning of English language were not included in this reform. Due to South Vietnam was still under foreign domination, the schools in North Vietnam provided English education with the aim to assist students in “understanding the USA and ... fighting against the US invasion on the diplomatic front” (V. V. Hoang, 2010, p. 8).

English language education in South Vietnam: Under the rule of the Republic of Vietnam, the educational system and policies in the south were different from those in the north. The northern government imposed strict regulations on national language policy, and defined Vietnamese as the official language, with Russian and Chinese promoted as the important foreign languages. Meanwhile, South Vietnam slowly framed a legitimate national language policy (H. T. Do, 1996). Until 1968, the southern government proclaimed Vietnamese as the language of instruction. In relation to foreign languages, French and English were highly promoted.

South Vietnam was a capitalist country which was significantly supported and influenced by France and the USA. Due to political and economic cooperation with these countries, French and especially English became the “living languages” at that time (Lam, 2011, p. 4). The long-established French language occupied a powerful position in the society and in the foreign language curriculum. French was learned and used by most Vietnamese people who held important posts in the government and other workplaces. Furthermore, the French curriculum was still offered in a number of French schools. However, French became the second status foreign language, after English, after the withdrawal of the French colonisers from North Vietnam. In 1954, the US army arrived in South Vietnam and became involved in the Vietnam War (1954 - 1975) (B. D. Tran, 2012). The USA established its own political system and

attempted to strengthen its administration. The government of the USA introduced English to the South Vietnam national education system and facilitated the teaching and learning of this new language. Hundreds of English classes were organised, providing southern people with good learning opportunities. English textbooks were freely supplied, and teaching resources such as movies, magazines, newspapers and radio programs related to American culture, as well as the necessary equipment, were all made available. In English classes, teachers and students used textbooks written by Vietnamese authors such as: English for Year 6 students (first edition in 1962) written by Dinh Hoa Nguyen; English for Year 7 students (first edition in 1964) written by Dinh Hoa Nguyen; English textbooks for high school students written by Ba Kong Le, Van Khon Nguyen, Ngoc Anh Vu, Van Tao Nguyen, Van Dien Tran, Khanh Hoan Do, Van Buu Ha, Son Dac, Van Rue Le, etc. (V. C. Tran, 2014). Further, they could work with different supplementary teaching materials provided by both English-speaking and Vietnamese producers, such as: Daily World News broadcasted by Allied Armed Forces Radio; English newspapers published in Sai Gon, Vietnam. The teaching content aimed to help students master an adequate knowledge of English in order to use English as a mean of communication to enhance “political and economic co-operation with other capitalist countries for the survival and expansion of [the] country” (T. H. Dang, 2004, p. 73).

Further, the USA offered training courses in America for government workers, military officers and teachers. During this period, a person with sound English language skills could find a high salaried job in either an American company or Vietnamese-run establishment. English became a popular language and played a significant role in South Vietnam. Hence, the government of the Republic of Vietnam upgraded English education and promoted English language teaching and learning at the secondary and tertiary levels.

The development of English education was much improved when Vietnam expanded its cooperation with other non-communist countries around the world. English teaching was supported by many agencies from English-speaking countries, especially the British Council from England.

After the victory at the battle of Dien Bien Phu,³ the teaching and learning of foreign languages was promoted by the Vietnamese government. In the national educational system, the instruction of Russian, Chinese, English and French was maintained and made some basic

³ Dien Bien Phu was the climactic confrontation of the First Indochina War between the French Union's French Far East Expeditionary Corps and the Viet Minh communist-nationalist revolutionaries. The battle occurred between March and May 1954 and culminated in a comprehensive French defeat that influenced negotiations over the future of Indochina at Geneva (Battle of Dien Bien Phu, n.d.).

progress towards growth and status. The number of schools teaching foreign language subjects increased and the number of foreign language teachers with bachelor degrees, as well as officers working in science, technology and the economy with sound proficiency in English also rose quickly. Foreign language teachers and their students were provided with favourable conditions for their teaching and learning. For these reasons, these foreign languages retained an important status and obtained favourable treatment from the Vietnamese government. In 1968, the Prime Minister issued Instruct No 43/TTg, guiding the direction and mission of foreign language education at universities, colleges and secondary schools. Four years later, in 1972, Decision No 251-TTg was approved, signifying the enhancement of foreign language education in nationwide secondary schools. This decision verified the significance of foreign languages as obligatory subjects in the national curriculum for secondary level students and emphasised the possibility of teaching and learning two foreign languages at the same time (one principal foreign language and one accessory foreign language) (T. G. Nguyen, 2006). These policy amendments were matched by the world trend of improving general education. Many schools for gifted students who were proficient at English were set up throughout the country. More importantly, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam established two universities for training foreign language teachers and one centre for researching the teaching and learning of foreign languages (T. G. Nguyen, 2006).

1.5.1.3 English in Vietnam from 1975 to 1986

On 30 April 1975, Vietnam defeated the United States army and gained independence for South Vietnam. The two regions of the country were united as one nation under the name of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (B. D. Tran, 2007). Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam put in place a single national education system for the whole country and emphasised the importance of education in the development of the country after reunification. The ideology of President Ho Chi Minh, that education played a very important role in prosperity, was stressed by the Vietnamese government and was employed “as a crucial tool for building the future Vietnam” (Duiker, 2000, p. 567). According to the new policy for education, the teaching and learning of foreign languages was officially included in the common curriculum framework issued by MOET (T. H. Dang, 2004). During this time, Russian became the major foreign language. The dominance of Russian spread throughout the country. Therefore, during this period, English and other foreign languages received limited opportunities to develop.

As has been demonstrated, a common national education system was employed throughout the country. As a result, Russian was taught nationwide and obtained much attention from the

government and Vietnamese society as a whole. The government policy privileged the teaching and learning of the Russian language in achieving key educational objectives in this new context. The Vietnamese MOET approved the inclusion of Russian in the national curriculum framework for students at all levels (H. T. Do, 2006). In this regards, T. H. Dang (2004) states that, in her research on English language teaching at the Vietnamese tertiary level, Russian was taught as the main foreign language in the whole country.

Russian, as the most important language subject, drew the attraction of most Vietnamese students, especially those from the north. The growth of Russian language education was marked by the establishment of Russian faculties in many universities and increasing student enrolment. The “enrolments continued to increase, and generally from seven to ten Russian language graduates were assigned to almost every high school and university”, as stated by H. T. Do (2006, p. 5). Additionally, Russian teachers and students received many opportunities to better their education. Every year, hundreds of them were selected and sent to Russia for their further studies.

The Russian language remained powerful and developed continuously for two reasons (Lam, 2011). Firstly, the political involvement with the Soviet Union which began during the war still continued. As members of the socialist bloc, both Vietnam and the Soviet Union followed the communist guidelines. Secondly, the Soviet Union gave much support to Vietnam in the process of recovering and developing the country after the war. They provided Vietnam with many kinds of goods, equipment and other necessities of life. In education, through the foundation of the Vietnam-Soviet Union Friendship Association, they set up many agencies in the big cities and towns of Vietnam in order to promote the teaching and learning of the Russian language. At that time, Russian predominated over the English, French and Chinese languages. The number of students majoring in Russian was estimated to outnumber the combined enrolments in all other foreign languages (H. T. Do, 1996).

English, French and Chinese were shunned by the Vietnamese people, because they were considered to be the languages of enemies (T. H. Dang, 2004; H. T. Do, 1996). This anti-foreign ideology, especially anti-American ideology, was propagated throughout the country, and had a significant influence on the study of these above mentioned languages. As a result, the demands for English language teaching and learning reduced dramatically; enrolments in English classes decreased considerably; almost all English language centres were closed; hundreds of English teachers became unemployed, while others were assigned different kinds of jobs or were trained to become Russian teachers; and all English textbooks and other related materials were banned

(H. T. Do, 1996). However, as the government could see some utility in the English language, as it was the language spoken by many of the world's more powerful nations, they decided not to delete it completely from the curriculum. The government organised classes for teachers of English to learn Marxist-Leninism, in order to raise their consciousness regarding the guidelines of the government, and also gave opportunities to a small number of English teachers to participate in overseas training programs. In general, during this time, the requirements for English education were reduced and the teaching of English was limited.

1.5.1.4 English in Vietnam from 1986 to Present

By 1986, Vietnam had implemented a new Open-Door policy (*Đổi mới*).⁴ The Vietnamese Communist Party and government launched this reform to further national development. The Open-Door policy was officially issued by the Sixth National Congress of the Vietnam Communist Party for two main political reasons (Q. M. Pham, 2012). Firstly, the border war between Vietnam and China in 1979 led to a break in their long-term diplomatic relationship. Secondly, the collapse of the government of the Soviet Union in the 1980s affected the political situation in Vietnam. As a result, Vietnam underwent great difficulties due to its political isolation from neighbouring countries and restricted support from communist countries, especially the Soviet Union and China. In Vietnamese history, the experience of the economic crisis from 1981 to 1985 had serious consequences for the Vietnamese people. An Open-Door policy was considered to be the appropriate strategy for Vietnam at that time (Beresford, 2008). It signified transformation in all aspects of society. In the educational field, the Open-Door policy had a great influence on the study of foreign languages.

The aim of Vietnam's new guidelines was to expand its relationships with every country around the world and to call for international cooperation and development (Beresford, 2008). Since then, many countries, including both English and non-English speaking countries, have established diplomatic and economic ties with Vietnam. A large number of foreigners came to Vietnam for trading and tourist purposes. They used English as their main medium of communication. English again became popular around the country and soon regained its status as a major language (Denham, 1992). The re-emergence of English as the dominant foreign language was an apparent outcome of this economic policy. More students chose English as

⁴ *Đổi mới* was a plan issued by the Vietnamese Communist Party on 6 December 1986 to reform the economy and society. The initial reformation applied to the economic system, in which the "market-oriented socialist economy under state guidance" model replaced the central planning model of socialism (Beresford, 2008). In the early 2000s, Vietnam expanded the policy to different fields such as society, politics, human resources, culture, etc.

their foreign language subject at schools and more parents sent their children to English language classes. English language education spread widely in response to social and economic needs. Additionally, the position of English became much more important when Vietnam joined the ASEAN in 1994, the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in 1996 and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in 1997. The dominance of English was further advanced when Vietnam became the 150th member of World Trade Organization (WTO) on 7th October, 2007. English has come to be used more and more widely, and has become the most studied foreign language in Vietnamese education.

From the early years of implementing the Open-Door policy, the government promoted English and issued many documents supporting the teaching and learning of this language. One of those was the Instruction No 422/TTg, signed on August 15, 1994, by the Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet, determining the status of English as an official foreign language (Prime Minister, 1994). Also in this year, a research project titled “A National Strategy for Foreign Language Teaching and Learning throughout All levels of Education” was conducted. It aimed to review the state of foreign language education and proposed a future plan for foreign language instruction, which emphasized a leading role for English. Since then, English language instruction has developed strongly and has achieved a higher position in Vietnam in comparison with French, Russian and some other foreign languages.

The Vietnamese government issued two strategic plans for 1991-2000 and 2001-2010 targeted at increased economics, integration and globalisation. In these plans, learning foreign languages, especially English, was recommended as a means to achieve these goals. English was seen as the key language for international communication. In fact, many documents and educational policies were developed by the Vietnamese government in order to promote English teaching and learning (Regulation No 24 of Educational Law in 1998; Decision No 50/2003/QĐ-BGD&ĐT on 31 October 2003; Decision No 40/2000/QH10, Instruction No 14/2001/CT-TTg; Regulation No 7 of Educational Law in 2004; and Decision 09/2005/QĐ-TTg on 11 January 2005) (MOET, 2008). The most important current policy for Vietnamese English instruction was approved by the Prime Minister and is titled “Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages in the National Formal Educational System in the Period of 2008 - 2020”.

The Vietnamese government’s policy privileges English language instruction in achieving its educational plans. Immediately after gaining independence in 1945, the Vietnamese government, under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh defined the importance of education and then issued many decrees to support the improvement of education. The slogan

“Education and training is the first-rate national policy” was known by every Vietnamese generation and it became the strategic plan to “develop the human resource, promote talented people for the mission of building up the country, building up Vietnamese culture and Vietnamese people” (Prime Minister, 2012, p. 2). In the era of globalisation,⁵ Vietnam has achieved significant growth in economics, science, education and many other fields. These processes enabled the Vietnamese people to better their education, and specifically to approach the education standards of powerful countries such as the USA, the United Kingdom (the UK), Australia, Canada, etc. These processes also presented the Vietnamese people with opportunities to share a common “global village” (Pauwels, 1994) with people from different countries in the world. As a result, these processes required an adequate knowledge of English. From general education to the tertiary level, English is taught as a compulsory subject. After graduating from each level, students have to obtain standardised English proficiency applied for that level. Vietnamese current evaluation of English mastery based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) includes six levels in which level 1 is the last and level 6 is the best (MOET, 2014; Prime Minister, 2014). English requirement for each educational level is clearly presented in Table 1.1. Primary school students should attain level 1 after 5-year English training while level 2 is applied for lower secondary and vocational training students. Students graduating from upper secondary schools, non-English major colleges, non-English major universities are required level 3 for English proficiency. Vietnamese students’ English mastery will be at level 4 or 5 after completing their study in any English major colleges or universities (Ho Chi Minh People Committee, 2014; Mai, 2014; MOET, 2014).

								Level 6
								Level 5
								Level 4
								Level 3
								Level 2
								Level 1
Primary school students	Lower secondary school students	Upper secondary school students	Vocational training school students	Non-English major college students	Non-English major university students	English major college students	English major university students	English proficiency

Table 1.1: English proficiency requirement for students in Vietnamese educational system

⁵ Globalisation can be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa (Giddens, 1990)

In the Vietnamese context, foreign language education in general, and EFL education in particular, have been defined as one of the goals for the national strategy period 2011-2020. The Vietnamese people thoroughly understand this fact and have strived to make a great contribution to the development of their country.

The above discussion has provided a broad overview of the Vietnamese foreign language policies focusing on EFL instruction. I will now present the current situation in EFL teaching and learning at Vietnamese higher education institutions to further develop my study that investigates the teaching of culture in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes.

1.5.2 The Current Situation of EFL Education at the Vietnamese Tertiary Level

In Vietnam, foreign language policy has been of primary concern in the development of the country. The teaching and learning of foreign languages is not a new issue in Vietnam, as it originated thousands of years ago when the country was under Chinese rule. Foreign language instruction, in relation to English teaching and learning, underwent an exponential growth and English became the most promoted foreign language in the Vietnamese educational system. English is taught nationwide in Vietnam from primary education to tertiary level. The current situation of EFL teaching and learning at Vietnamese colleges and universities will be discussed in more detail below. This discussion will aim to highlight teachers' teaching practice in relation to developing students' cultural competence in the current higher education system.

Vietnamese EFL instruction appears to focus on providing students with linguistic knowledge, limiting the integration of cultural knowledge (Ho, 2009; T. T. Nguyen, 2005; T. Q. Tran & Dang, 2014). Vietnamese EFL teachers are concerned with the introduction of grammatical structures, vocabulary items and the development of the four basic skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Thus, the activities designed for English lessons aim to improve the students' linguistic competence rather than their cultural competence. Culture has not received much attention in English classrooms, despite the fact that teachers are aware of the importance of culture in foreign language education (L. Nguyen, 2014; T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007). Teachers spend little time on the teaching of culture or equipping students with cultural knowledge of different countries and strategies to communicate interculturally in international interactions. As a result, Vietnamese students have limited opportunities to achieve ICC alongside their linguistic competence.

Many Vietnamese universities include cultural content in their English teaching programs, as will be discussed in more detail in Section 2.3.3.4. Cultural information about Anglophone

countries is the focus. Through English lessons, teachers help students understand general cultural knowledge of English-speaking countries rather than developing their abilities to make use of that knowledge in a realistic context. Teachers focus on English textbook content, which means they endeavour to provide students with cultural information and limit students' opportunities to discover and interpret cultural practices of different countries (T. L. Nguyen, 2013; T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007). This model of teaching culture assists students in developing their cognitive knowledge of ICC, but fails to develop significant abilities of ICC (see Section 2.3.4.2 for more detail) for successful communications across cultures.

The literature suggests that Vietnamese EFL teachers primarily present cultural knowledge by transmitting cultural information to language students rather than raising cultural awareness and developing intercultural skills among students. In other words, they “most often employ cognitive activities of culture teaching during their teaching time” (T. Q. Tran & Dang, 2014, p. 99) and restrict the time spent on helping students figure out cultural incidents when communicating with people from different countries. This cultural teaching approach of Vietnamese EFL teachers affects the process of learning English from an ICC perspective.

Another aspect of EFL teaching and learning which influences Vietnamese teachers' willingness to include cultural teaching in their EFL pedagogies is the time constraints. It was found from the research by S. T. Le (2011) on English teaching in Vietnam that tertiary EFL teachers suffer from heavy workloads. They seem not to have enough time to cover the assigned curriculum. Thus, teachers devote a small amount of time to providing students with cultural information embedded in teaching materials while focusing on the language content with the aim of helping their students make progress in language learning.

The learning activities for Vietnamese students are limited to the classroom context (T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007). Teachers generally organise EFL lessons such that students are given chances to practice their English with other students. Furthermore, they bring students to the world of English speaking people by utilising authentic documents such as pictures and posters or by providing them with opportunities to learn about foreign cultures by watching movies, reading stories, etc. By doing this, teachers support students in building an English intercultural learning environment. However, similar culture-based activities that are designed to enhance students' independent learning outside English classrooms are overlooked. Vietnamese students are not used to communicating in English, have difficulties in gaining access to foreign cultures and limit their contacts with foreign people. As a result, students have a lack of practical skills and strategies with which to facilitate appropriate interactions with those who have different cultural

backgrounds to them. This fact suggests two important issues: firstly, the classroom is the main place for Vietnamese students to obtain knowledge and become skilled at English; and secondly, the students face challenges in becoming communicatively competent English users.

As discussed, Vietnamese students have opportunities to learn English from primary to tertiary level. They can also learn English at many foreign language centres. A problematic issue in Vietnamese EFL education is that the primary purpose of learning English is simply getting a language certificate but not improving English competence. In the current Vietnamese education system, students have to face a lot of examinations, and thus learning is characterised as an “examination-focused” activity (Trinh, 2005, p. 15). Students are accustomed to sitting for examinations and may “achieve the highest scores in the exams but fail to show their excellence in the real life performance” (T. Hoang, 1999, p. 79, cited in S. T. Le, 2011). Examinations in English focus on grammar and vocabulary and are mostly constructed in written form. This kind of test-oriented system hinders teachers from teaching English for communicative purposes, as well as improving Vietnamese students’ English proficiency.

With regards to the teaching methods employed, lecturing is still the most popular technique applied by Vietnamese EFL teachers (V. C. Le, 2011), forcing students to become highly dependent on lectures, and giving them few opportunities to practise English communication skills. In English lessons, teachers emphasise the development of language knowledge, but do not spend much time on “developing professional or common skills such as team work, oral and written communication in English, project management, problem solving methods, initiative-taking, life-long learning, etc.” (Director, Doughty, Gray, Hopcroft, & Silvera, 2006, p. 11). Recently, a number of teachers have indicated that they would like to innovate their teaching methodologies by applying updated teaching approaches, for example Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) or ICC (see page 40 for CLT approach, Section 2.3.5 for ICC approach and the comparison between CLT and ICC approaches), as investigated by S. T. Le (2011) and Ho (2011). The shift from traditional teaching methods to CLT or ICC approaches can “make the teaching and learning process more communicative and authentic. Accordingly, monotonous, mechanical and boring drills and exercises have been replaced by more exciting and interesting communicative activities, thus placing the increasing focus on the learner. More authentic materials are being introduced to learners, e.g., advertisements, radio announcements, shopping, telephoning” (V. H. Dang, 2006, p. 30). Given that improving cultural competence is an important factor in English foreign language education, the implementation of an ICC approach has the potential to help students become intercultural learners, communicate competently and mediate intercultural challenges in the context of globalisation. ICC students

have opportunities to be involved in the activities of “making explicit contextual, linguistic and cultural connections, based on interactive language use and reflection” (Moloney, 2007, p. 4), which will enrich students’ viewpoints and equip them with intercultural skills for cross-cultural communication and strategies to face real circumstances in multicultural societies. In turn, an ICC approach can contribute to teachers’ professional development for EFL instruction. To be more specific, it enhances teachers’ “awareness of the inextricable and interdependent relationship between language and culture and teaching culture as an integral component of language teaching” (Ho, 2009, p. 73). Furthermore, it assists in developing “teachers’ intercultural perspectives that may have an impact on their language teaching methodology and syllabus design” (ibid., p. 73). Consequently, the growing trend for ICC to become a current teaching method must be continued by Vietnamese teachers so that their EFL students become well aware of the significance of culture in language learning and practice using the target language, not only in the classroom, but also to improve their ICC outside the classroom.

In summary, the current situation of English language teaching and learning at the Vietnamese tertiary level indicates that ICC is not a current practice applied consistently by EFL teachers. The teaching of cultural competence is not a strong focus in teachers’ daily practices. A strong argument can be made for upgrading Vietnamese EFL instruction to combine the teaching of cultural elements alongside linguistic elements so as to better meet the demand for training students to be globalised citizens.

1. 5.3 The Contexts of EFL Education at a Vietnamese Higher Education Institute

This research project is a qualitative case study addressing the three research questions described earlier. As qualitative case studies need to be contextualised (Wisker, 2008), in the following section, an overview will be provided of EFL teaching and learning at the higher education institution where the research was undertaken.

The subject organisation in this project is that of a major non-English educational institution where English is taught as a compulsory subject (MOET, 2008). Currently, the total number of requisite units in English is 20, including General English (GE) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The GE course, which focuses on improving the four basic modes (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and providing students with the general knowledge necessary to master English, accounts for 14 to 15 units. The ESP course, which focuses on learning vocabulary and reading skills development, accounts for four to five units. There is no common

English curriculum nor are there teaching materials for non-English-major students.⁶ Consequently, Vietnamese teachers and students use various textbooks and learning resources.

The time allocated for English is limited (see Table 1.2). GE is introduced using five periods a week for 30 weeks in three semesters, for a total of 150 periods. ESP is taught five periods a week for 9 weeks in one semester, for a total of 45 periods. Students at Vietnamese tertiary level in general and at the case university in particular begin to study English after they have completed a 7-year English program in schools with the total of 700 periods (V. V. Hoang, 2008; MOET, 2008). As each period is 45 minutes long, the total amount of English contact hours is 146.25 hours per academic year. Apart from English, the students take many other courses each academic week, and the total amount of lectures for students ranges from 35 to 40 periods a week. The school day lasts for over eight hours.⁷ Because students have limited time to study English in classrooms, an increasing number of students join additional private English evening classes. This is common for university students in Ho Chi Minh City where 51 per cent of all students take extra English courses (Vu & B. H. Nguyen, 2004).

In general, the conditions for Vietnamese EFL instruction are inadequate, due to a lack of teaching facilities and self-study support materials (V. V. Hoang, 2010). This fact is reflected by similar teaching and learning contexts in the case study institution. There are no designated rooms for the study of foreign languages. The classrooms are narrow with a large number of students in each. The teaching materials are simply comprised of textbooks, blackboards, chalk and cassette players. Reference works and publications about English speaking countries are not available for either teachers or students. These factors hinder language teaching and learning in the Vietnamese education system.

Type of English training	Amount of allocated time	Total	
		Periods	Hours
GE	5/week/30 weeks	150	112.5
ESP	5/week/9 weeks	45	33.75
TOTAL		195	146.25

Table 1.2: Allocated Time for the English Subject

⁶ Non-English-major students are described as those who are not pursuing a degree in English studies.

⁷ The school day starts from 7a.m to 11.10a.m and continues from 1p.m to 5.10p.m.

EFL instruction at the Vietnamese tertiary level, especially in the case study institution, faces a mismatch between two teaching and learning economies: the Vietnamese traditional system and the Western educational system. In the view of the local and Asian education systems, teachers are perceived as the authoritarian transmitter of knowledge (V. C. Le, 2011) and students are described as “passive, rote learners” (Pennycook, 1998, p. 162) who prefer listening and obeying to working out problems (Kyung Soon & Angela, 2006). On the other hand, the images of Western teachers and students are quite different, because teachers act as facilitators who provide guidance and facilitate communication, while students develop independent and competitive learning strategies (V. C. Le, 2011; Lewis & McCook, 2002). These two systems concurrently exist in EFL classrooms and require different styles of teaching and learning. Vietnamese EFL teachers and students experience both the local teaching and learning methodologies and the widely-used Western methods. Cultural differences in English teaching and learning methodologies may challenge Vietnamese EFL teachers and students.

The limited amount of time allocated to English, the lack of teaching materials, outdated teaching and learning methods, and inadequate teaching and learning facilities create many challenges for teachers and students. Students tend to be inactive and are largely dependent on their teachers to provide them with knowledge. Most of them are not confident enough to practise their English language skills or to converse with English teachers or English-speaking people (S. T. Le, 2011). English, much like any other academic subject, tends to be taught and used only inside the classroom. As a result, the quality of the teaching in EFL classrooms is low. After completing a course, students are often still unable to use English to communicate socially or in the workplace (Duong, 2011; Kieu, 2010).

1. 6 The Organization of the Thesis

This study is divided into six chapters as follows:

Chapter One, introduced the contexts of the research. The rationale of the research questions which emerged from my experience as a Vietnamese student and a Vietnamese teacher of English were discussed first. The chapter then presented the research questions of the study. Finally, it provided the background to assist readers to gain a deeper understanding about the contexts of Vietnamese EFL teaching and learning, which are closely linked to the research problems.

Chapter Two outlines the literature most relevant to the research questions and provides the theoretical framework for the study. The four key issues that guided the selection and review of

the literature are present as major sections: (i) Overview of the teaching of culture in a second language/foreign language (L2/FL) educational context; (ii) The important role of culture in L2/FL teaching and learning; (iii) The presentation of culture in EFL curriculum/teaching materials; and (iv) The teaching methodology of ELT teachers.

Chapter Three focuses on the research methodology. It first summarises the key themes identified from the literature, and then provides a conceptual framework for the study. This chapter describes and justifies the qualitative research design chosen for the study, and is followed by a detailed description of the methodology, samples and sampling strategy, field work and data collection methods, data collection protocols, and the strategies used for the analysis of data collected using various methods, including: document analysis, interviews, classroom observations and field notes. The research methods are those of a qualitative case study approach.

Chapter Four reports on the findings from the two sets of currently used English textbooks. The aim of the document analysis method is to reveal a broad picture of culture presentation in the teaching materials used by Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers and students. This chapter is organised into four major sections. The first and second sections report on the findings from the analysis of the two EFL textbooks used by teachers and students in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes. The third section presents comparisons related to the cultural content in these two textbooks. Finally, several significant issues are noted from the textbook analysis.

Chapter Five presents the findings of the case study conducted at a Vietnamese higher institution. It is organised in terms of the cultural contents of the English textbooks in use, the evident forms of culture in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes and the ways that teachers infuse cultural knowledge into their EFL pedagogy. The findings have been derived from the analyses of a number of data sources, including the documents collected from interviews, classroom observations and field notes. There are four main sections in this chapter: the first section begins with a discussion about the participants' perception of language and culture teaching. The second section presents the findings about the different kinds of teaching materials employed by participants in their own teaching contexts and their cultural teaching content. The third section deals with the issues pertaining to teaching practices from an ICC perspective. The last section provides a discussion of professional development activities to support the teaching of culture.

Chapter Six is devoted to a description of the key findings of the qualitative case study research. On the basis of the main findings, recommendations are made for the teaching of cultural competence in terms of teaching content, teaching activities and English intercultural teaching

and learning support. The chapter then provides a model for teaching cultural competence in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes, which serves as a reference for EFL teachers to increase students' ICC and improve English teaching and learning in the Vietnamese tertiary educational system. The final section presents a summary of the key points, an acknowledgement of the limitations of the study, suggestions for further studies and my personal reflections.

In conclusion, this chapter has set out the contexts for my study. It began with a rationale of the research problems which emerged from my experience as a Vietnamese student and a teacher of English. It then presented the research questions and the significance of the study. Finally, it provided the background to help readers gain a deeper understanding of the context of Vietnamese EFL language teaching and learning, which is closely linked to the research problems. The following chapter will discuss the current state of foreign language education and review the literature on culture and the methods for teaching culture, with a view to creating a theoretical framework for this case study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1 Introduction

One of the contributions of foreign language teaching to pupils' education is to introduce learners to and help them understand 'otherness'. Whether it be in linguistic or cultural terms, learners are confronted with the language of other people, their culture, their way of thinking and dealing with the world.

(Byram, 1989, p. 25)

Byram's quotation interests me, because it relates to the teaching of foreign languages, which is my chosen career. It also assists me by suggesting an approach to teaching my lessons, as well as what to teach in those lessons. The teaching of foreign languages, especially English teaching, requires teachers to pass on to students a linguistic knowledge of the English language (in terms of grammar, vocabulary, the phonetic system, etc.) as well as an understanding of the peoples who speak that language. In the quote, Byram uses the term "otherness" to imply people who speak different languages and possess different cultural backgrounds from the learners. It is important to conceptualise foreign language teaching as being a process of providing students with a means of communication and strategies for cross-cultural interactions in a globalised society. It is clear that communication is but one kind of activity conducted by humans in an attempt to understand each other. They distribute and exchange information about different worldviews through verbal or non-verbal languages (Negi, 2009). Verbal language can be understood to mean spoken and written language, while non-verbal language consists of symbols, gestures, behaviours, physical appearance, etc. In communication, people use language as the main tool to transmit messages or to share knowledge, attitudes and skills. However, it is not easy to capture what is being conveyed solely from language, even between people coming from the same cultural group. This is because of something that goes beyond language, which from my understanding is 'cultural knowledge' about others. Only when humans acquire aspects of both language and culture can they interact in meaningful ways and communicate effectively.

Byram's intention is to focus on the goal of foreign language teaching, that is, to help students master the language and to understand the culture of that language. According to Byram, foreign language teaching is not only comprised of teaching a new language linguistically, but also teaching the culture of the target language, the people speaking that language and their diverse

views about the world. He indicates that teachers must be aware of the different levels of teaching, in terms of teaching strategies, from strategies for introducing culture to those for understanding it. Foreign language teaching is inseparable from the teaching of culture.

In the first chapter, I presented a brief review of the teaching of English in Vietnam. During the nearly two decades since the government implemented the Open-Door policy, the situation of English language education has changed significantly. Pedagogically, the shift from traditional methods to an ICC approach has gradually been taken into account by researchers and language teachers and learners as they came to realise the importance of integrating culture into English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language (ESL/EFL). Through a review of both scholarly research and government documents, I will now locate my study within a critical theoretical framework. My discussion will explore aspects of the cultural element underpinning this study, because I am undertaking the project to investigate how, and to what extent, Vietnamese tertiary teachers and students build cultural competence in EFL classes. This discussion includes four sections.

First, the definitions of ‘culture’, ‘culture knowledge’ and ‘culture competence’ will be discussed, because they are the key concepts of the study. Second, I will review the teaching of culture in a L2/FL educational context,⁸ focusing on the relationships between language and culture; the five dimensions of culture; the history of culture teaching with the evolution of the ICC approach; and the relevance of ICC in ESL/EFL education.⁹ Lastly, I will discuss the important role of culture in the process of teaching and learning, the introduction of culture in EFL curriculum and textbooks, and conclude with a discussion of the approaches of EFL teachers to teaching culture.

2.2 Definitions of the Key Terms

I will firstly start by giving the definitions of the key terms used in the study because, by being provided with a clear understanding of these central constructs right from the beginning, readers

⁸ Second language or L2 is the language that a person learns after his or her native language and it is used in the locale of that person. Foreign language as a language that is different from a person’s native language and is learned for used in an area where that language is not generally spoken (Second language, n.d.).

⁹ ESL education refers to the teaching and learning of English as a Second Language while EFL education refers to the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language. In Vietnam, English is taught as a Foreign Language (Baeher & Dang, 2011; H. N. H. Pham, 2014). Vietnamese EFL education from an ICC perspective aims to provide students with Vietnamese and Anglophone cultures, and those from non-English-speaking countries.

will find it easier to follow what is referred to in the field of foreign language teaching and learning, especially with regards to the teaching of culture in the ESL/EFL educational context.

2.2.1 Culture

Culture is an abstract concept that means different things to different people (Cakir, 2006) and can be understood implicitly, but is difficult to define precisely. Culture is also a broad and complicated concept (V. H. Phan & Nguyen, 2008). One of the earliest scientific definitions of the term ‘culture’ was proposed by the British anthropologist Tylor¹⁰ (1871) in his book *Primitive Cultures*. Tylor defined culture as “knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capacities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871, cited in Honigsmann, 1969, p. 145). The term ‘culture’ in this definition firstly refers to general culture relating to the explicit aspects of culture, such as art, literature, music, food, clothing styles, etc., and secondly, to the implicit aspects of culture, such as cultural etiquette, behaviour, and customs. Two categories of culture are emphasised in this definition: “high culture” or “culture with a capital C”, which refers to the major products and contributions of a society, and “culture with a small c”, which focuses on the ways people of a society live (Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 25).

Culture is a broad concept that embraces almost all aspects of human social life. Culture is addressed by scholars from various fields, such as cultural anthropology, cultural studies, communication studies, sociology and education. Scholars from the field of foreign language teaching and learning share a similar conceptualisation of culture: “culture is the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterise a given group of people in a given period of time” (H. D. Brown, 1994, p. 380); “culture is a complex system of concepts, attitudes, values, beliefs, conventions, behaviours, practices, rituals, and lifestyles of the people who make up a cultural group, as well as the artefacts they produce and the situations they create” (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, & Kohler, 2003, p. 45); and “culture tended to mean that body of social, artistic, and intellectual traditions associated historically with a particular social, ethnic or national group” (Sowden, 2007, pp. 304-305).

These definitions of culture contain two separate parts: elements of a culture and group membership. The former refers to the cultural patterns forming the whole way of life and the latter indicates the given community where cultural elements are shared among the group members. The second refers to the culture of a unique group that can be identified only when people of this group share certain structural elements. The structural elements of a culture tend

¹⁰ Sir Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917) is an English anthropologist who is regarded as the founder of cultural anthropology with his most important work *Primitive Culture* (Edward Burnett Tylor, n.d.)

to be more emphasised than the group membership, because they comprise both the tangible and intangible products made by human beings. These ideas are discussed in more depth below.

Culture can be seen as an iceberg (Weaver, 1993), which consists of both exposed and hidden parts. The tip of the iceberg represents what we can see when experiencing a new culture and the submerged part of the iceberg embodies the invisible cultural aspects. The hidden part lies underwater and accounts for a large proportion of cultural knowledge, so is not obvious or well known to outsiders, and thus creates cross-cultural misunderstandings and communicative obstacles. In this regard, culture is conceptualised as the form of a three-level iceberg (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005) (see Figure 2.1). The three levels of the iceberg are: surface-level culture, immediate-level culture and deep-level culture. The exposed part of this iceberg stands for popular culture, such as traditional costumes, music, literature, food and clothes. The hidden part consists of two layers: the upper layer (immediate-level culture) represents symbols, meanings and norms (such as gestures, behaviours, courtesy) and the lower layer (deep-level culture) involves the traditions, beliefs and values which are shared by the people in a society. The deep-level culture may be the most difficult element for foreign language users, because people of any particular community are familiar with their own cultural backgrounds and might find it hard to adapt themselves in the world of those who come from different cultures.

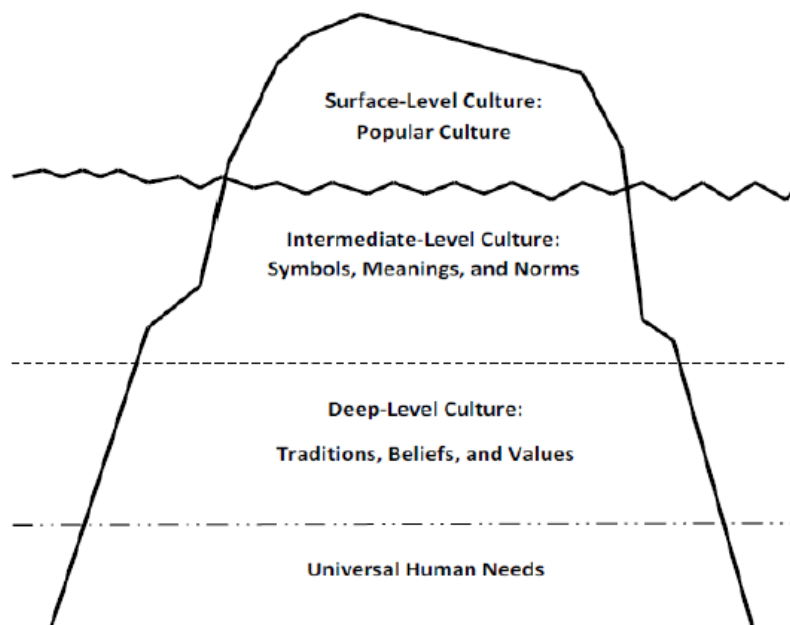


Figure 2.1: Iceberg Model of Culture

Source: Ting-Toomey & Chung (2005, p. 28)

Culture is described in terms of its elements and the community members who share these cultural elements. Based on this principle, I propose a definition of culture as follows:

Culture is the combination of the creations of the members in a group/community as a result of working to meet universal needs. It involves both tangible products, such as infrastructures, arts, music, food and clothes, and intangible products, such as customs, beliefs, values and norms. These products are shared and between the group/community members, and are passed down from one generation to another.

There are three major points expressed in my proposed definition. First, the term culture illustrates the cultural patterns created by human beings and is manifested in the forms of perspectives (what members of a culture think, feel and value), practices (how members communicate and interact with one another) and products (technology, music, art, food, literature, etc., which can be described as the things members of a group create, share and transmit to the next generation). These cultural patterns shape the lives of human beings, ruling them and connecting people closely to one another. Second, culture in my understanding is shaped and shared among a group of people. The cultural patterns are made up of shared and collective items within that community, and they act as the bond that unites the individuals. It means that culture can bring people together or separate them. When people share the same cultural values, they become connected by having a universal way of interacting, and where people differ in their worldviews, they can find it difficult to understand each other. Therefore, culture can be seen as something that implies the group membership. Third, in my definition, I have introduced the process of developing and transmitting from generation to generation as being central to an understanding of culture. Culture does not exist in a static form, but it slowly changes, structures the world, and generates the invisible bonds for individuals in the community. Culture is viewed as an ongoing process without an end. People in the community can learn their culture from each other and transfer culture from one generation to the next, so that a culture can be preserved along with the process of its development.

In summary, culture is shaped, shared and passed from one generation to another by any particular groups of people. Different groups/communities form distinct cultures. The limited understanding of the other's culture may lead to failures in communicative interactions, because the way people behave in one community may be considered unusual in another community. Therefore, it is important to provide people with knowledge of culture from different groups. The following section will discuss definitions of cultural knowledge.

2.2.2 Cultural Knowledge

Cultural knowledge is framed by Western scholars as knowledge about the identity of a particular cultural group, which contains two key elements: factual knowledge about geography, history, literature, etc., and cultural norms, or cultural codes, in language use (Pilhofer, 2011). Similarly, cultural knowledge is defined as “the community’s store of established knowledge” and “an all-encompassing kind of knowledge which, to a certain extent, has determined – facilitated or precluded – all other types of knowledge” (Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 6).

These notions define cultural knowledge as the system of knowledge, which contains information about all aspects of life and are accumulated into a conventional store of facts. People who have access to this knowledge will possess the necessary structured information about the culture of a community and will have a better chance of succeeding in communicating effectively with members of that community. Byram (1989, p. 120) conceptualises cultural knowledge as “structured and systematically presented information about the other culture which provides a necessary framework for understanding it”. In his conceptualisation of cultural knowledge, it is clear that all the elements of culture (see Section 2.2.1 for the elements of culture) need to be transmitted to learners if they are to fully understand their own culture and the culture of others, and consequently communicate effectively. This process of transmitting cultural knowledge is referred to as raising cultural competence, a term I will discuss in depth in the following section.

2.2.3 Cultural Competence

The contemporary world is becoming more connected, with increasing international contact between people from different countries. Each particular community possesses its own cultural store, shaped and shared by members in that community, which differ from those of other communities. People from different countries have limited knowledge about the cultures of other countries, unless they have made a concerted effort to engage in cultural studies. As a result, it is hard for them to conduct successful intercultural communication. The more cultural gaps they have, the more difficulties they confront in their interactions with individuals from other cultural groups. For effective communication to take place, people must become culturally competent in order to understand the cultural values and worldviews of members of different cultural groups (Sue, Zane, Hall, & Berger, 2009, p. 529).

Over the past two decades, the concept of cultural competence has gained currency in many disciplines, such as psychology, health care, nursing and education (Gallegos, Tindall, & Gallegos, 2008). Many scholars in these fields have worked with definitions of cultural

competence and have demonstrated its application in practice. An important initial work on cultural competence is by Cross, Bazron, Dennis, and Isaacs (1989). In this study, cultural competence is defined as follows:

Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (Cross, Bazron, Dennis and Issacs, 1989, p. 12).

Cultural competence is a compound noun constructed by two separated terms: culture and competence (Cross et al., 1989). Culture refers to the integrated cultural elements of the human world, while competence implies the ability to perform a task effectively. Cultural competence describes the system of cultural patterns and the capacity needed for working successfully across cultures in a way that acknowledges and appreciates people from culturally diverse communities. Consequently, becoming culturally competent suggests a process of being aware of one's own worldviews in relation to others' worldviews and being able to generate appropriate responses in cross-cultural communications.

The American National Association of Social Workers in their publication in June 23, 2001, titled *NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice* presented a similar definition:

Cultural competence refers to the process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each (cited in Gallegos et al., 2008, p. 54).

This definition highlights the effectiveness of interactions among people from distinct cultures and demonstrates the importance of acquiring cultural knowledge about individuals and groups of people, as well as the differences in their systems of knowledge. With this kind of knowledge, individuals and groups may find it easier to manage their communications in an appropriate way. This definition describes the process by which individuals and organisations become skilled at valuing cultural differences and make an effort to respond properly to differences within and among themselves. Cultural competence functions as an instrument for individuals and organisations to use in order to produce better cultural exchanges.

In the field of foreign language education, cultural competence has been defined in a similar way:

Cultural competence is the ability to successfully teach students who come from cultures other than your own. It entails developing certain personal and interpersonal awareness and sensitivities, learning specific bodies of cultural knowledge, and mastering a set of skills that, taken together, underlie effective cross-cultural teaching (Diller & Moule, 2005, p. 5).

Cultural competence focuses on developing cultural awareness, cultural sensitivities, cultural knowledge and skills. Cultural awareness refers to the acknowledgement of the cultural factors that affect human communications. Cultural sensitivity means the capacity to change cultural attitudes in a way that is relevant for intercultural interactions. Cultural knowledge relates to the acquisition of information about the cultural background of different cultural groups. These sets of skills focus on the strategies to successfully manage cross-cultural communication by being aware of cultural differences, understanding them and negotiating intercultural encounters.

My focus in this study is on the teaching of culture in the EFL context, with the aim to develop cultural competence for English language learners. Thus, this last definition provides a useful description of cultural competence. EFL teachers work to help learners understand their cultures and cultural groups different from their own. Learners should be made aware of the different worldviews they may encounter in intercultural communication and understand them in order to communicate successfully in situations involving individuals from culturally different contexts. The teaching of culture in order to improve the learners' cultural competence is a key component of EFL instruction.

In summary, cultural competence is an important competence for people living in multicultural communities. The teaching of culture to help achieve cultural competence has been addressed internationally by scholars and researchers. In the next section, I will provide an overview of teaching of culture in the field of L2/FL education.

2.3 An Overview of the Teaching of Culture in L2/FL Education

2.3.1 The Relationship between Language and Culture

Culture is a term used to describe all aspects of human social life. Culture is not static; people from within particular groups can create and re-create their own culture and values. One key element of culture is language, which will be described briefly below.

Language is described by applied linguist Halliday (1973, 1985) as “the systematic resource for expressing meaning in context, not the set of all grammatical sentences” (Halliday, cited in Jordan, 2004, p. 6) which is used by people as a means to “deal with the external world...and...with each other” (ibid., p. 7). From this view, language can be understood as a set of linguistic units – morphemes, words, sentences – that people use as a tool for communication or to express their own feelings, thoughts and attitudes.

Culture and language are heavily entwined. Language is created by human beings, so the development of language parallels the development of human society. Culture represents human society, because it reflects all aspects of human social life, the relationship among community members, and their history and development. From that view, language is seen as a part of culture and people use language to enact and reflect on culture. People from different cultures have their own ways of doing things, so the language they use in communication reflects cultural differences. It is noted that language and culture have an inextricable and interdependent relationship (Choudhury, 2013); they are not separable, but depend on each other and each supports the development of the other (Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

The relationships between language and culture have been noted by numerous anthropologists and linguists in the development of foreign language education (Beishamayum, 2010; Byram, 1989; Choudhury, 2013; Fishman, 1996; Gao, 2006; Kramsch, 1998; Liddicoat et al., 2003; Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Risager, 2005, 2006; Thanasoulas, 2001). The two earliest linguists, named Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, determined the mutual relationship between language and culture through the “Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis”¹¹ (reviewed by Hussein, 2012; Jalalah, 1993). The “Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis” proposed that language controls the thoughts and perceptions of individuals, therefore language conditions their worldviews. People from different cultural groups have different worldviews and it is language that shapes their cultures. Language is a reflection of human beings’ society and the changes within that social context affect the language people use. In other words, language affects culture and, culture affects language. The “Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis” sparked considerable academic debate and discussion, and has contributed to the cultural turn in linguistics in the 1980s (see Section 2.3.3.3 for more detail).

¹¹ Edward Sapir (1884 - 1939) was an American anthropologist and Benjamin Lee Whorf (1892 - 1941) was his student. They are the authors of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity. The hypothesis theorises that languages determine human thoughts and the behaviours of human beings, so the structures of the real world perceived by human beings differ from one language to another.

The links between language and culture consist of: language as a part of culture (language is an important tool to master for anyone who wants to enter into and understand a given culture); language as an index of culture (language reveals the ways of thinking and doing things in the associated culture); and language as symbolic of culture (languages can be used as symbols to defend or foster the cultures associated with them) (summarised from Fishman, 1996, p. 452). In a similar way, their relationship is described, including: language expresses cultural reality (people use language to express facts, ideas or events for sharing information from their own viewpoints); language embodies cultural reality (the way people use language in communication to create meanings that are understandable to others, for example, the way they use verbal or non-verbal languages means that they are expressing themselves); and language symbolises cultural reality (language is a system of signs that is seen as having a cultural value itself) (summarised from Kramsch, 1998, p. 3).

The relationship between language and culture is strong, and “culture is embedded in language as an intangible, all-pervasive and highly variable force” (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1999, p. 116). Figure 2.2 illustrates how language and culture interact with each other in communication at a number of levels. Points of articulation between language and culture are evident by five specific features of communication: culture in context; culture in the general structure of a text; culture within shorter units of texts; culture in the organisation of the units of texts; and culture in linguistic structures/words/syntax/non-verbal. These links can be briefly understood as follows: culture in context consists of knowledge about the world from individuals’ views, so culture contains specific and local meanings. In context, culture has different implications to language. As such, culture is less apparently attached to language. Culture in a text structure means culture can be found in the way spoken or written texts have been shaped. Textual features, like a part of language, differ from country to country and embody different cultural activities. For example, in pragmatic and interactional norms, culture is expressed through the use of speech acts (for example, the ways to say ‘thank you’). Language use determines the value of human communication, but more than that, a cultural framework guides the interpretation of language use. Culture in linguistic structures can be seen in the presence of culture in linguistic forms, words, syntax and non-verbal language.

The terms ‘languaculture’ (Risager, 2005, p. 110) has been widely used to indicate that language and culture are tightly related to each other by an invisible tie and cannot be separated, but are acquired together. Languaculture is a meaningful and relevant concept, because it can sum up language and culture in one word and, further, it explicitly illustrates the tie between them. In language education, it is important to consider which cultural aspects should be

integrated into teaching. The sections below will discuss the five dimensions of culture applicable to foreign language teaching (see page 37) and the history of teaching culture up to the present time (see Section 2.3.3).

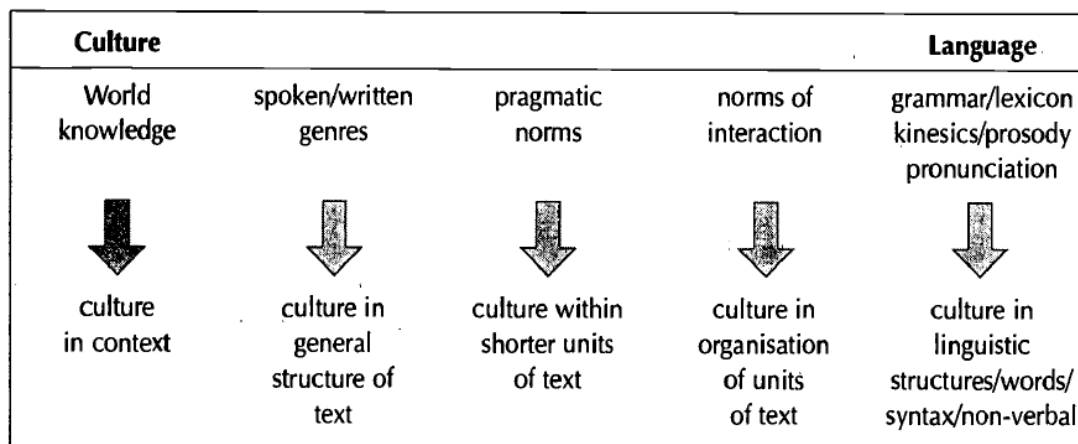


Figure 2.2: Points of Articulation between Culture and Language

Source: Crozet and Liddicoat (1999, p. 116)

2.3.2 The Five Dimensions of Culture in L2/FL Education

Many language researchers, scholars, educators and teachers have conceptualised the teaching and learning of L2/FL as the study of the linguistic and cultural dimensions with the aim to “enable learners to communicate with people coming from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in a multicultural world” (Cankova et al., 2007, p. 5). L2/FL education always includes the presentation of cultural content, giving teachers and students the opportunities to work with national and universal issues:

Language teaching has admittedly always had a cultural dimension in terms of content, either universal/encyclopaedic or national. Reading pieces have been studied that have been written for the occasion, or taken from unadapted literature, and conversational exercises have been constructed on the basis of conversational examples and translated texts – some with a cohesive content, other strongly fragmented in character (Risager, 2007, p. 3).

The history of foreign language instruction is shaped by nations. The teaching and learning of language subjects is nationalised and involves the presentation of culture of the studied language. With respect to English language study, the focus is on the country, the people and the English language (Risager, 2007). A cultural dimension has been acknowledged for a long time, but it was not until the nineteenth century that researchers begin to work on a ‘culture

pedagogy’.¹² There are two separate categories for a pedagogy for teaching culture: a pedagogy drawing on the humanities and pedagogy drawing on the development in linguistics (Risager, 2007). The pedagogy of culture drawing on the humanities serves the purpose of providing cultural knowledge for students about their local cultural and societal conditions through broad topics, such as education, art, religion, economic, technology, etc. The linguistic pedagogy aims to introduce practical knowledge for language learners in order to provide them with the ability to communicate effectively through the target language. As my study aims to help students improve their English competence, I will focus on this linguistic pedagogy.

From cultural topics to cultural dimensions

With reference to Section 2.3.1, teachers address culture in L2/FL classrooms through the presentation of varied topics. These topics must cover different ranges in the societies of the world’s countries. The familiar cultural topics for the language studied, as suggested by Brooks (1986), consist of 62 themes, such as greetings, levels of speech, patterns of politeness, folklore, childhood literature, festivals, holidays, games, music, medicine, sciences, hobbies, learning in school, family meals, flowers and gardens, movies and theatres, careers, etc. Similarly, the National Council for the Social Studies (1994, p. 15) proposes 10 themes, which include “culture; time, continuity, and change; people, places, and environments; individual development and identity; individuals, groups, and institutions; power, authority, and governance; production, distribution, and consumption; science, technology, and society; global connections; and civic ideals and practices”. The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment* recommends seven categories: “everyday living, living conditions, interpersonal relations, values, body language, social conventions and ritual behaviour” (Council of Europe, 2001, pp. 102-103). Teachers may develop students’ understanding of culture in terms of “the fixed facts,...the knowledge of cultural achievements,...[and] the broad range of behaviours performed in the social contexts by human beings” (Chao, 2011, p. 194). In this sense, students are working with two dimensions of culture: ‘culture with a capital C’ and ‘culture with a small c’ (see in Section 2.2.1).

Teachers can plan their lessons by presenting five dimensions of cultures (Moran, 2011) (see Figure 2.3). These five cultural dimensions include products, practices, perspectives, communities and persons. Products are all the artefacts produced by the members of a culture,

¹² Culture pedagogy is the term used by Risager (2007) in his book *Language and Culture Pedagogy: From a National to a Transnational Paradigm* that refers to language teaching with the purpose of dealing with both language and culture. The teaching of language must be taken in relation with the teaching of culture of the target language country.

such as their spoken language, music, written documents, buildings, education, politics and religion. Their practices are comprised of all communication processes, which can be understood as verbal or non-verbal communication, interpretations of time and space, the context of communication in social situations, their appropriateness or inappropriateness, and the taboos. Perspectives are their perceptions, beliefs, values and attitudes. Communities include the social contexts, circumstances and groups in which members carry out cultural practices. Persons are the individual members of a culture who uniquely express themselves (Moran, 2011). These five elements are inseparable and interrelated, because they jointly encompass “people’s shared set of practices, connect to their shared set of products, reflect a set of perspectives of the world, and are set within specific social contexts” (Song, 2013, p. 101).

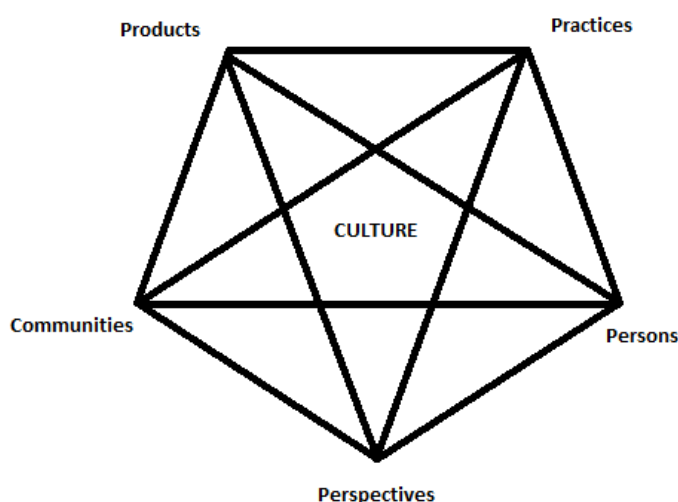


Figure 2.3: The Five Dimensions of Culture

Source: Moran (2011, p. 24)

Cultural dimensions play an important role in the total improvement of students’ language competence. For foreign language learners and future global citizens, learning entails mastering grammatical, communicative and cultural competence in order to be proficient in intercultural communications. The five essential dimensions of culture may assist in reviewing our approaches to L2/FL education.

2.3.3 The History of Teaching Culture in L2/FL Education

The inclusion of culture has been practically integrated into teaching since the beginning of L2/FL education (Purba, 2011).¹³ Numerous researchers have discussed the “importance and possibilities” (Genc & Bada, 2005, p. 73) of integrating cultural elements into L2/FL programs (Purba, 2011; Risager, 2007). In the following section, I will review the history of teaching culture dividing into four stages: the teaching of culture in the 1960s, the teaching of culture in the 1970s, the teaching of culture in the 1980s and the teaching of culture from 1990 up to the present time.

2.3.3.1 The Teaching of Culture in the 1960s

During this period, there were two foci in the teaching of culture: the focus on realia¹⁴ knowledge and the focus on the nations (Risager, 2007). The cultural content in L2/FL textbooks helped to familiarise students with information about polite conversation, tourism, schooling and working, and it provided students with knowledge about the country and people of the studied language. The cultural dimensions were nationally-oriented and focused on the countries where the target language was spoken as the first language (Serrano, 2002). In L2/FL classrooms, students obtained cultural knowledge by working with reading texts covering different aspects of human life. However, problems arose in relation to this pedagogy. Teachers focused on teaching grammar and vocabulary in order to help students understand the content of texts. Through this approach, teachers and students were acquainted with the grammar, syntax and phonetics, but not social and cultural practices:

[T]he actual practice of teaching a second language seems to have changed little over the past half century, and is still dominated by grammar instruction. In other words, culture – taught either in more common culture-specific terms or as more generalisable culture-general (e.g., intercultural communication) skills – does not appear to figure prominently in language instruction (Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, & Colby, 2003, pp. 12-13).

In the 1960s, L2/FL teaching underwent a comprehensive change marked by the emergence of new teaching methodologies, namely Audiolingualism and the Audio-Visual method. These

¹³ The root of language education was assumed to appear as the solution for communication between people coming from different places and having different mother tongues. Starting from the time of classical Greece and Rome, the learning of a new language in addition to one's native language is the question of adapting themselves in a new context. The historical time for language teaching traditions can be dated from the 6th century before Christ (Musumeci, 2006).

¹⁴ Realia are objects from real life used in classroom instruction by educators to improve students' understanding of other cultures and real life situations.

audio-method approaches were viewed as “the first of a wave of new methodologies to reinvigorate the field of English as a second or foreign language” (J. C. Richards, 2008, p. 159) and were “more practical and utilitarian” (Andrawiss, 2004, p. 26) than the Grammar-Translation method. The Audiolingual and the Audio-Visual methods focused on the memorisation of patterns in common everyday dialogues rather than promoting communicative competence. The audiolingual approach emphasised teaching grammatical and phonological structures, while the Audio-Visual approach focused on the teaching of linguistic forms through mechanical repetition, with the aim of helping students practice language structures spontaneously and become familiar with the common situations in the target language. These audio-methods focused on teaching cultural elements to support the mastery of structures and patterns used in communication. Culture was a separate add-on part of language instruction rather than a significant element integrated with the learning of a language. Culture was taught implicitly and was embedded in learning linguistic phrases, for example the teaching of making a request: the teacher may introduce the expression “Give me....” (“Give me the pen”, “Give me your pencil”, “Give me that umbrella”, etc.), then explain the use of this pattern in the appropriate contexts. The expression may have been grammatically correct, but the students could only use it to make a request to a person who was the same age or younger; may be inappropriate to use it when talking with older people. Contrary to the explicit teaching of culture, which can be taught through discussions and activities, the implicit teaching of culture provides students with ways to act in interactive situations and helps students practice, memorise and use the linguistic forms for communication in the target language (Rezaee & Farahian, 2011).

2.3.3.2 The Teaching of Culture in the 1970s

In the 1970s, there was an attempt to make culture visible in a L2/FL education. Cultural issues were embedded into teaching programs (Risager, 2007). Texts were the main sources of culture for teachers and students, which was somewhat similar to the pedagogy in 1960s. There were two kinds of texts used in L2/FL classrooms, literary and authentic texts. While literary texts enabled students to learn “of the civilisation associated with the target language” (Lessard-Clouston, 1997, p. 131), authentic texts “of various kinds, often texts from newspapers and magazines, or texts used in everyday life: menu, signs, tickets, etc.” (Risager, 2007, p. 39) assisted students in understanding practices, beliefs, behaviour, norms and values.

Cultural pedagogy had undergone an important change associated with the emergence of the CLT approach.¹⁵ The goals of L2/FL teaching focused on successful communication and interaction, which required the pedagogical consideration of ways to train learners to “be competent for communication with speakers of different languages and with speakers using lingua franca” (Byram, Holmes, & Savvides, 2013, p. 251). Communicative competence was the main focus of teaching and learning activities, which provided students with the knowledge of both grammatical rules and pragmatic rules. In L2/FL classrooms, activities were designed to “engage students in the pragmatic, authentic, and functional use of language for meaningful purposes” (H. D. Brown, 1994, p. 245). Therefore, the content of teaching content shifted to include cultural dimensions. The cultural content in L2/FL teaching became more visible with a variety of reading from newspapers, magazines, advertisements, stories, etc. The teaching of culture was promoted because:

the role of culture in the ESL/EFL curriculum grew, as [was] shown by the appearance of a great number of teacher-oriented texts, like those of Rivers’ (1981) and Hammerly’s (1982), which included detailed chapters on culture teaching for the ESL/EFL class. Other major works concerning culture learning in ESL/EFL contexts that appeared in this era [were] Robinson’s (1988) and Valdes’ (1986) (Purba, 2011, p. 46).

The integration of culture into L2/FL programs through the CLT approach was felt to be more effective and natural than the grammatically based approach (Canale & Swain, 1980). Language teaching “move[d] away from a sole grammatical interest to a functional and utilitarian objective” (Andrawiss, 2004, p. 27). It focused on providing the learners with the information, practice and experience needed for communication and it “conceive[d] culture as a social phenomenon” (Andrawiss, 2004, p. 27).

The appearance of CLT and the growing application of CLT brought about many important changes in EFL instruction. The concept of communicative competence in the CLT approach entailed the acquisition of the target language (L2) and the target culture (C2), which had to be

¹⁵ The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach was first proposed by Hymes in the 1970s. This approach aims to develop foreign language learners’ communicative competence. CLT is basically focused on acquiring the necessary skills to communicate and participate in teaching techniques such as role play and real situations. With regards to second/foreign language teaching, CLT provides learners with opportunities to use their studied language for communicative purposes. CLT can be understood as the teaching method of which the primary target is to help students become communicatively and interculturally competent people. In the CLT context, classroom activities are designed to “engage students in the pragmatic, authentic, and functional use of language for meaningful purposes” (H. D. Brown, 1994, p. 245); teachers act as the guides and students take the initiative of language learning; language is used “productively and receptively in any unrehearsed situations” (ibid., p. 245).

examined in relation to the learners' first language (L1) and native culture (C1) (Li & Li, 2004). A concern arose regarding the indispensable use of L1 and the familiarity of C1 in the learners' everyday activities, and how that might affect the mastery of L2. Learners thought and spoke in L1 and relied on their C1 context in order to learn how to use L2 and perform well in C2. Therefore, learners needed to "understand L2 communication as a cultural process and to be aware of their own culturally based communicative behaviour and that of others" (Baker, 2012, p. 62).

The incorporation of culture in communicative competence resulted in burgeoning numbers of research projects. These projects proposed four approaches to the study of culture and communicative competence (Collier, 1989). First, the *ethnography of speaking approach* focused on the particular culture or community of each member participating in actual communicative situations (e.g., Geertz, 1973). Second, the *cross-cultural attitude approach* emphasised the cognitive knowledge of critical cultural awareness and the application of such knowledge in particular interactions (e.g., Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Gudykunst, Wiseman & Hammer, 1977). Third, the *behavioural skills approach* stressed the identification of skills which can be adopted successfully and effectively in an intercultural encounter (e.g., Hammer, 1984; Ruben, 1976; Ruben & Kealy, 1979). Fourth, the *cultural identity approach* described the culture differences among interlocutors and their cultural backgrounds to increase the validity of communication (e.g., P. Brown & Levinson, 1978; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Collier & Thomas, 1988).

2.3.3.3 The Teaching of Culture in the 1980s

In the 1980s, culture was widely referred to in L2/FL instruction. International researchers stressed the interrelationship between language and culture. They advocated for the introduction of cultural knowledge in L2/FL teaching (Risager, 2007). A shift occurred from a national-oriented culture to a multicultural orientation (Brooks, 1975; Nostrand, 1974; Risager, 2007; Seelye, 1988). The source of cultural knowledge was taken not only from the country of the target language, but also other countries where the learned language was being used. The topics offered in language courses were varied, such as geography, history, society, literature, art, etc., which mostly:

pertain[ed] to the transmission of factual, cultural information, which consists in statistical information, that is, institutional structures and other aspects of the target civilisation, highbrow information, i.e., immersion in literature and the arts, and lowbrow

information, which may focus on the customs, habits, and folklore of everyday life (Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 3).

The “culture turn” (Byram et al., 2013, p. 251) became more and more evident in language classrooms and quickly gained the interest of researchers, educational managers, teachers and students. Numerous publications suggested teaching approaches: *Culture learning: The fifth dimensions in the language classroom* (Damen, 1987), *Teaching culture* (Seelye, 1988), *Foreign language education and cultural studies* (Byram, 1988) and *Culture studies in foreign language education* (Byram, 1989). Educational managers and policy makers facilitated the integration of culture into language curricula. The cultural practice enhanced the opportunities to deal with authentic and realistic aspects of culture in classrooms. Particularly, thanks to the development of modern technology, the use of advanced devices such as radios, cassettes, televisions and the Internet helped facilitate the presentation of cultural dimensions.

International communications influenced the teaching and learning of L2/FL. The pedagogy of culture was linked to intercultural communication and shifted from culture-specific knowledge towards culture-general knowledge (Zarate, 1986, cited in Risager, 2007). Teachers focused not only on the specific knowledge of the target culture, but also cultivated students’ “general awareness of cultural differences” (Risager, 2007, p. 75). As a consequence, various teaching techniques were developed to allow students to understand the foreign cultures, such as cultoon,¹⁶ culture capsule,¹⁷ culture cluster,¹⁸ and mini-drama.¹⁹

By the mid-1980s, the “various advantages of teaching culture in EFL classes were virtually universally accepted, and culture was widely taught in language classes” (Genc & Bada, 2005, p. 74). In the late 1980s, the “integrated discipline of teaching language and culture” (Byram, 1989, p. 23) was developed. The teaching of L2/FL stressed on the development of students’ language awareness, cultural awareness and cultural experience. Teachers integrated culture

¹⁶ Cultoon is a method of teaching cultural aspects through pictures. The pictures used for teaching and learning convey cultural misunderstandings which should be sorted out by students (Chen, 2003).

¹⁷ Culture capsule is a technique that requires teachers to present the aspects of culture from other countries and to contrast these with students’ local culture.

¹⁸ Culture cluster can be understood as the combination of two (or more) culture capsules. Teachers design different activities for students to practice. The activities present different aspects of culture. For one specific culture topic, teachers propose activities consisting of a set of culture capsules and in turn introduce them to students

¹⁹ Mini-drama is a technique that helps students to become familiar with cultures from different countries through acting as characters of the other culture. Teachers choose the dramas, stories, etc. (and design them when necessary) and guide students to position themselves in the role of drama characters.

with language teaching and helped students experience the interrelationship between language and culture in practice.

2.3.3.4 The Teaching of Culture from 1990 up to the Present Time

From the 1990s onwards, the teaching of culture has gained an important development and reached “its climax...thanks to the efforts of Byram and Kramsch” (Genc & Bada, 2005, p. 74). Byram and Kramsch are two researchers who have produced valuable studies and writings that strengthen the seamless relationship between L2 and C2. While Kramsch (1993) works on language, culture and context from a postmodern perspective, Byram (1997) focuses on the need for ICC, which is still relevant in today language classrooms. Culture is a key element for L2/FL education and teaching culture is given much weight in the total development of students. The aim of language learning is to contribute to “mutual understanding and a sense of global citizenship”, and looks at the intercultural understanding as the key concept reinforcing the mastery of language.

Intercultural education is emphasised in the national curricula and language planning documents of many countries. In England, intercultural awareness is reinforced in order to develop students’ understanding of themselves and their own and different cultures (Department for Education and Employment, 2004). In Australia, the teaching of culture aims to help students develop linguistic and cultural knowledge compatible to acting as intercultural communicators when they are in connection with others (ACARA, 2011). In the USA, the National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (2006) proposes five standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century: Communication, Connection, Cultures, Comparisons and Communities. These standards depict the knowledge, attitudes and skills required for all high school students. Among these standards, the culture goal specifies two: the first is “students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied” and the second requires that “students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied” (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, pp. 50-51). As discussed in Section 2.3.2, three out of five cultural dimensions (practices, products and perspectives) are the main threads that constitute the teaching goals. Students have to gain an understanding of these dimensions and the relationships between them, which means that they learn about cultural artefacts produced by individuals, they become aware of cultural practices in social interactions and they know how to perform appropriately in communication. As a result, teaching culture is given a prominent place in any foreign language pedagogy.

In Vietnam, most of the foreign language universities have introduced cultural information about the studied languages into their general programs (T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007). For example, since 2002 the Department of English at the ULIS-VNU, the University of Foreign Language Studies – Danang University, and the Hue University of Foreign Languages include in their curricula the teaching of Anglophone cultures (Department of English, 2002a-d). Knowledge of major cultural issues, such as history, geography, literature, country, people and arts, are explicitly presented to students through subjects called American culture, British culture, French culture, Japanese culture, Geography and history of Great Britain, Country studies, History of the world civilisations and ASEAN cultures. However, this model of teaching culture results in Vietnamese students' insufficient cultural competence, because it focuses on content rather than the process of developing cultural competence (T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007). Culture is not a part of language teaching process, but a complementary segment in the teaching curriculum. With regards to teaching methods, there are few opportunities for students to practice the social conventions associated with the target culture in Vietnamese basic language classes. The concern here is whether they are given real insights into the target cultures when they are in these language courses. Teachers provide students with knowledge of literature, art, science, etc., which may develop students' cultural understandings superficially, but not to the extent that it would allow students to adequately negotiate the world of the target language. The limitations of practical skills related to the people's ways of life cause the inefficiency in students' language competence.

In summary, the teaching of culture becomes more prominent in L2/FL programs, with the ultimate purpose of providing learners with “the knowledge needed to function in a societal group” (Lázár, 2007, p. 8). More specifically, it offers the cultural understanding necessary for communicating “in the native context as enculturation or in non-native or secondary context as acculturation” (ibid.). Many researchers have been interested in intercultural education and proposed appropriate models for intercultural teaching and learning (Bennett, 1993; Byram, 1997; Risager, 2007; Ruben, 1976). One significant model is Byram's model, known as ICC. The ICC model has become an important reference for scholars in L2/FL education (see Section 2.3.4.3). Byram's model includes five significant factors: attitude, knowledge of oneself and others, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness (Byram, 1997). In the next section, I will provide a detailed discussion of ICC in L2/FL context.

2.3.4 The Evolution of ICC in L2/FL Education

I will briefly define ‘intercultural’, and make a distinction between this term and the term cross-cultural. These two terms are often used in compound nouns in connection with language instruction, at times interchangeably, even though they refer to different things.

2.3.4.1 Intercultural

‘Intercultural’ is a concept that appears to be commonly accepted, understood and used. The term describes an interaction process occurring between people of different cultures. In this process, a person from one specific culture observes the target culture and reflects on his/her own culture and the target culture (Byram, 1989; Kramsch, 1993). People with an understanding of both cultures can mediate the cultural differences by putting themselves in a “third place” (Kramsch, 1993, p. 13). They first recognise the conversation, compare and interpret its meaning, and insert themselves into a context where they can present it in an appropriate way. In L2/FL teaching and learning, the students are expected to be aware of this ‘third place’ and to enhance understanding of different cultures for a successful intercultural communication.

Intercultural is differentiated from cross-cultural. Cross-cultural “implies the meetings of two cultures across the political boundaries of nation states” (Kramsch, 1998, cited in Judit, 2013, p. 26) and refers to the understanding of cultures from two different countries. Intercultural refers to the meeting of two cultures, which may include cultures belonging to people from different (ethnic, gendered, social) groups within the same nation state (Judit, 2013, p. 28). Communication in intercultural conceptualisation can be defined as the communication between people of “different languages and countries where one is a native speaker of the language used; ...different languages and countries where the language used is a lingua franca; ...the same country but different languages, one of whom is a native speaker of the language used” (Byram, 1997, p. 22). Cross-cultural means a comparison and contrast between two cultural groups. The study of a specific concept within one culture and in comparison to another culture is the main goal of cross-cultural pedagogy (Q. Nguyen, 2008). However, the process of becoming communicatively intercultural in an ICC teaching involves how to understand different cultures, making distinctions between them and then negotiating a common place in the intercultural communication.

These two terms are used to describe human communication in which the involved participants belong to different cultural backgrounds. The process of communication from the perspectives of intercultural and cross-cultural pedagogies is illustrated in Table 2.1.

Intercultural communication	Cross-cultural communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants come from different cultural groups and interact with one another - <i>Interaction process:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Understand different cultures + Respect different cultures + Make distinction between different cultures + Building relationship between one another + Being shaped and changed by the experience obtained in interactions and negotiate for themselves a common place in communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants come from different nationalities and interact with each other. - <i>Interaction process:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Understand different cultures + Compare and contrast different cultures + No individual transformation

Table 2.1: Intercultural Communication versus Cross-cultural Communication

Cross-cultural communication refers only to the interaction among individuals from different nationalities, whereas intercultural communication involves the participation of individuals from different group identities. In this regard, the notion of intercultural communication is captured as inter-ethnic or inter-regional (and so on) communication, depending on which group an individual belongs to. Cross-cultural implies the comparison of phenomenon across cultures in order to understand the dissimilarities and similarities between cultures. Therefore, cross-cultural communication requires an understanding of the involved individuals' cultures. Individuals gain the cultural knowledge of another participant from an outsider's point of view. Therefore, the process of cross-cultural interaction is limited to the understanding of different cultures and the ability to make distinctions between them.

Intercultural communication expands the scope of interaction to the capacity to understand different cultures, compare and contrast cultures, and negotiate the cultural differences in order to find a common place in communication. The involved participants are required to undergo the process of being shaped and changed by the experience obtained in their interactions. In this sense, intercultural communication can be understood as the process of creating shared meanings by people from different cultural groups.

The scope of intercultural communication is broader than that of cross-cultural communication. Further, the consequences of the former interaction are more applicable than the latter, because

it seeks both an understanding and appropriate negotiation from the involved individuals. My choice of using the term intercultural to address communication in the context of EFL teaching is motivated by three reasons. First, in relation to how the terms are defined, intercultural communication refers to something broader than cross-cultural communication. Second, in the globalised community there is an ever increasing number of intercultural interactions every day, because people from different places are more likely to come into contact with others. Third, it is the term broadly used by scholars in connection with L2/FL teaching and learning. In Byram's (1997) ideology, the goals of L2/FL instruction are to assist students to communicate with people from diverse cultures and the ultimate target is to train them to become intercultural speakers instead of native-like speakers. Kramsch (1993) also supports this view by linking language and culture in the process of L2/FL teaching and learning so as to provide students with linguistic competence and cultural competence for successful communications with people coming from different nations. In a similar vein, scholars such as Deardorff (2009), Liddicoat et al. (2003) and Sercu et al. (2005) reinforce the importance of intercultural communication, especially in the context of L2/FL classrooms. Consequently, preparing language students to function as ISs is a desired goal of L2/FL education in the contemporary global community.

The increase of international contacts in the contemporary world requires the need of training students to become communicatively and interculturally competent people. In the next section, I will focus on defining the notion of ICC.

2.3.4.2 Intercultural Communicative Competence

The term ICC has been examined and defined in a variety ways by a number of different researchers (Byram, 1997; Hyde, 1998; Sercu, 2004; Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2007). It was initially conceptualised in terms of a specific sample as cross-cultural adaptation, intercultural understanding or satisfaction with overseas experience in the early history of ICC exploration. During the past three decades, it was commonly viewed as an integrated mix of "knowledge, motivation and skills to interact effectively and appropriately with members of different cultures" (Wiseman, 2003, p. 192). As noted on page 43, the most well-developed definition of ICC is that of Byram (1997, p. 7), which is the "ability to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries". This definition implies that the involved individuals possess the ability to negotiate and mediate between multiple identities and cultures in any situations. The challenging features for intercultural interaction can be seen as the differences of interlocutors' cultural backgrounds. The process of becoming interculturally and communicatively competent is complicated, because ICC requires five significant factors: attitude, knowledge of oneself and others, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery

and interaction, and critical cultural awareness (Byram, 1997, p. 91). This requirement lays out the philosophical base for a L2/FL teaching branch that it is necessary and feasible to integrate intercultural communication into curriculum plans to develop students' ICC.

ICC was firstly introduced by Baxter in early 1983 and until the late 1990s it was Byram who "ha[d] most extensively developed the concept and the applications of ICC" (Aguilar, 2010, p. 89). The next section presents Byram's model of ICC in L2/FL education. I employ this framework to address the teaching of culture in Vietnamese EFL classes.

2.3.4.3 The Model of ICC in L2/FL Education

Byram's model of ICC has become one of the most widely cited models used by researchers in foreign language education. His model is the most developed and practice-oriented, which "has had an impact on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*,²⁰ ... generally regarded as the guiding concept for the overall aim of FL education" (Larzén-Östermark, 2008, p. 528). His definition of ICC is the most exhaustive and influential among many definitions drawn by researchers, because it sets clear objectives for teachers and students to follow in the process of developing language proficiency (Dervin, 2010). Based on his experience as a member of the Council of Europe, Byram proposed a multidimensional model of intercultural competence in 1997 (see Figure 2.4). For more than 10 years, he worked on an updated model and finally his new model was published in 2009 (see Figure 2.5). Byram presented the model of ICC in relation to four language competences: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and intercultural competence. Intercultural competence consists of five dimensions, as listed in his first model, in which critical cultural awareness is now at the very centre of the updated ICC model.

Byram depicts these five factors as follows (summarised in Byram, 1997):

Attitude refers to the ability to relativise one's self and to value others, and includes "curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own" (p. 91).

²⁰ *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFRL) is a guideline giving a detailed description of foreign language learners' levels by skill (reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing and speaking) across Europe and, increasingly, in other countries. It was developed by the Council of Europe and consists of six levels of competency. It became a useful reference document for school directors, syllabus designers and teachers in developing learning materials, teaching and assessing learners' language proficiency.

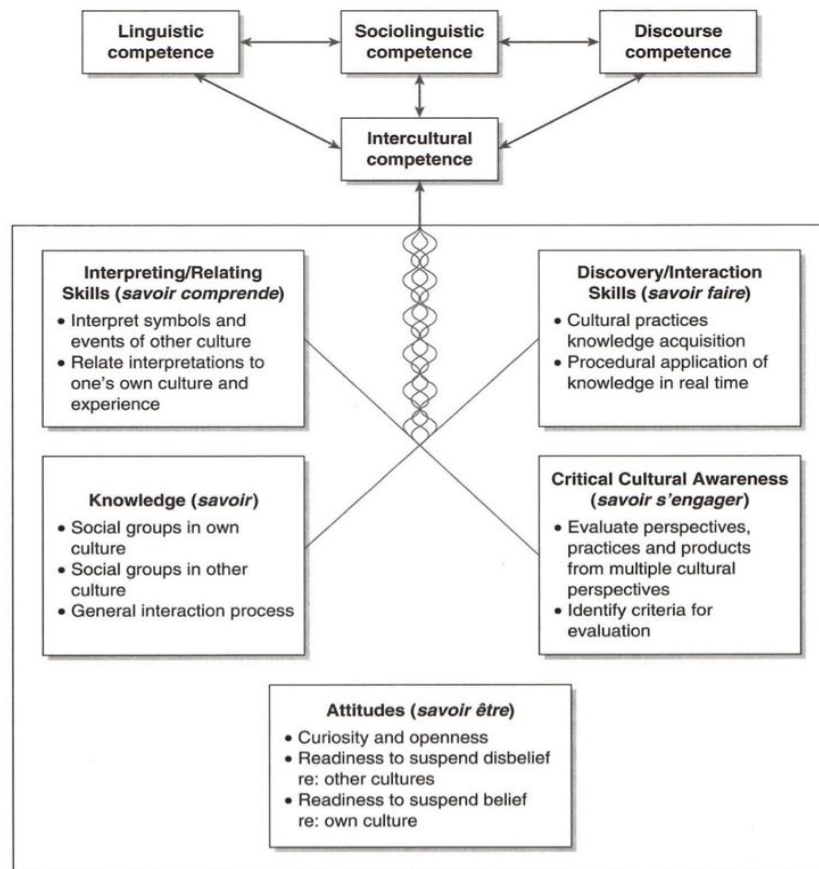


Figure 2.4: Byram's Model of ICC (Byram, 1997)

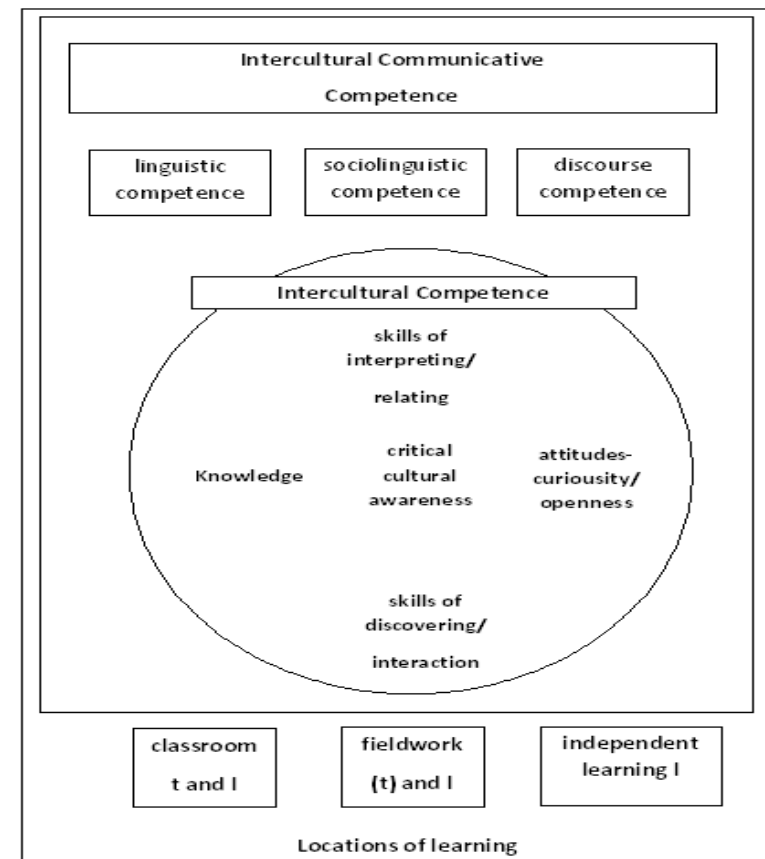


Figure 2.5: Byram's Model of ICC (Byram, 2009)

Knowledge of one's self and others means knowledge of the rules for individual and social interaction and consists of knowing social groups and their practices, both in one's own culture and in the other culture.

Skills of interpreting and relating, the first skill set, describes an individual's ability to interpret, explain and relate events and documents from another culture to one's own culture.

Skills of discovery and interaction, the second skill set, allows the individual to acquire "new knowledge of culture and cultural practices", including the ability to use existing knowledge, attitudes and skills in cross-cultural interactions (ibid., p. 98).

Critical cultural awareness describes the ability to use perspectives, practices and products in one's own culture and in other cultures to make evaluations.

The updated model is represented as a "list model" (Byram, 2009, p. 325) and contains components required for students to develop and employ in multicultural communications. Among four language competences, intercultural competence is prescribed in some detail with five factors as five objectives that need to be achieved in language teaching and learning. Critical cultural awareness is positioned in the centre of the model, because it "embodies the educational dimension of language teaching" (Byram, 2012, p. 9). Byram assumed that when foreign language learners learn a language, they can be taught the sets of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to make up linguistic and intercultural competence. ICC pedagogy can be done without the addition of critical cultural awareness, however it may not achieve its fully potential (Byram, 2012). In this regard, critical cultural awareness relates to the students' self-development, through which they can improve themselves. Teachers help students raise their cultural awareness by involving students in culture-based activities. Students take the opportunities to discover, interpret and explain cultural events/practices within its context. Students' acquisition of critical cultural awareness can be achieved with or without the intervention of teachers. If they do not possess critical awareness, they may not know how to implement what they have learned in practice or know how to perform appropriately when communicating. In other words, if students possess this awareness, they can acknowledge diverse situations and endeavour to manage them in flexible and effective ways.

Three locations of learning were added in the latest ICC model: classroom, fieldwork and independent learning settings. Language teachers and students could choose compatible contexts to fully develop the studied language linguistically and culturally. The inclusion of learning locations was advantageous to students' language development, because it made

possible the best learning environment where teachers could facilitate their students' learning and students could take initiative in their study.

Byram's ICC model is valuable in representing the components of ICC as well as the objectives for language teaching and learning. The list of knowledge, skills, attitude and awareness is a reference for teachers in addressing ICC in their teaching lessons to reach the aim of training students to become intercultural speakers. Consequently, ICC pedagogies have been developed to support foreign language teachers and students in achieving their educational objectives. The next section will introduce the ICC pedagogy and explain the importance for ESL/EFL education.

2.3.5 The Relevance of an ICC Pedagogy in ESL/EFL Education

ICC has been increasingly necessary in our multicultural and globalised world (Houghton, 2009). The ICC pedagogy has become relevant in ESL/EFL for the following reasons.

First, English is considered as the lingua franca in the contemporary world. The number of people worldwide using English is increasing in terms of both native speakers and non-native English speakers. People share a common 'global village' where they can have access to other cultures through mass-media and face-to-face interactions (Pauwels, 1994). As a result, ESL/EFL education can be seen as the global education, which is supposed to provide students with not only the basic skills, but also a variety of information about the world. ICC teaching and learning goals can be realised in every language classroom, focusing on developing students' linguistic and intercultural competences. These new goals establish new pedagogies for teachers to provide students with necessary and relevant understanding, skills and attitudes for their future independent lives in a globally multicultural society. ICC plays a pivotal role in ESL/EFL education. Teachers should be able to employ ICC to develop students' language proficiency in practical ways (Houghton, 2009).

Second, the development of critical cultural awareness is an important goal in ESL/EFL education. In the new millennium, where English education is increasingly prioritised, cultural awareness as "developing an understanding of and comparisons between a C1 and a C2 or a number of C2s, for example, the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia" (Baker, 2012, p. 65) may be replaced by an intercultural awareness, which provides learners with the "knowledge of different cultural contexts of communication" (ibid.) in the process of interacting across diverse cultures. While cultural awareness only provides the knowledge relating to the cultural aspects of the studied language, intercultural awareness seems to be more relevant, because it offers "a conscious understanding of the role culturally based forms, practices, and

frames of understanding can have in intercultural communication, and an ability to put these conceptions into practice in a flexible and context specific manner in real time communication” (Baker, 2012, p. 66). Therefore, the shift from cultural awareness to intercultural awareness is of direct relevance for ESL/EFL teachers and learners. In the ESL/EFL classroom context, the application of Byram’s ICC framework may provide learners not only with critical knowledge but also critical cultural awareness. In summary, ICC pedagogies are key to ensuring that the ultimate goal of ESL/EFL education to prepare learners to become intercultural English speakers.

Third, in recent times there have been efforts to incorporate culture into L2/FL curricula. The updated programs for EFL instruction do not deviate from this trend, which aims at developing ICC for language learners. In any EFL classroom, it depends on the teachers – who work directly with students – to choose the kinds of teaching approaches that can ultimately improve their students’ English proficiency. If teachers follow with the “grammar-translation method” (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004, p. 151), students may get bored and may not find their English communication skills improving. The grammar-translation method aims at developing a mastery of grammatical structures, syntactic rules and their usages for second language learners, which is not conducive to developing the communicative competence of learners. Moreover, the grammar-translation method “has neglected the cultural, sociolinguistic and pragmatic features of the learned language. Consequently, it has only produced professional mute grammarians” (Raouf, 2010, p. 15). If teachers focus solely on developing the students’ linguistic competence through improving their four basic skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, students might become confident in using English as a mean of communication but face difficulties in relation to cultural aspects of English interactions.

In the same way, if teachers are influenced by the CLT approach, their task of developing “linguistic knowledge and skills, ultimately to the point where they will acquire native-speaker competence” (Corbett, 2003, p. 1) will become more complicated and difficult because students are expected to master English to the same extent as native speakers do and perform as native speakers (Andreou & Galantomos, 2009; Li & Li, 2004).²¹ In ESL/EFL education, the term

²¹ The notion of native speaker in the field of foreign/second language education was generated from the Chomskyan concept of the idealized native speaker-hearer. Chomsky defined native speakers as those who are “capable of giving valid judgements on their language and of identifying ill-formed grammatical expressions in their languages although they may not be able to explain exactly why they are ill-formed” (Chomsky, 1965, cited in Saniei, 2011). A native speaker has the authority on the language because she/he possesses the ideal linguistic competence of her/his own language. Therefore, the goal of foreign/second language education is to provide language learners with native-like competence. Different points of view in relation to native speaker proficiency have been developed, however the challenge of striving to be like native speakers is considered significant. The

‘native speaker’ is debatable because English is the first language of people from many countries all over the world. It is thus difficult to determine who is a ‘typical’ native speaker and what the criteria are to evaluate the level of native-like competence. The model of the native speaker is not compatible and ideal for ESL/EFL education. The notion of native speaker can be improved by other concepts, such as the intercultural speaker (Aguilar, 2008; Byram, 1997), the intercultural mediator (Alred & Byram, 2002), the multi-competent language user (Cook, 1995) and the ideal language user (Saniei, 2011). These later concepts are an attempt to integrate culture into communicative language classrooms. While the grammar-translation and CLT approaches tend to undervalue cultural perspectives, an intercultural approach draws attention to the importance of culture in language education. Consequently, teachers who use ICC pedagogies realise that their tasks is to provide students with English linguistic knowledge, cultural and general knowledge, and the strategies to communicate interculturally. In English classrooms where ‘culture’ is taken into consideration, the scope of teaching will be broadened from a focus on linguistic competence in order to help learners acquire cultural competence necessary for intercultural communication. To sum up, the grammar-translation and CLT approaches have dominated ESL/EFL education for the past few decades. They can no longer satisfy the demands of multiculturalism and globalisation in the contemporary world. It is now the time to shift to the development of ICC.

ESL/EFL education is changing rapidly in the era of globalisation where ICC pedagogies dominate (Houghton, 2009). Numerous studies have asserted the integral role of ICC in foreign language teaching and intercultural communication (Arasaratnam & Doerfel, 2005; Atay, Kurt, Camlibel, Ersin, & Kaslioglu, 2009; Collier, 1989; Houghton, 2009; Wiseman, 2003). ICC is one of the most demanding goals in ESL/EFL instruction (Sercu et al., 2004). The Council of Europe proposed this competence as a new requirement, which students should be able to achieve and teachers should promote in their students (cited in Sercu et al., 2004). In the next section, I will focus on the integration of culture into EFL teaching in order to understand how educational managers, policy makers, researchers and teachers develop students’ ICC. I will firstly focus on the role of culture in EFL education and then develop the presentation of cultural aspects in EFL curriculum/teaching materials. Finally, the methodology employed by EFL teachers for the teaching of culture will be discussed.

native speaker model should be viewed as one of the criteria to evaluate learners in their learning but not for the final assessment of achievement (Cook, 1999).

2.4 The Integration of Culture in EFL Education

2.4.1 The Role of Culture in EFL Teaching and Learning

Culture plays a very important role in EFL instruction, because its incorporation brings advantages to students' acquisition of language competence (Byram, 1989; Cortés, 2007; Deneme, Ada, & Uzun, 2011; Genc & Bada, 2005; Sercu, 2006; Thanasoulas, 2001). As a result, EFL teaching and learning can achieve its goals of assisting students to converse with people in diverse cultural situations.

EFL educational scholars advise that culture should be integrated into language classrooms and set the objectives for the teaching of culture (Seelye, 1993; Thanasoulas, 2001). Three reasons for the necessity of the teaching of culture are: the process of foreign language learning in general comprises the learning of cultural knowledge and skills required to be a competent speaker of the studied language, the inclusion of culture helps students avoid stereotyping and the teaching of culture in language lessons enables students to improve their learning (Thanasoulas, 2001). The main aim of teaching culture is to help students enhance their intercultural communication. Through the introduction of culture, teachers can develop in students the “cultural understanding, attitudes, and performance skills needed to function appropriately within a segment of another society and to communicate with people socialised in that culture” (Seelye, 1993, p. 29). Four specific goals are proposed in order to assist students to gain the ability for intercultural communication: the interest in another culture; the understanding of the cultural norms, traditions, attitudes, beliefs, etc. of that culture; the evaluation of that culture; and the strategic skills necessary for interactions in that cultural setting (Seelye, 1993).

Culture is one of the main content areas needed in EFL programs (Beishamayum, 2010; Genc & Bada, 2005). Aside from linguistic content for the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and four language skills, cultural content is defined as a crucial area that teachers should introduce to students in order to develop their ICC. In EFL instruction, culture has “a rightful place as part of language teaching, not just as an adjunct to language learning, but an integral component” (Byram, 1989, p. 3). The teaching of culture has become an ongoing concern for scholars and teachers in order to achieve the goal of EFL education, especially in contemporary multicultural societies. EFL teachers need to carry out cultural teaching practices intentionally in language classes and familiarise students with the world of foreigners and their cultural viewpoints.

The relevance of teaching culture with language is based on the belief that language and culture are interconnected. The teaching of culture benefits EFL students and makes learning much

more significant. It stimulates students' curiosity about the differences and similarities of another culture to their own, as well as increases students' interests in the target countries, their people and their cultures (Kitao, 1991; Thanasoulas, 2001).

As my study aims to investigate cultural content embedded in EFL textbooks, the following section will review the literature on the presentation of culture in official curricula/teaching materials.

2.4.2 The Presentation of Culture in EFL Curriculum/Teaching Materials

2.4.2.1 Cultural Representation in EFL Curriculum

Curriculum may be defined as “an explicit, conscious, formally planned course with specific objectives which includes learners’ development of instructional knowledge and skills” (J. F. K. Lee, 2014, p. 40). In this regard, an EFL curriculum describes the teaching goals, content and assessment. The incorporation of culture in English curricula has progressed rapidly in recent years. The goals of teaching culture are well defined in many countries and they are documented in EFL policies and curricula. The following discussion introduces the EFL curricula of some countries such as Spain, China, and Vietnam in order to understand whether culture is integrated in EFL, and whether there are differences between EFL curricula of these countries in terms of cultural teaching goals.

2.4.2.1.1 Cultural representation in Spanish EFL Curriculum:

Spain values foreign language education. Its national EFL curriculum objectives specify the development of linguistic and sociocultural skills in order to help them have strategies for communicating with people from other linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Castro, Sercu, & Garcí’a, 2004). This curriculum consists of three domains, the cognitive domain (knowledge about the country of the spoken language regarding its history, geography, politics and economics, etc.), the behavioural domain (the ability to discover, negotiate and adapt to different intercultural contexts) and the attitudinal domain (the ability to manage emotional reactions and respect members from other cultures for effective communications). Further, Spanish EFL objectives focus on the development of students’ “positive attitudes towards the foreign language and culture together with their acquisition of oral comprehension, using the target language as the basis for communication” (Ping, Nicolás, & Coyle, 2013, p. 118). Culture is a crucial aspect of Spanish EFL education. It aims to equip students with knowledge, attitude and skills to become socio-culturally competent language users.

2.4.2.1.2 Cultural representation in Chinese EFL Curriculum

In China, the 2001 English curriculum promotes cultural competence an integral aspect of EFL education (Han, 2010). The teaching and learning of cultural information alongside linguistic knowledge marks a new orientation towards language education in China. In line with this change, this EFL curriculum offers objectives for language learning focusing on five domains: language skills, language knowledge, emotion and attitude, learning strategies and cultural awareness (Ma, 2012). The framework provides students with the ability to use the studied language and the experience in the real world. In Chinese EFL lessons, cultural information is taught and learned along with the linguistic content for the acquisition of intercultural knowledge.

2.4.2.1.3 Cultural representation in Vietnamese EFL Curriculum

In Vietnam, the focus on the cultural backgrounds of English and non-English speaking countries is emphasised. EFL teaching must provide students with knowledge of foreign countries, with the aim to prepare students for the use of English in intercultural communications, as well as to promote a sense of global civic responsibility in students (MOET, 2008, 2012). From primary to tertiary education, the importance of intercultural understanding has been acknowledged in response to the development of foreign language teaching in a social-cultural context (Crozet, Liddicoat, & Bianco, 1999; Kramsch, 1993), and the orientation for Vietnamese EFL instruction with a focus on the international communication. In Decision No 1400/QĐ-TTg approved by the Prime Minister on 30 September, 2008, on the teaching and learning of foreign languages in the national formal educational system in the period of 2008 – 2020, the common goal for EFL education is articulated as follows:

[B]y 2020, most young Vietnamese graduates of professional secondary schools, colleges and universities will have a good command of a foreign language which enables them to independently and confidently communicate, study and work in a multilingual and multicultural environment of integration; to turn foreign languages into a strength of the Vietnamese people to serve national industrialization and modernization (Prime Minister, 2008c, p. 1) .

Curriculum planning for Vietnamese primary EFL instruction focuses on the purposes of providing students with “a fundamental knowledge of English to gain primary understanding of the country, people, and culture of some English speaking countries” (T. M. H. Nguyen & Q. T. Nguyen, 2007, p. 165), while that for secondary education offers the requirement for “understanding and respecting the diverse cultures along with reflecting the value of

Vietnamese culture through the use of English” as one among eight specific goals (MOET, 2012, p. 6). The content of EFL teaching and learning includes four themes, life, society, environment and the future, which are repeated at each stage and depict the cultural characteristics of Vietnam and other countries in Asia. With regards to the tertiary level, the newly documented EFL curriculum requires students to achieve the applicable level among six CEFR levels.²² Some of the underlying principles for designing the English curriculum consist of promoting the integration of all aspects of communicative competence and enabling the students to use English fluently and accurately on all learning levels (Prime Minister, 2008b). This orientation informs the policy goal of developing communicative skills for Vietnamese students. As demonstrated in Section 1.5, EFL teaching and learning is promoted along Vietnamese educational system. English proficiency enables those who wish to learn abroad or work and live in an English-speaking environment in Vietnam or in other countries (Duong, 2011; V. V. Hoang, 2010). As a result, the curriculum makes a strong case for English learning and intercultural learning.

Culture is conceptualised as a significant component in EFL curricula, though to what extent and in what ways it is incorporated varies from context to context. The teaching and learning of culture have become a key notion within EFL education in many countries (Ho, 2009). The introduction of culture in EFL curricula should provide learners with the opportunities to acquire “the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures” (Paige et al., 2003, p. 177). The culture-specific domain refers to knowledge and skills appropriate for a given target culture, while culture-general knowledge relates to those that are more generalisable across cultures. EFL teaching and learning from an ICC approach requires educational authorities and policy makers to acknowledge the presentation of culture in designing curriculum. Similarly, it asks for textbook authors to include cultural content among linguistic content in writing EFL textbooks. The next section will discuss the representation of culture in EFL textbooks.

2.4.2.2 Cultural Representation in EFL Textbooks

The cultural content in EFL materials is “the hidden curriculum” (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 90), which forms part of the EFL program. The hidden curriculum is “unstated and undisclosed” (Wala, 2013, p. 123) and it “refers to the unintended or implicit values cultivated in the

²² The levels of English proficiency used in Vietnam consist of six categories A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. The Vietnamese evaluation of English mastery is developed based on CEFR.

practices exercised in the classroom and educational institutions through the application of the curriculum” (Konieczka, 2013, p. 250). The purpose of such a hidden curriculum for an EFL program is to promote in students a particular view of the world and a cultural awareness. Embedded in the EFL school curriculum, the hidden curriculum is unwritten and may be perceived differently by teachers and students. There are different locations of the hidden curriculum: the information selected for inclusion in textbooks, the register of teachers discourse, the selection of classroom activities and classroom structure. The significance of the implicit curriculum may not be realised by students and is unlikely to be reviewed by EFL teachers. (J. F. K. Lee, 2014). Within the scope of this study, my interest is on the implicit assumption underlying EFL teaching materials.

Culture represented in EFL instructional materials, particularly textbooks, can be described as falling into four categories: aesthetic, sociological, semantic and pragmatic (Abdullah & Chandran, 2009; Sárdi, 2002). Culture in the aesthetic sense comprises “the media, the cinema, music” (Abdullah & Chandran, 2009, p. 11); culture in the sociological sense means “the way of life” (Sárdi, 2002, p. 101); culture in the pragmatic sense refers to “social skills...to make possible communication” (ibid., p. 101); and culture in the semantic sense involves “the conceptual system embodied in the language” (Abdullah & Chandran, 2009, p. 11).

EFL textbooks are seen as crucial materials, which have such roles as “a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer, an authority, a de-skinner and an ideology” (Cortazzi & Zin, 1999, p. 201). Textbooks present the subject matter defined by the policy and curriculum. They provide much of the content for EFL courses (Tomlinson, 1998). For this reason, many researchers have argued that EFL textbooks should cover all aspects of language, from linguistic to culture (Rajabi & Ketabi, 2012; Ramirez & Hall, 1990). With regards to these cultural elements, textbooks appear to vary their contents from country to country (Aliakbari, 2004). EFL textbooks provide cultural information from three sources: source culture, target culture and international target culture (Cortazzi & Zin, 1999).²³ Textbooks employ source culture to cultivate learners’ knowledge of their own identity, but not the cultural backgrounds of any other countries. Target culture focuses on native English-speaking countries (e.g., England, the USA, Canada, Australia) in order to provide EFL students with similar content. Others reference various English-speaking and non-English-speaking cultures.

²³ The presentation of cultural knowledge in English teaching materials include three sources: source culture (learner’s own culture); target culture (culture of the countries where English is spoken as first language); international target culture (variety of cultures from English and non-English speaking countries) (Liu & Laohawiriyonon, 2013; Mahmood, Asghar, & Hussain, 2012; Munandar & Ulwiyah, 2012).

Numerous EFL textbooks include English-speaking cultures, while others focus on non-English speaking cultures (Aliakbari, 2004). For example, the textbooks from China, Venezuela, Turkey and Saudi Arabia focus on non-English speaking cultures and those from the USA (e.g., *Success-Communicating in English*) and England (e.g., *English Occasions*, *The Language of Business*) usually focus on the Anglophone cultures. Target culture is integrated by native English textbook writers, because it is easy for them to present their own culture's values (Alptekin, 1993). Source culture is introduced in national EFL teaching materials in particular countries. Intercultural target cultures seem to be more appropriate for global classrooms and bring students to international English environments (McKay, 2000). The inclusion of cultural elements differs in EFL textbooks:

Textbooks can vary in terms of the amount and nature of the culture they are loaded. Some may highlight the source culture more in comparison with the target or other cultures while a group of them are developed to feed the content with a balance of culture presentation of the source and target cultures as well as elements originated in other cultures (Aliakbari & Jamalvandi, 2012, p. 91).

Internationally distributed EFL textbooks mostly represent the Anglophone cultures rather than those from non English-speaking countries. Locally produced EFL textbooks focus on the source culture and lack of target cultural knowledge (Shin, Eslami, & Chen, 2011). The alternative foci of these three types of textbooks shape students' acculturation and influence their development of ICC. It is important to note that many EFL textbooks merely present models of linguistic knowledge (Aliakbari, 2004). Most EFL textbooks used in Japanese, Chinese and Korean contexts focus solely on linguistic aspects and aim to develop only four skills among students, including reading, writing, listening and speaking (Aliakbari, 2004; Thanasoulas, 2001).

Culture in EFL textbooks can be classified into two groups: big C culture (the visible aspects of cultural creations) and little c culture (an invisible and deeper sense of the target culture) (Elham, 2013; Liu & Laohawiriyanon, 2013; Thanasoulas, 2001). Big C concerns geography, architecture, classical music, literature and history. Little c relates to information about the way people live, for example their opinions, gestures, food, hobbies and popular issues. EFL textbooks should include both types of culture in order to provide students with a general knowledge of target culture, learner's culture or intercultural target culture (Hamiloğlu & Mendi, 2010; Liu & Laohawiriyanon, 2013).

EFL textbooks may be inadequate for the inclusion of big C and little c cultural knowledge (Alptekin, 1993; Cakir, 2010; Derin, Zeynep, Pinar, Özlem, & Gökçe, 2009; Hurst, 2007; Thanasoulas, 2001). Textbooks tend to avoid including culturally specific expressions which do not meet the needs and interests of EFL students and teachers (Alptekin, 1993). Further, the representation of culture mainly consists of stereotypes (Alptekin, 1993; Rashidi & Najafi, 2010). Some EFL textbooks written by English-speaking writers focus only on the target culture and much of the instructional materials have a generally stereotypical representation of that culture (Alptekin, 1993; Hamdan, 2010; Rashidi & Najafi, 2010; Sherman, 2010). For example, numerous stereotypical structures about gender, social class, religion or general social concerns exist in British EFL materials (Alptekin, 1993) and in EFL textbooks for Pakistani students (Mahmood, Asghar, & Hussain, 2012). Females are presented in the role of housewives while males act as breadwinners who do many kinds of jobs to support their families. The upper class is predominantly mentioned, compared with the middle and working classes. Christianity is the main religion presented in these textbooks. Gender bias is also found in global EFL textbooks and local materials used in Jordan and Iran (Hamdan, 2010; Rashidi & Najafi, 2010; Sherman, 2010). Ethnic diversity is examined in Japanese EFL textbooks (Otlowski, 2003).

2.4.2.3 Checklist for Cultural Content in Textbooks

Textbooks play a significant role in ESL/EFL teaching and learning, because they provide teachers and students with “the foundation for the content of lessons, the balance of the skills taught, as well as the kinds of language practice” (Cheng, Hung, & Chieh, 2011, p. 94). Teachers use textbooks to facilitate language teaching and to assist students to achieve intercultural competence. From an ICC perspective, cultural values must be included in EFL textbooks along with the linguistic forms. Many researchers have offered models for determining the cultural content within textbooks (Byram, 1993a, Cortazzi & Zin, 1999; Cunningsworth, 1995). In this study, I aim to analyse the cultural dimensions of Vietnamese EFL textbooks and investigate which forms of culture as well as how much cultural knowledge is infused by teachers in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes; therefore, developing relevant criteria for evaluating textbook cultural content is important. I chose Byram’s checklist of cultural content in textbooks as the framework for my research, largely because his model of the ICC approach is one of the most widely-cited and influential in the field, though my major reasons will be elaborated on below (Larzén-Östermark, 2008; Lundgren, 2009). Byram explores cultural content through eight areas:

- *social identity and social groups*: groups within the nation-state which are the basis for other than national identity, including social class, regional identity, ethnic minority, and

which demonstrate the complexity of individuals' social identities and of a national society

- *social interaction*: conventions of behaviour in social interaction at differing levels of formality, as outsiders and insiders within social groups
- *belief and behaviour*: routine and taken-for-granted actions within a social group – national or sub-national – and the moral and religious beliefs which are embodied within them; second, routines of behaviour taken from daily life which are not seen as significant markers of the identity of the group
- *social and political institutions*: institutions of the state which characterise the state and its citizens and which constitute a framework for ordinary, routine life within the nation and sub-national groups; provision for health care, for law and order, for social security, for local government, etc.
- *socialisation and life-cycle*: institutions of socialisation – families, schools, employment – and the ceremonies which mark passage through stages of social life; presentation of divergent practices in different social groups, as well as national auto-stereotypes of expectations and interpretations
- *national history*: periods and events, historical and contemporary in the constitution of the nation and its identity – both actually significant and, not necessarily identical, perceived as such by its members
- *national geography*: geographical factors within the national boundaries which are significant in members' perceptions of their country; other factors which are information (known but not significant to members) essential to outsiders in intercultural communication
- *stereotypes and national identity*: for example, German and English notions of what is “typically” German and English national identity; the origins of these notions – historical and contemporary – and comparisons among them; symbols of national stereotypes and their meanings, e.g., famous people or monuments and people (Byram, 1993a, pp. 34-35)

There are three reasons for my selection of Byram's checklist as follows:

First, these criteria for textbook evaluation include almost all aspects of culture. The five dimensions of culture (as demonstrated in Section 2.3.2) consisting of Products, Practices, Perspectives, Communities and Persons can be found in Byram's checklist under the names of equivalent criteria: the first dimension – Products – is allied to two criteria named “Social and political institutions” and “National history”; the second dimension, Practices, is similar to “Social interactions”; Perspectives is related to “Belief and behaviour”; Communities aligns

with ‘Social interaction’; and Persons can be understood as the eighth criterion, “Stereotype and national identity”. These criteria for textbook evaluation highlight the cultural content analysis; therefore they are used as the framework for my study.

Second, Byram’s checklist provides detailed criteria for textbook evaluation, focusing on cultural content. He specifies eight types of cultural aspects necessary to be included in foreign language textbooks. His model assists teachers to have a thorough understanding about different kinds of cultural information, and consequently helps them choose the best teaching materials to meet the aims of language courses as well as students’ needs. Meanwhile, Cortazzi and Jin suggest evaluating the textbook content based on three sources of culture (see Section 2.4.2.2). Cultural information in textbooks is analysed to define which cultural source it belongs. In this respect, their model only helps teachers distinguish different sources of cultural information, but provides no insight into the types of cultural aspects. With regards to Cunningsworth, he advises criteria for cultural content evaluation alongside different checklist areas for a language course, for example grammar, vocabulary, phonology, etc. Similar to Cortazzi and Jin, Cunningsworth’s model includes criteria that pertain to the representation of culture. His model is limited to the extent that he treats culture as one of the important parts of a language course and includes the criteria for cultural content in language textbooks in addition to those used to evaluate the linguistic content, teaching goals, teaching methodology and language development. Byram’s checklist seems to be more thorough in terms of evaluating the treatment of cultural content in language textbooks.

Third, Byram is one of the most influential researchers associated with intercultural learning (see Section 2.3.4). His contribution to the development of the ICC approach, especially in foreign language education, is considerable. My study is conducted from an ICC perspective; hence I decided to adopt his standpoint, including the ideology of ICC as well as his research on the application of ICC in foreign language settings.

The next section will discuss the methodology of teaching culture with reference to the approaches, techniques and activities.

2.4.3 The Teaching Methodology of EFL Teachers

2.4.3.1 Pedagogies for Teaching Culture in EFL Classes

Varied approaches can be developed for the introduction of culture in EFL teaching. Table 2.2 presents nine different understandings of pedagogies for teaching culture in EFL instruction, as well as the similarities and differences among them.

Pedagogies for the teaching of culture	Similarities	Differences
<i>Mono-cultural pedagogy:</i> This pedagogy focuses only on culture of the studied language (Evi, 2004).	<p>These pedagogies enable teachers to familiarise students with the teaching of culture in EFL classes.</p> <p>These pedagogies help teachers develop students' acquisition of cultural knowledge.</p>	<p>Some pedagogies focus only on the introduction of target culture (<i>Mono-cultural</i> and <i>Foreign-cultural</i> pedagogies). Some pedagogies include the target and students' cultures (<i>Comparative</i>, <i>Intercultural</i> and <i>Multicultural</i> pedagogies). Others do not focus on cultures of any specific country.</p> <p>Some pedagogies highlight the importance of comparing different cultures (<i>Comparative</i>, <i>Intercultural</i> and <i>Multicultural</i> pedagogies), while others merely stress the provision of cultural information.</p>
<i>Foreign-cultural pedagogy:</i> This pedagogy focuses on the introduction of target culture, aiming to help students perform as native speakers in communication (Risager, 1998).		
<i>Note pedagogy:</i> This pedagogy helps teachers to approach difficult culturally-loaded expressions by noting them down and giving detailed explanations (Yang, 2010).		
<i>Combination pedagogy:</i> This pedagogy requires teachers to bring to classrooms further cultural input in addition to the textbook content. The selection of additional materials needs to meet students' interests and help them acquire both linguistic and cultural knowledge (Yang, 2010).		
<i>Practice pedagogy:</i> This pedagogy relates to the teaching of culture through the practice of four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) (Yang, 2010).		
<i>Comparative pedagogy:</i> This pedagogy provides students with both target culture and source culture through making comparisons between them (Evi, 2004; Yang, 2010).		
<i>Intercultural pedagogy:</i> This pedagogy focuses on the relations between cultures of countries where the studied language is spoken and the students' culture. The teaching includes comparisons among cultures (Risager, 1998).		
<i>Multicultural pedagogy:</i> This pedagogy focuses on the diversity of the target and students' cultures. The teaching emphasises comparisons among cultures (Risager, 1998).		
<i>Transcultural pedagogy:</i> This pedagogy guides teachers to help students use the studied language for international communication. The teaching does not provide students with cultural understanding of any specific country but introduces topics which are common among cultures (Risager, 1998).		

Table 2.2: Pedagogies for the Teaching of Culture

Among these pedagogies to teaching culture, *Mono-cultural* and *Foreign-cultural* pedagogies appear to be inadequate for contemporary classrooms, because they do not integrate students' knowledge of their local cultures. Mostly focusing on the target culture, teachers using these pedagogies overlook the opportunities to address culture from an ICC perspective. *Note*, *Combination* and *Practice* pedagogies guide teachers in how to approach cultural items. These pedagogies enable students to learn the studied language both linguistically and culturally because culture is addressed alongside language instruction. Similar to *Mono-cultural* and *Foreign-cultural* approaches, the teaching of culture within these approaches may not be intercultural. In language classrooms, teachers provide students with cultural information, but do not make comparisons among cultures. *Comparative*, *Intercultural* and *Multicultural* pedagogies emphasise the importance of comparing different cultures. They give students the opportunities to discover the similarities and differences between their own countries and the others. These pedagogies are more relevant for students to develop cultural competence, because they enable students to "identify more clearly those communities with which they wish to align themselves, to observe the way they work, and to negotiate more effectively their own place in these communities" (Corbett, 2003, p. 39). They appear to be relevant in raising students' awareness and enable the making of distinctions between cultures and managing their communications in an effective way. The remaining pedagogy, *Transcultural*, "takes as its point of departure the interwoven character of cultures as a common condition for the whole world" (Risager, 1998, p. 248). The teaching of culture within this approach may assist students to function at a global level. It does not stress the differences and similarities among cultures, which may cause misunderstanding for students.

The implementation of any particular pedagogy affects the ways culture is addressed. When culture is approached from an intercultural stance, it is integrated into language education and involves students' engagement with practices, which helps them communicate across cultural boundaries as well as strengthen their identity. If the teaching approach does not allow teachers to view culture from an intercultural perspective, it may limit students' understanding of target culture through the provision of cultural facts. Consequently, it affects their learning outcomes, because they might develop cultural competence depending on their cultural knowledge. Teachers may follow any variant of pedagogies to address culture in EFL classes. However, they should bear in mind the need to adapt their teaching in order to engage students in various techniques for their development of ICC. In the following section, I will elaborate on the techniques and activities for the teaching of culture.

2.4.3.2 Techniques and Activities for Teaching Culture

Researchers who emphasise the integration of culture into EFL pedagogy offer a variety of techniques and activities (Dai, 2011; Hughes, 1986; Reid, 2015; Stern, 1992; Thanasoulas, 2001; Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993). I will now introduce a list of nine techniques for the teaching of cultural competence and make a distinction among them (see Table 2.3). The list includes almost all techniques suggested by scholars for culture-based activities in EFL classes in order to help teachers approach cultural items in practical and relevant ways (Reid, 2015). The discussion of each technique is elaborated on below.

The nine techniques (Table 2.3) may be adopted to introduce culture in EFL classrooms. The commonly used technique is *Comparison* (Reid, 2015). Students may discuss topics applicable to English-speaking countries and contrast these with their local culture. Similarly, *Cultural capsule* enables students to discover the differences between cultures. These two techniques may be useful in raising students' cultural awareness, because they help students explore a specific cultural topic from the perspectives of different countries. *Cultural assimilator* is somewhat similar to *Comparison* and *Cultural capsule*. Students have to figure out the differences between diverse cultures. This technique assists students in developing skills to negotiate encounters with different cultures. Teachers should explain cultural conflict to the student. With these three techniques, teachers become cultural mediators in order to help students negotiate their communications across cultures.

Other techniques of note include *Cultural island*, *Reformulation*, *Prediction*, *Total Physical Response*, *Role play* and *Treasure hunt*. *Cultural island* assists teachers in creating an authentic classroom context associated with English speaking countries. Visual aids such as posters, displays, newspaper cuttings, etc. can be brought into EFL classrooms to familiarise students with foreign cultures and attract their interest. This technique is simple but effective (Reid, 2015; Youzhen, 2006). Teachers can adapt authentic materials to suit students' language proficiency. *Reformulation*, *Prediction*, *Total Physical Response*, and *Role play* techniques encourage students' participation. Students' involvement in learner-centred activities, such as retelling a story, finishing a half told story, responding to verbal commands, acting out in real life situations provides opportunities to develop linguistic and cultural competence. *Treasure hunt* "offers many opportunities for visits and projects, enabling [students] to come into direct contact with a great many aspects of the target culture" (Stern, 1992, p. 232). It may be an effective culture-base technique, because it assists students in developing their thinking and skills in order to understand materials from a range of Internet resources.

Techniques	Similarities	Differences
<i>Comparison</i> : This technique focuses on discussing the similarities and differences between the target and students' local cultures.	<p>These techniques help teachers involve students in culture-based activities.</p> <p>These techniques enable teachers to develop students' cultural competence alongside linguistic competence.</p> <p>These techniques require students' participation for the acquisition of cultural knowledge and the development of cultural skills.</p>	<p>Each technique offers a way to approach cultural items or to integrate culture with language learning.</p>
<i>Cultural assimilation</i> : This technique guides teachers to give brief descriptions of critical incidents of cross-cultural situations that may lead to misunderstandings. Students obtain an understanding of cultural conflicts and then figure out appropriate responses.		
<i>Cultural capsule</i> : This technique guides teachers in presenting the aspects of culture from other countries and then making the contrast with students' local culture.		
<i>Cultural island</i> : This technique guides teachers in setting a cultural context of the target community by using various types of visual aids, such as posters, displays, bulletin boards, maps, cartoon, newspaper cuttings, tickets, menu, etc.		
<i>Reformulation</i> : This technique requires students to retell a story using their own words.		
<i>Prediction</i> : This technique requires students to guess the content of a story, an article or a book based on a few pieces of information.		
<i>Total Physical Response</i> : This technique requires students to respond to verbal commands in order to act out a cultural experience.		
<i>Role play</i> : This technique provides students with opportunities to practise communicative situations or position themselves in the role of drama characters.		
<i>Treasure hunt</i> : This technique involves students in researching the information related to the target culture and creating and presenting their projects or posters to others.		

Table 2.3: Techniques for the Teaching of Culture

The goal of ICC pedagogies is no longer the transmission of knowledge but the focus on skills, attitudes and critical cultural awareness for students' development of ICC (Aguilar, 2008). It is important to include culture right from the beginning of EFL instruction. EFL pedagogies can deepen and expand students' learning through these techniques. Students' discovery and exploration of the local culture and that of others make possible their ability to interpret and negotiate intercultural communications (Liddicoat, 2002). The task of integrating culture into EFL teaching is not easy. Teachers should use the classroom to make the inclusion of culture possible. Using culture-based techniques effectively requires that teachers should consider the overall factors from the students, teaching materials, teaching goals, teaching principles and teaching approaches to choose the most appropriate methodology.

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature on cultural pedagogies in EFL teaching relevant to the study. I have also presented the integration of culture into EFL education, focusing on cultural representation in EFL curriculum and teaching materials, and teachers' approaches to teaching culture. This review and discussion suggest that culture is a core component of EFL education, which is necessary to develop students' cultural competence alongside linguistic competence. It is necessary to teach culture in an integrated way with language teaching. In the Vietnamese EFL context, the Government and the MOET advocate students' development of cultural knowledge and skills for international communication. The common goal requires teachers to make a shift from outdated teaching methods to intercultural pedagogies. EFL instruction should include the teaching of culture in order to approach the key idea of addressing students' ICC. Consequently, my study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of cultural content in EFL teaching materials and teachers' strategies to demonstrate cultural competence into language teaching and learning. In the next chapter, I will outline my research methodology that guided the study and discuss the ways the research was conducted and how the data was analysed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

In Chapter Two, the review of literature on culture and the teaching of cultural competence indicates that it is important for EFL teachers to integrate culture into English language classrooms and improve their teaching approaches in order to prepare students to be interculturally and communicatively competent English users. The review also emphasises the shift to the application of ICC in foreign language education, especially when a “culture turn” is developed among researchers and teachers. Vietnamese EFL teaching limits students’ English proficiency. My research attempts to construct knowledge about the cultural content of Vietnamese EFL teaching materials, then use this knowledge as the means to examine Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers’ teaching practices. This chapter describes the research design and the methodology I employed to achieve these objectives. In the first section (Section 3.1), I introduce the research paradigm and rationale for choosing qualitative methodology. Details of the research design are then discussed in Section 3.2, beginning with a justification for a case study design, and followed by a description of the two phases I employed in the study. Section 3.3 presents how I selected textbooks for Phase 1, and the site and participants for Phase 2. Section 3.4 provides the methods of data collection, while Section 3.5 describes the vetting process in order to assess the quality of the employed methods. Finally, the last section (Section 3.6) focuses on my methods for data analysis.

3.1 Research Paradigms and Rationale for Qualitative Methodology

Research is the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data in order to understand a phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). The first significant stage of the research process considers the paradigm of inquiry, which provides the theoretical framework that underpins the research process and answers the research questions (Graham & Thomas, 2008). There are two major paradigms, positivism and naturalism, though there are variations within each of these (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The positivist paradigm is based on “a belief in reality” (Polit & Beck, 2008, p. 15) and a desire to “know reality with certainty and therefore seek probabilistic evidence” (ibid., p. 15), whereas in the naturalistic paradigm, the concept of reality is “a construction of the individuals participating in the research” and the researchers attempt to understand “the interaction between the inquirer and the participants” (Polit & Beck, 2008, p. 15). These two broad paradigms influence the selection of appropriate research methodologies.

Quantitative approaches, which focus on identifying factors that influence an outcome, the utility of an intervention, or understanding the best predictors in outcomes tend to be associated with positivist inquiry (Creswell, 2012). Qualitative approaches, which attempt to discover and understand the experiences, perspectives and thoughts of participants tend to be associated with naturalistic inquiry (Creswell, 2012).

Considering the purpose of the study and a need for a holistic qualitative research design in the field, this study takes a naturalistic approach. I have chosen a qualitative study as the most appropriate method of inquiry. Qualitative inquiry involves “an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 3). The application of this approach allows in-depth understanding of the research problem in the specific context from insider perspective. In the role of a naturalistic researcher who wants to make allowances for complexity, I can approach participants by “actually talking directly...and seeing them behave and act within their context” (Creswell, 2007, p. 37); and collecting the data from a combination of different sources; restructuring the data collection process or modifying the data collection tools to suit the setting and the participants at any time (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). It is through the use of this approach that I can bring the real world into research and, at the same time, gain the trust of my readers.

In justifying the relevant methodological approach for a particular study, the researcher must consider the notion of ‘fit for purpose’ (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). I chose qualitative research for four key reasons: first, it fits the purpose of my research, which is to seek in-depth information and perspectives from the participants individually so as to address the issues concerning teachers’ teaching of culture in the specific educational context; second, it provides trustworthiness to the research in the process of data collection and interpretation; third, it fills the gap in the literature in relation to the teaching of culture by teachers in Vietnamese educational context; fourth, it fits the current trend in qualitative research in language teaching.

Qualitative research is defined as:

... a multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. It involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials case study, personal experience, introspective, life story interview, observational, historical, interactional and visual texts-that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning

in individual lives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, cited in Joubish, Khurram, Ahmed, Fatima, & Haider, 2011, p. 2083).

Researchers can achieve value from qualitative case study research, because it gathers detailed data from a “multimethod approach” (Joubish et al., 2011, p. 2083) such as interviews, observations and document analysis. Further, the process of data collection in qualitative research is naturalistic and flexible, which permits researchers to gain in-depth responses from particular participants and cases. My research adopted a qualitative approach in order to explore the content of cultural knowledge in currently used textbooks and the teaching of culture by Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers to elaborate the most evident forms of cultural content used in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes and the ways and the extent to which tertiary Vietnamese teachers enact cultural knowledge in EFL lessons. Qualitative research was useful for my study since it allowed for the possibility of exploring the researched participants within a ‘value’ and ‘context’ bound view (Joubish et al., 2011) and fit the diverse characteristics of my participants. Importantly, qualitative research in the Vietnamese context is relatively new and provides an opportunity to understand Vietnamese tertiary EFL classroom practice in some depth. Vietnamese researchers tend to prioritise quantitative rather than qualitative approaches, because conducting a study with a large number of participants and working with statistical data is believed to be more convincing than small numbers and descriptive data (H. H. Pham, 2006). The research communities in Vietnam tend to find qualitative study a major methodological challenge. Thus, I employed qualitative strategy in order to fill this gap.

The current trends in qualitative research, especially in language teaching, have increased since 2000 (K. Richards, 2009). In applied linguistics in general and second language education in particular, the application of a qualitative approach is favoured, because it brings “together a series of rich descriptive and interpretive accounts, documenting the concerns of teachers and students as they teach, learn and use languages” (Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001, p. 9). Many researchers have adopted this approach to teachers and students’ perceptions, behaviours and language practices (Colarossi, 2009; Gocer, 2010; V. C. Le, 2011; T. T. H. Phan, 2011; Tercanlioglu, 2008). The qualitative approach taken in this study fits the current methodological trend in worldwide language education and helps to contribute to the field.

3.2 Research Design: A Qualitative Research Based on Case Study

Within the qualitative tradition, there are multiple forms of research design, including biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study (Creswell, 2007; McCaslin & Scott, 2003). Case study shares with other methodologies “the search for meaning

and understanding, ... an inductive investigation strategy and the end product being richly descriptive” (Merriam, 2009, p. 39). A case study can be defined in a variety of ways focusing on the need to closely explore a phenomenon within a specific context. It is conceptualised as “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p. xi). According to this view, the case study is defined by the investigation into any individual case. In the same vein, this kind of research can be described as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p. 13). Another definition of case study is below:

Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audio-visual material, documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes (Creswell, 2007, p. 73).

Case study, therefore, is a systematic inquiry into an event which aims to examine a particular issue from different angles in its natural setting. In my study, Creswell’s (2007) definition will be used as a working definition in order to examine cultural content in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes and how teachers enact cultural knowledge in EFL lessons. Overall, my study will adopt the qualitative case study approach in attempting to address the three research questions.

3.2.1 Justification for Case Study Design

A case study as a form of qualitative research was adopted for the three following reasons. First, I was interested in Groat and Wang’s (2002) notion that the case study combines well with other research methodologies. The researcher can examine a particular issue from different angles and triangulate the data from different sources by combining strategies. The case study allows the researcher to conduct their research from multiple levels, perspectives and sources. By collecting information from different sources, such as texts, policy makers, teachers and students in educational environments, and by using different data collection methods, including documents, interviews, and observation, the researcher can provide a comprehensive picture of the event so as to help to draw a trustworthy conclusion for the study. Second, case study design has three main strengths of this methodological strategy, including “being particularistic, descriptive and heuristic” (Merriam, 2009, p. 43). Being ‘particularistic’ means that a case study aims to examine a single subject or one particular event, so it is useful for investigating a practical problem. In the Vietnamese context, for example in universities, the low quality of

EFL education is a problem. Conducting research on Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers will provide elaboration on English language teaching and learning. Being ‘descriptive’ means that the researcher can gain “thick description” (Merriam, 2009, p. 43) from the study. A case study of tertiary EFL will help me obtain a more holistic understanding of culture teaching as evident in investigating everyday teaching practices. Being ‘heuristic’ means that the research participants themselves can benefit from the research by discovering and experiencing new knowledge. With this study, Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers will have opportunities to broaden their knowledge of English speaking and international cultures. They may become aware of means to improve their English teaching, especially the teaching of culture so as to further develop students’ cultural competence. Third, “case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied” (Stake, 2005, p. 443). I was drawn to researching the teaching of culture by EFL teachers at a higher institution, who represent a typical group of Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers. They are teachers like me and have a similar interest in improving EFL teaching. I believed they would support my research as it would offer them an opportunity to reflect on their work. I therefore invited them to participate in my research with the purpose of uncovering their teaching methods in a “real-world context” (Yin, 2012, p. 5).

3.2.2 Research Design

This qualitative case study was conducted in two phases: Phase 1 (Document Collection and Analysis) and Phase 2 (Teachers’ Interview, Classroom Observation and Field notes). Phase 1 of the research addressed the first question: *Given that cultural competence is an important factor in EFL education, to what extent is cultural knowledge embedded in official curriculum/teaching materials?* I collected textbooks used in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes and analysed them using a modified version of Byram’s checklist for cultural content in order to investigate the cultural content presented in currently-used textbooks. Through this process, I aimed to gain an understanding of the form of culture and the frequency of any particular cultural aspect presented in Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks. Results from this phase allowed me to explore the most evident cultural aspects used by Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers and their teaching of culture, which was the aim of the second phase. Phase 2 of the research addressed the second and third research questions: *Given that cultural content has many forms, as identified by Byram (1993a), which forms are the most evident in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes?* and *In what ways and to what extent do Vietnamese tertiary teachers infuse cultural knowledge into EFL pedagogy?* To answer these questions, I collected qualitative data from five EFL teachers at a higher institution in Vietnam, including interviews, classroom observations

and field notes. An overview of the process is presented in Figure 3.1 and the detailed information is described below.

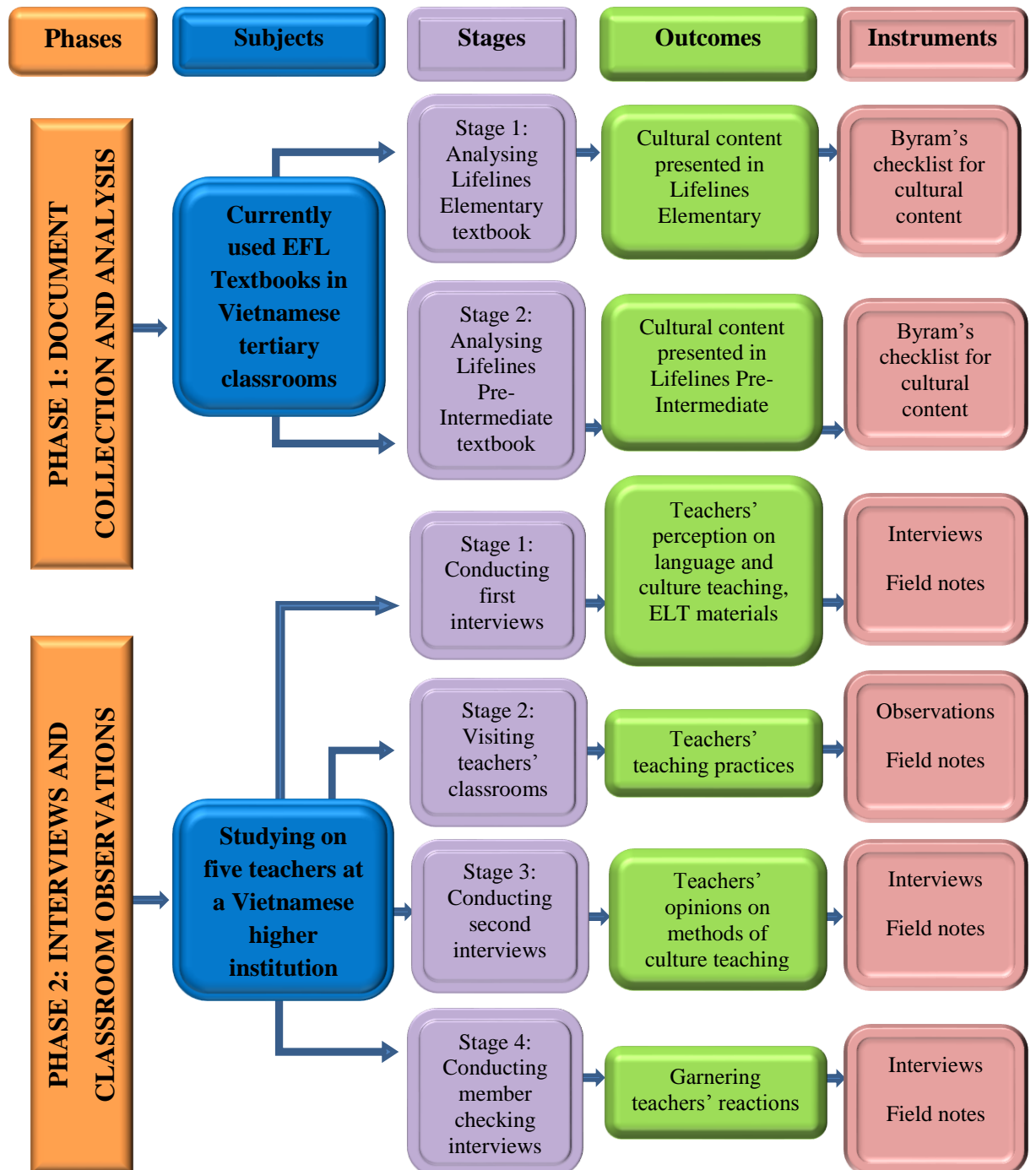


Figure 3.1: Research Design

The first phase involved my analysis of two EFL textbooks. Each was analysed in stages; there were two stages within Phase 1. The second phase was made up of four stages of data collection, which included conducting first interviews, visiting teachers' classrooms, conducting second interviews and conducting member-checking interviews. A detailed description of these four stages is as follows:

1. I engaged participants in interviews, during which they were asked to provide their personal information, their perceptions of language and culture teaching, and EFL teaching materials. These interviews were recorded and later transcribed. I wrote field notes after each interview.
2. Each of the five teachers was observed five times in their classroom over a 15-week span of time. A classroom observation protocol was used as a method of recording field notes about teachers' actions, behaviours and everything that happens in EFL classrooms.
3. One-on-one interviews were conducted with five teachers, aiming to investigate teachers' opinions on method of culture teaching towards ICC perspective and activities to support English intercultural teaching. Field notes were written after the interviews.
4. I employed individual interviewing for member checking, which included talking to the informants about their responses in the one-on-one interviews, taking the data and tentative interpretation back to them and once again garnering their reactions. Then, I showed them the transcript of their interviews to check accuracy.

The next section will present a detailed description of my research.

3.3 Research Procedure

3.3.1 Selection of Research Site and Participants

3.3.1.1 Research Site

The research was conducted at a higher institution in Hanoi, the capital city of Vietnam (see Section 1.5 above). I decided to select this site for three reasons. First, I followed the suggestion for the method of sampling, namely that non-probability samples are relevant for qualitative research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Among five types of non-probability sampling techniques, including convenience, quota, purposive, dimensional and snowball, "a convenience sample may be the sampling strategy selected for a case study or a series of case studies"

(Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, p. 156). The selection of the research site was the result of the use of the convenience method by which I obtained easy access from the EFL teachers working at that university. These teachers were readily available for me to gather useful information to answer the research questions. As a result, I did not find it difficult to recruit the participants for my study as well as build the relationships with them. Second, because my aim was to conduct a case study on a non-English major university, I picked one among 69 universities within Hanoi. Third, it was convenient for me to travel from/to my accommodation during the fieldwork. Hanoi is “an economic and industrial centre of Vietnam, with more than 6 million inhabitants in the area of about 3,324 square km” (C. T. Pham, Kameda, Toriba, Tang, & Hayakawa, 2012, p. 298). With regards to transportation in Hanoi, “there is about one motorbike for every two people, motorbikes account for more than 90% of total vehicles” (ibid.) and, consequently, “cause traffic jams and air pollution” (ibid.). It is clear from this that Hanoi residents are faced with traffic jams every day. The reason behind the selection of the research site was to restrict travel, so I chose this university, which is close to my home.

3.3.1.2 Selection of Participants

As noted, convenience sampling allowed me to easily recruit the participants, as they shared my interest in improving the teaching of culture and demonstrated willingness to participate in my study. There were five permanent teachers from the English Division at this local university who agreed to participate in the research. They taught GE courses during the semester of my fieldwork. As noted earlier in Section 1.5, they are assigned to cover 14 to 15 units of GE in which they must use the set textbooks and the same final assessment. Apart from these prescribed elements, teachers are free to design their own lessons, and on-going in-class and mid-term assessments.

The steps of gaining access to the participants were as follows.

I approached the Rector of the university to arrange a meeting. This step was carried out in the first week of semester 2 in the Vietnamese academic year. Information about the project and the research procedure was given to him. After gaining the Rector’s consent, I worked with the Rector’s office to distribute Information Statements and Consent Forms to five potential participants. In the next step, I approached EFL teachers and granted them opportunities to have questions answered to their satisfaction. I organised an initial joint meeting with five EFL teachers in the second week after they received the documents from the Rector’s officer. I took special care to ensure that the participants did not feel pressured to participate in the research, by explaining that participation was voluntary and that there would be no negative ramifications

if they chose not to participate. I advised them about their roles as participants and the maintenance of their privacy and confidentiality. Their right to withdraw from the project until such time as the data analysis had commenced without penalty would be respected. There were no identifiable risks for teachers. All five teachers agreed to participate in my study and confirmed their clear understanding regarding my research purposes and their involvement in the study.

I organised a meeting with the student participants one week later. I provided general information about the research and clarified their role in the research project. The students were informed that they were not the subject of the research and that I was observing their teachers and not them. I informed them that participation in my research did not carry any risks to them. It was entirely their choice and they could withdraw from the research at any time. Whether or not they decided to participate, their decision would not disadvantage them. Only those who gave their informed consents were included in my research. Those students who chose not to participate during the observation were sent to a different class to do work. Teachers could prepare teamwork activities or discussion on the topic of the lesson and instructed them to do tasks before my observation began to ensure that no students would be disadvantaged. In total, 242 students from the five classes agreed to participate in my study.

For the purpose of maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of the teacher participants, I decided to use pseudonyms: Anh, Binh, Duyen, Hieu and Luong. All of the teachers were female and had a wide range of experience, from 13 to 21 years. They were trained as EFL teachers at two different universities in Vietnam. Four of them studied at the ULIS-VNU, which was “a prestigious research university in languages, linguistics, international studies and related social sciences and the humanities” (ULIS-VNU, 2012). The other teacher studied at Hanoi University, which is also a significant educational institution in Vietnam. All five teachers hold master degrees as their highest qualification, however only three of them have Masters in English Language Teaching. Two teachers majored in Educational Administration. At that time, there was one teacher pursuing her second master degree and two teachers doing doctoral courses in linguistics. A full description of each participant is given in Table 3.1.

Teacher	Gender	Degree	English teacher training				Teaching experience	
			Past training		Present training			
			<i>BA course/ Institution</i>	<i>MA course/ Institution</i>	<i>MA course/ Institution</i>	<i>Doctoral course/ Institution</i>	<i>Teaching years at present university</i>	<i>Total teaching years</i>
Anh	Female	Master of Educational Administration	Bachelor of English Language Teaching/ULIS-VNU	Master of Educational Administration/ HNUE	Master in Applied Linguistic/ HANU		03 years	13 years
Binh	Female	Master in English Language Teaching	Bachelor of English Language Teaching/ULIS-VNU	Master in English Language Teaching /ULIS-VNU			01 years	13 year
Duyen	Female	Master in English Language Teaching	Bachelor of English Language Teaching/ULIS-VNU	Master in English Language Teaching /ULIS-VNU		Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics/GASS	10 years	13 years
Hieu	Female	Master in Applied Linguistics	Bachelor of English Language Teaching/HANU	Master in Applied Linguistic/HANU		Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics/GASS	06 years	20 years
Luong	Female	Master of Educational Administration	Bachelor of English Language Teaching/ULIS-VNU	Master of Educational Administration/ HNUE			21 years	21 years

Table 3.1: The Demographic Information of Teacher Participants

Notes: ULIS-VNU: University of Languages and International Studies – Vietnam National University; HANU: Hanoi University; HNUE: Hanoi National University of Education; GASS: Graduate Academy of Social Sciences

3.3.2 Selection of EFL Textbooks

The target materials for content analysis were *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, both written by Tom Hutchinson and published by Oxford University Press. These have been popular textbooks in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes since 2000 (Bui, 2000). The information about the textbooks is summarised in Table 3.2. I chose *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* as the target textbooks because they were used officially within the subject higher institution. In interviews with the case university EFL teachers, they mentioned various textbooks currently used in their English classes, such as *Lifelines Elementary*, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, *New Cutting Edge*, *Solution*, *New English File* and *Round up* (see Section 5.2.1 for more detail). The two first textbooks were commonly used among teachers while others were sometimes employed as supplementary materials together with different teaching sources (see Section 5.2.2 for more detail). Another reason of mine for the selection of these textbooks was because my five participants relied on textbooks as guides for classroom activities to meet the common teaching objectives.

Tapes are available for use in conjunction with the textbooks, because they contain listening activities. Taped listening tasks are provided in all sections to integrate listening with other language skills. The listening activities focus on conversations or monologues related to each unit topic. Both of the textbooks consist of 14 units at the Elementary and Pre-Intermediate levels of English proficiency. Each unit is divided into five sections: *Grammar*, *Vocabulary*, *Reading and Writing*, *Listening and Speaking*, and *Pronunciation*. Extension activities are provided after two units of *Lifelines Elementary* and after each unit of *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. *Lifelines Elementary* has 7 *Extensions* while *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* has 14 *Extensions*.

Textbooks	Author	Publisher	Publication date	Number of pages	Number of units/extensions
Lifelines Elementary	Tom Hutchinson	Oxford University Press	1995	127	14/7
Lifelines Pre-Intermediate	Tom Hutchinson	Oxford University Press	1995	143	14/14

Table 3.2: Information about the Selected Textbooks

When I conducted content analysis, I considered each part of the lesson as a single item. There are 870 items in *Lifelines Elementary* and 681 items in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. Based on the information presented in any particular part of the lesson, I investigated why some included cultural knowledge while others did not contain any cultural information. For example, the content provided in *Pronunciation* section of Unit 2 (Figure 3.2) was found to be culture-free. All the information relates to phonetics, which guides the learners in making appropriate pronunciations of the studied language. Whereas, the information introduced in a text of *Reading and Writing* section in Unit 5 (Figure 3.3) concentrates on the eating habits of people from England. There are two different types of generations with different eating routines. Many kinds of food and drinks are introduced. It is clear that this text involves the target culture and the basic theme of “food, drinks, eating custom/etiquette” was investigated under the ‘little c’ culture.

I have limited my analysis to the reading texts, conversations, paragraphs and pictures which appear in the first four sections and the *Extension* section. My choice was to focus only on those parts that contain the cultural elements, which provide EFL students with the opportunities to develop intercultural skills. I did not analyse the specific activities, which relate to grammatical rules, practice, vocabulary file, language focus, language check and pronunciation, because they do not contain any culture-specific knowledge and merely aim to equip students with English phonetic or grammatical rules and the development of four language skills.

Only complete paragraphs and readings texts, which did not contain gaps, were counted as relevant texts. Songs and quizzes were also counted as texts. I decided that the dialogues or conversations with missing words or sentences would not be counted because they carried incomplete information. All pictures in these two EFL textbooks were included for analysis. My reason for the selection of complete reading texts, paragraphs or conversations was because they provide full cultural context through which factual information is introduced comprehensively and accurately. Pictures reflect aspects of human life and thus are a useful source of cultural input.

I employed three units of analysis: text, conversation and picture. If one unit presents cultural content, it was placed under the suitable category and analysed. In total, there were 107 texts, 167 conversations and 488 pictures (Table 3.3, Table 3.4, Table 3.5) that were used for Phase 1. The number of culture-free items was 789 units, which was greater than the total number of other items (762 units). For the purpose of exploring the presentation of culture in two currently-used Vietnamese EFL textbooks, this was the significant finding, which I will discuss in Chapter Four.

Pronunciation

Vowel sounds (1); -es endings

1 Vowel sounds (1)

Look at the list of phonetic symbols on p127.

a Match the words and the sounds.

one	/e/
two	/i:/
three	/ʌ/
four	/eɪ/
five	/ɔ:/
six	/ɪ/
seven	/u:/
eight	/aɪ/

b What are these words?

/seɪ/	_____
/tɔ:l/	_____
/fam/	_____
/blu:/	_____
/hi:/	_____
/mag/	_____
/sɪt/	_____
/red/	_____

c Compare your ideas with a partner.


d  3.5 Listen, check, and repeat.

2 -es endings

a Tick (✓) the words that have an extra syllable in the plural.

<input type="checkbox"/>	watch	watches
<input type="checkbox"/>	badge	badges
<input type="checkbox"/>	eye	eyes
<input type="checkbox"/>	niece	nieces
<input type="checkbox"/>	orange	oranges
<input type="checkbox"/>	apple	apples
<input type="checkbox"/>	telephone	telephones
<input type="checkbox"/>	house	houses
<input type="checkbox"/>	toothbrush	toothbrushes
<input type="checkbox"/>	nurse	nurses
<input type="checkbox"/>	uncle	uncles
<input type="checkbox"/>	box	boxes

b Compare your ideas with a partner.
Practise saying the words.

c  3.6 Listen, check, and repeat.

d After which sounds is there an extra syllable?

Figure 3.2: An Example of Culture-free Part in EFL Textbook

Source: Unit 2, *Lifelines Elementary* by Tom Hutchinson, 1996



Figure 3.3: An Example of Textbook Selection with Cultural Information

Source: Unit 5, *Lifelines Elementary* by Tom Hutchinson, 1996

Kinds of data units/ Units	U 1	U2	Ext. U1 & U2	U3	U4	Ext. U3 & U4	U5	U6	Ext. U5 & U6	U7	U8	Ext. U7 & U8	U9	U1 0	Ext. U9 & U10	U1 1	U1 2	Ext. U11 & U12	U1 3	U1 4	Ext. U13 & U14	Total
Texts		3		1	1	1	1	4		4	5	2	1	2	0	4	2	1	1	2		35
Conversations	1	7	1	2	17	1	7	8	1	7	12	0	3	4	3	6	9	4	6	3		118
Pictures	2	13	1	18	32	2	23	24	13	15	26	2	16	16	2	13	20	4	25	20	3	315
Culture-free items	2	22	11	23	23	14	23	23	7	21	24	13	26	20	11	26	22	12	24	25	11	402

Table 3.3: The Number of Selected and Excluded Data Units in Lifelines Elementary

Kinds of data units/ Units	Getting started	U1	Ext. U1	U2	Ext. U2	U3	Ext. U3	U4	Ext. U4	U5	Ext. U5	U6	Ext. U6	U7	Ext. U7	Total (U1-U7)
Texts	1	4	1	9	2	2	2	2	2	4	1	3	1	3	2	39
Conversations	2	9		1	1	2		1		6		2	1	2		25
Pictures	2	10	7	12	3	10	3	3	1	7	1	14	3	15	5	86
Culture-free items	10	20	6	19	4	25	5	23	5	25	4	21	7	22	8	204

Table 3.4: The Number of Selected and Excluded Data Units in Lifelines Pre-Intermediate (From Unit 1 to Unit 7)

Kinds of data units/ Units	U8	Ext. U8	U9	Ext. U9	U10	Ext. U10	U11	Ext. U11	U12	Ext. U12	U13	Ext. U13	U14	Ext. U14	Total (U8-U14)	Total (U1-U14)
Texts	2	1	2	3	2	3	3	4	3	1	3	1	4	1	33	72
Conversations	3		1		4	1	2		9		3		1		24	49
Pictures	6	3	2	2	8	4	12	5	14	5	9	5	11	1	87	173
Culture-free items	20	5	23	4	20	6	24	5	19	6	22	6	19	4	183	387

Table 3.5: The Number of Selected and Excluded Data Units in Lifelines Pre-Intermediate (From Unit 8 to Unit 14)

3.4 Methods of Data Collection

I employed the following strategies to construct data: document analysis, one-on-one interviews, individual interviews for member checking, classroom observations and field notes. Table 3.6 provides further information as to the purpose of each chosen method and a brief description of how the data from each source was analysed. A more detailed discussion of each chosen method will be provided following the table. These sources of data were triangulated in my data analysis as a part of my aim to explore the cultural content in Vietnamese EFL teachers' teaching materials and their teaching practices. I compared and contrasted the themes generated from interviews with my classroom observations and field notes. I triangulated these themes with those generated from the analysis of the teaching materials. I aimed to identify the relationship among the themes from the collected data in order to gain insights into the participants' EFL pedagogies.

3.4.1 Phase 1: Document Analysis

Document analysis was used to answer the first research question. I took Byram's checklist (see Section 2.4.2.3 for more detail) and developed an analytical framework in order to identify the aspects of culture within two Vietnamese EFL textbooks. I classified Byram's eight categories of culture into 33 subcategories: "Social identity and social groups" (4); "Social interaction" (5); "Belief and behaviour" (7); "Social and political institutions" (5); "Socialization and life-cycle" (3); "National history" (1); "National geography" (2); and "Stereotypes and national identity" (6). I gave elaborations and examples for each cultural subcategory. The details are shown in Appendix E.

3.4.2 Phase 2: Teachers' Interviews, Classroom Observations and Field notes

3.4.2.1 Interviews

Interviewing is a commonly used method to collect data in qualitative research, as it allows the researchers to gain in-depth understanding of the social phenomenon (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Miller & Glassner, 1997). It is a primary means of "understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 2006, p. 9). For the purpose of my study, I employed interviewing as one of the most important strategies for collecting information about Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers' teaching practices.

Questions	Research instrument/Purpose	Data analysis	Outcomes
Question 1	<i>Document analysis</i> : To investigate the extent culture is introduced in current textbooks	Organise the data from textbooks into 8 categories based on Byram’s checklist of cultural content, analyse and write the findings	Culture presentation in official curriculum/teaching materials
	<i>Second semi-structured interviews</i> : To address the teachers’ view about culture content on EFL textbooks in-use and their additional teaching materials	Gather the relevant data from interview and list them under thematic categories, analyse and write the findings Triangulating data: Interrogate two data sources for thick description of culture content	
Question 2	<i>First semi-structured interview</i> : To investigate what aspects of culture are evident in teachers’ EFL teaching	List data from four sources under relevant thematic categories, analyse and write the findings	Evident forms of culture taught in tertiary Vietnamese EFL classes
	<i>Member-checking interview</i> : To achieve more detailed information about the evident forms of culture in Vietnamese context	Triangulating data: Compare findings from two interviews, notes from observations and field notes. Interrogate four data sources for any additional findings	
	<i>Classroom observations</i> : To record what cultural aspects are taught and why they are most significant		
	<i>Field notes</i> : To record observations in EFL lessons		
Question 3	<i>First semi-structured interview</i> : To investigate teachers’ perception of language and culture teaching	List data from four sources under relevant thematic categories, analyse and write the findings	The teaching of culture teaching by Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers
	<i>Second semi-structured interview</i> : To investigate the ways and the extent teachers infuse cultural knowledge into EFL pedagogy	Triangulating data: Compare findings from two interviews, notes from observations and field notes. Interrogate four data sources for any additional findings	
	<i>Member-checking interview</i> : To achieve more detailed information about teachers’ methods of the teaching of culture		
	<i>Classroom observations</i> : To record how teachers teach culture and to what extent culture content is performed in their EFL lessons		

Table 3.6: Map of Data Collection and Analysis

One-on-one interviews were conducted in this study, because they allowed me the opportunity to explore the teacher participants' ideas more in-depth by asking questions and recording answers from only one teacher at a time (Creswell, 2012). In order to allow the participants to give detailed responses from their experiences, semi-structured interview sessions were used. I structured my interviews around my three research questions and developed protocols as the guidelines to ensure valid data would be obtained from the participants. Some questions were open-ended, which allowed the participants to "best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researchers or past research findings" (Creswell, 2012, p. 225). Other questions were close-ended and focused on issues raised in the literature review (Creswell, 2012).

The interview guides were designed in English and then translated into Vietnamese. The interviews were undertaken in Vietnamese and audio-recorded. The interviews took from 35 to 100 minutes, varying between participants. The venue of the interviews were the lecturers' common room, classrooms and their houses depending on the lecturers' availability and convenience. The interviews were transcribed and given to the participants for verification. As the interviews were undertaken in Vietnamese, they were all translated into English for data analysis (see Section 3.6.3 for more information). There were three interviews in Phase 2, which are presented in detail below.

First interview

The first interview protocol was developed in order to collect information about teachers' background in terms of their EFL training, teaching experience, interests and preferences in EFL teaching, goals for EFL teaching, understanding of culture and the teaching of culture, and currently used EFL teaching materials. My first semi-structured interview protocol can be found in Appendix A. There were 20 questions, which were grouped into three main sections:

1. Personal information
2. Teachers' perception of language and culture teaching
3. EFL teaching materials

Second interview

The participants were asked to provide information about their teaching practices, focusing on the teaching of culture. I aimed to investigate what aspects of culture, if any, the participants incorporate in their EFL teaching, what cultural aspects are the most evident in their EFL

classrooms, and what culture-based techniques and activities are employed for the development of students' ICC. Further, I aimed to seek their suggestions of how to promote EFL teaching and learning in the Vietnamese context in order to meet the goal of developing students' English competence communicatively and interculturally. There were 12 questions in my second interview (see Appendix B), which were designed in two sections:

1. Methods of teaching culture towards ICC perspective
2. Activities to support intercultural English teaching

Third interview: Member checking interview

Individual interviewing was employed for member checking (see Appendix C), including talking to the informants about their responses in the first and second interviews, taking the data and tentative interpretation back to them and once again garnering their reactions. Finally, I showed them the transcript of their interviews for accuracy checks. The reason for using this method was that it allowed me to ensure that the received information is accurate and valid (Harper & Cole, 2012), which helped to improve the credibility of my study.

3.4.2.2 Classroom Observations

I used classroom observation to gather information on teachers' EFL classroom practices. This method required me to adopt the role of nonparticipant observer (Creswell, 2012). In my research, the teachers were asked to choose one class to be observed. Each teacher was observed five times over a 15-week span of time. Each lesson lasted 45 minutes. I designed a classroom observation protocol to use as a method of observing teachers' classroom conduct (see Appendix D).

Lessons were recorded with an audio recording device, which was placed on the teachers' desk. Before commencing each observation, I tested the audio recording equipment and gave an informal demonstration for the teachers and students in order to check if they had any questions and to make sure they felt comfortable. During the lessons, I sat quietly at the back of the classroom to minimise any interruption to the normal progress of the class. In total, 25 classroom observations were recorded.

3.4.2.3 Field Notes

In addition to interviews and observations, I employed field notes to complement my data collection. My aim was to triangulate the data from different sources. Field notes were used in

the course of collecting data in qualitative case studies in order to “supplement other forms of data gathering” (Morse & Field, 1995, p. 112). Field notes comprised “the things that the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks”, which provided the detailed and accurate description essential to a good qualitative study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, cited in Morse & Field, 1995, p. 112). I kept writing notes for classroom observations and interviews. These notes were made after each event so as to “minimise loss of data” (Morse & Field, 1995, p. 111). In total, 40 field notes were made, 15 of interviews and 25 of classroom observation respectively.

These field notes also formed “an audit trail” as I worked with my participants. The collection of these notes was an important tool in order to think critically about what has been done and also address the issues related to the trustworthiness of the result.

3.5 The Vetting Process

3.5.1 Vetting Interview

I conducted a vetting interview to assess the quality of the employed methods in terms of practical aspects of administering data collection tools and ensuring their reliability (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). Three EFL teachers volunteered to assist me. They were Vietnamese English university lectures who were doing their PhD courses in Australia. They assisted me in vetting the wording of interview questions and the flow of the interviews. As I planned to interview participants in their mother language, the interview questions were translated from English into Vietnamese prior to the vetting process. My volunteers seemed to have no trouble understanding interview questions and we determined that the interviews would last about 50 minutes.

The vetting interview helped familiarise me with the use of the recording device and the flow of the conversations. I practised recording the discussions with participants and learned how to make them feel comfortable in the presence of the recorder, as well as follow techniques to obtain high quality recordings. Additionally, the vetting interview permitted me to confirm the validity of the interview guides and member checking protocol, because the interview questions were examined as to whether they were clear, comprehensible and meaningful for participants.

3.5.2 Vetting Classroom Observation

I vetted my classroom observation protocol with a volunteer teacher, who worked at the English Centre at the University of Newcastle, Australia. This process helped me to evaluate my instrument. Further, it assisted me in practising strategies to ensure high quality recordings for

each classroom observation. I then revised the classroom observation protocol before using it as a tool to examine the teaching of culture by Vietnamese EFL teachers participating in my study. First, the layout of this protocol was changed into three stages: before the lesson (Preparation), during the lesson (Lesson flow) and after the lesson (Follow up), instead of the initial format with only the report template for the content of the lesson. Second, I designed a new template to describe the activities that occurred during the 45-minute lesson. I decided to record the flow of EFL lesson in which teachers' and students' activities were recorded every five minutes. Choosing to record every five minutes allowed me to capture more data than if I tried to do a common running technique. I used this template for the second stage of my classroom observation protocol. Third, I designed a checklist to use when I finished my observation (third stage). I classified my checklist into four categories: class organisation, content development, EFL teaching activities and EFL teaching materials. I decided to report whether or not teachers address culture in their teaching practices, what activities and teaching materials they use, and how much time they spend on teaching culture.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedure

3.6.1 Overview

My data analysis procedure is presented in Figure 3.4. There were five steps in my analysis, which are elaborated on below.

I began by familiarising myself with the data. The process of organising, coding and editing the data focused on the three research questions and the interpretative framework that emerged from my literature review. The data were coded for key words and phrases. Techniques such as asking questions about the data and making comparisons between the data were employed in this process. Datasets were managed, analysed and described so as to achieve understanding of the content and find answers to the research questions. I then developed an initial interpretation and explanations of my findings.

As noted, I conducted the teachers' interviews in Vietnamese and recorded them. In order to prepare the data for Phase 2, I transcribed the interviews and translated them into English. The next sections will elaborate these two processes.

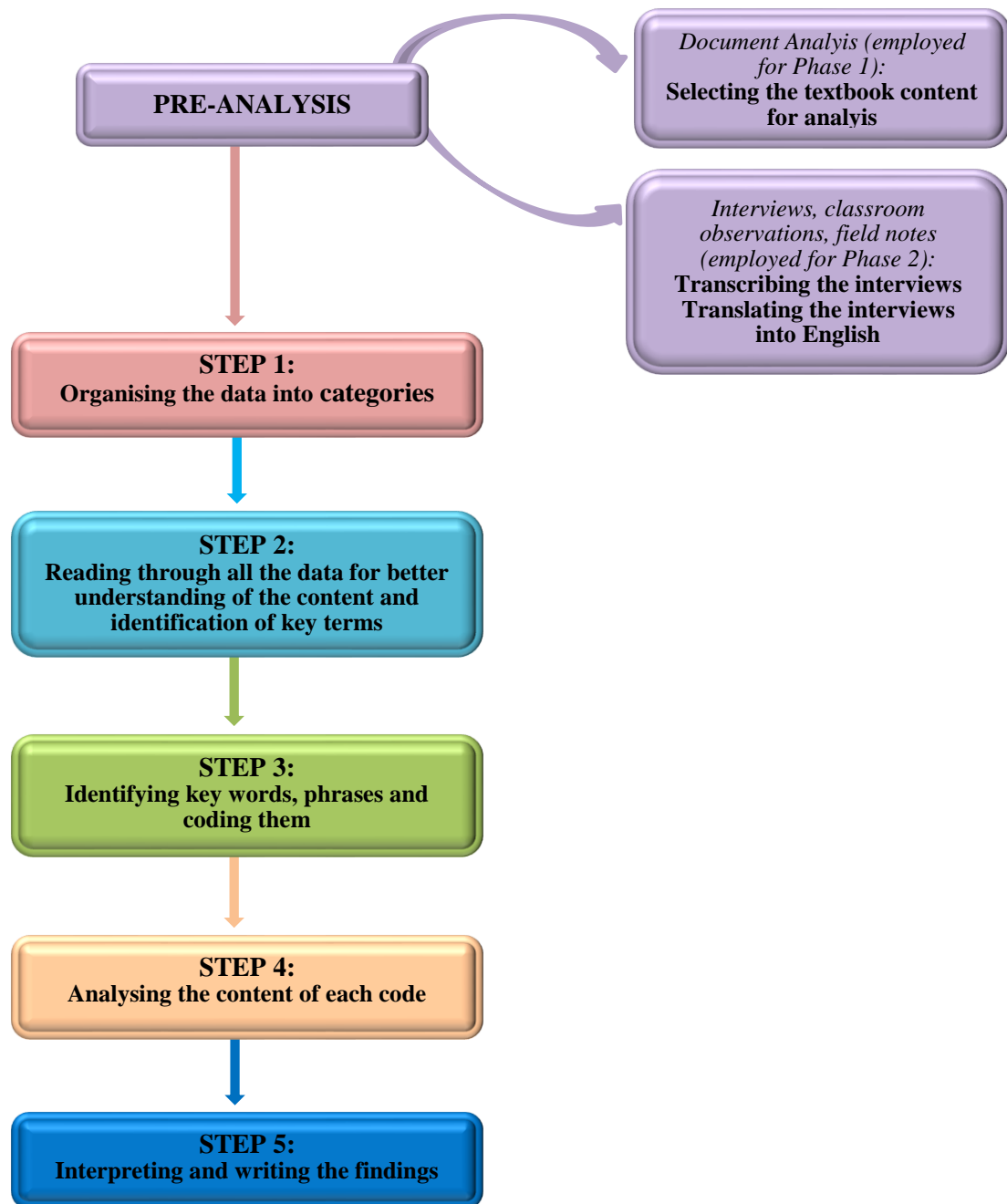


Figure 3.4: The Procedure of Data Analysis

3.6.2 Transcribing Data

I attempted to transcribe my data as soon as possible to be ready for the following step in data analysis. I intended to share a copy of the transcripts with my participants and asked them to verify that they were accurate. By transcribing data verbatim, I could distribute my transcriptions to the participants and have their feedback, not only for accuracy but also to gain new ideas that came to them thereafter or what they thought was relevant for my study.

I employed three steps to transcribe all of the recording files. The first step involved my listening through the whole recording file to get general idea of what was going on and taking notes of the interviewees' tone during the conversation. In the second step, I carried out a verbatim transcription. Due to "transcribing all words will provide data that captures the details of an interview" (Creswell, 2012, p. 239), I included every single word used by the participant and their actions, such as laughing or answering to the telephone. Appendix F shows the format I followed for the transcription. In the third step, I listened again to the recordings for accuracy checks.

I kept duplicate copies of all data. The original data was kept separated from the copied files and acted as the backup.

3.6.3 Translating Data

While data from the interviews and observations were collected in Vietnamese, I decided to translate them into English for two main reasons. First, for this research project, I worked under the supervision of two qualitative professionals at the University of Newcastle, Australia. They are both native English speakers who do not read Vietnamese documents. It was necessary to translate the data into English, so we could discuss and finalise any issues relating to the study. As these were EFL classes, the original transcriptions are both in English and Vietnamese. Second, interestingly, my participants used English and Vietnamese alternatively during their interviews and the lessons. Although the interviews were conducted in Vietnamese, some of them utilised English terms or phrases. Their EFL lessons often begin by introducing items in English, followed by Vietnamese translation. They use both languages when talking to the whole class and individual students. My original transcriptions contained both English and Vietnamese expressions, which made no sense to the readers who could not speak either language.

I collaborated with a colleague who holds a NAATI²⁴ licence to check my English translations. First, I translated 15 interviews and 25 classroom observations into English and then passed them to my collaborator. We worked together comparing both Vietnamese and English transcripts for fidelity.

Interview guides and member check protocols were developed in English. It was necessary to translate these into Vietnamese before commencing my research. My colleague and I worked separately translating the interview questions into Vietnamese and then we collaborated on a final version.

3.6.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative documents from Phases 1 and 2 were analysed by hand. Hand coding was done through reading carefully the data in hard copies, noting down the codes along the right margins and refining these codes. I chose hand analysis because it enabled me “to be close to the data and have a hands-on feel for it without the intrusion of a machine” (Creswell, 2002, p. 240). I read the data and marked it using colour pencils. After gathering the relevant units of data for each phase, I followed the five steps of analysis, as presented in Section 3.4.1. I started with organising data into categories. Data from different phases were categorised into themes. Detailed descriptions will be presented in the next two sections.

I created codes from key words and phrases that arose in my data sets and gathered them into a list. I then refined my list of codes. Those codes that were not important were removed from the list and those codes that had similar meanings were combined together to make new codes. The refined list served as the coding frame for my study. For the purpose of enhancing the validity of the research, I employed a double-checking method with my supervisors. My two supervisors checked all the codes. Finally, these codes were collapsed into themes.

3.4.5.1 Textbook analysis

As stated earlier, in Phase 1 three units of analysis were used to analyse two Vietnamese EFL textbooks: texts, conversations and pictures (see Section 3.3.2 for the selection of textbook content). I worked with each textbook unit separately. I read the analysis units carefully, one by one, and labelled relevant words, phrases and sentences, which presented cultural information. I used a priori classification of data (see Appendix E) to work with during this procedure. The data were coded into 33 subcategories of culture using this framework. If an analysis unit

²⁴ The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) is the accreditation body for interpreters and translators in Australia.

contained more than one cultural aspect, it would be labelled correspondingly with appropriate numbers of codes. I then compared the categories I developed with Byram's eight categories of culture. Below are some examples of how the data were coded in this study.



Figure 3.5: A Sample of Data Coding

The analysis is based on Byram's eight categories and my 33 subcategories, which will be presented in Chapter Four.

3.4.5.2 Case study analysis

In Phase 2, four units of analysis were used to analyse the Vietnamese EFL teachers' teaching practices: interview transcripts, classroom observations transcripts, classroom checklists and field notes. Similar to textbook analysis, I began by reviewing the data to make sure I could gain a better understanding of the content and that I could identify the key points. The data were then coded and analysed as described below.

I employed a deductive strategy to organise my data into categories. This means my coding process was based on initial categories derived from the three research questions and those that emerged from my literature review. There were five main analytical categories I used in Phase 2: the role of culture in EFL teaching; EFL teaching materials/sources; pedagogies for the teaching of culture in EFL classes; techniques and activities for the teaching of culture in EFL classes; and factors affecting the teaching of culture. Similar to the coding process for textbooks, I analysed each data unit separately. As I adopted hand analysis coding, I marked the data with colour pencils. I divided the data into segments of information by placing a bracket around them and then decided the suitable category for these segments. Next, I identified key words and phrases that covered the main ideas of the data segments before coding the key terms. I labelled the data segments of information with codes. In total, I created 49 codes. In the next step of the coding process, I examined these codes for overlap and refined them into 11 new codes: teachers' rationales for teaching EFL education; teachers' goals for EFL education; teachers' understanding of culture; teachers' understanding of the teaching of culture; teachers' perception of EFL textbooks; teachers' perception of supplementary teaching materials; teachers' use of EFL teaching materials; cultural forms in Vietnamese EFL classes; teachers' methods of incorporating culture in Vietnamese EFL classes; students' responses to the integration of culture in Vietnamese EFL classes; and activities to support the teaching of culture. I then refined these 11 codes by organising them into four overarching themes in order to develop an interpretation and explanation of my findings: teachers' perception of language and culture teaching; EFL teaching materials; teachers' teaching practices towards ICC perspective; and professional development. The analysis in Chapter Five presents the findings from Phase 2.

This chapter has provided the rationale for my choice of methodologies and research methods. I have presented in detail the research design and procedure used to conduct my study. In the next chapter, I will present the findings from my analysis of two EFL textbooks in order to build an understanding of cultural presentation in textbooks currently used in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS FROM PHASE 1: CULTURE PRESENTATION IN VIETNAMESE TERTIARY EFL TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks remain a staple within school curricula worldwide, presenting teachers and students with the official knowledge of school subjects as well as the preferred values, attitudes, skills, and behaviours of experts in those fields. Textbooks are commodities, political objects, and cultural representations and, therefore, are the site and result of struggles and compromise in order to determine how and by whom they will be produced, how and by whom their contents will be selected, how and to whom they will be distributed, and how teachers and students will make use of them.

(Wen-Cheng, Chien-Hung, & Chung-Chieh, 2011)

English textbooks hold a significant place in teaching and learning. Teachers and students use textbooks as guides for classroom activities to meet curricula goals. The textbook is “an almost universal element of [English language] teaching [...] No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook” (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994, p. 315). The selection of an appropriate textbook is often a first necessary instructional step taken by educational leaders and teachers. Next, how to make use of this content for teaching and learning using the selected textbook is considered. In this study, I analyse *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, two textbooks used in Vietnamese higher institutions. As settlements on commodified political objects and cultural representations, I use content analysis of these two globally published tertiary EFL textbooks and then elaborate the ways and the extent to which Vietnamese tertiary teachers enact cultural knowledge in EFL lessons.

This chapter reports the findings from the analysis of the two EFL textbooks. My aim was to reveal a broad picture of culture presentation in teaching materials used by Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers and students in their English lessons. The analysis of these two EFL textbooks was conducted from an ICC perspective, which served as a reference to elaborate on the teachers’ performance of enacted curriculum, so as to investigate their teaching pedagogies for the purpose of improving cultural teaching and learning in English classrooms. The first research question-*Given that cultural competence is an important factor in EFL education, to what extent is cultural knowledge embedded in official curriculum/teaching materials?*-will be addressed in this chapter. To clarify, I sought answers for three main sub-questions as follows:

1. *What kinds of cultural categories suggested by Byram have been included in Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks?*
2. *What aspects of embedded cultural categories in Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks have been given the most attention and which have received poor treatment?*
3. *What are the differences and similarities related to cultural aspects between two Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks?*

This chapter is organised into three major sections. The first section provides findings from the analysis of *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* that are combined with detailed comparisons between these two textbooks. The next section focuses on presenting four striking issues drawn from the comparative analysis of Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks. Lastly, the third section is devoted to summarising the presentation of culture in Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks.

4.1 The Cultural Forms Presented in Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Textbooks

As mentioned in Section 3.3.2, I examined 107 texts, 167 conversations and 488 pictures in order to characterise the extent to which they contained cultural information and how often they make reference to the eight categories suggested by Byram. My aim was to understand what kinds of cultural aspects are presented in these textbooks and what cultural aspects are given the most/least attention. These categories include social identity and social groups; social interaction; belief and behaviour; social and political institutions; socialisation and life-cycle; national history; national geography; stereotypes and national identity. What follows is the distribution of cultural information presented in *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* under each unit. The details are shown in Table 4.1.

As seen in Table 4.1, *Lifelines Elementary* is used by Elementary English Level students. I found 1438 references coded under Byram's checklist for cultural content categories within it. *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* is used by Pre-Intermediate English Level students and I found that it contains 1527 references. Both textbooks mix cultural content alongside linguistic content. However, the distribution of culture in each textbook is slightly different, as reported below.

Lifelines Elementary	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Unit 1								
Unit 2	20	49	4		2		17	2
Extension Units 1 & 2	9	13					5	
Unit 3	3	27	3		3		1	4
Unit 4	12	70	46	16	1		2	
Extension Units 3 & 4	2	7						1
Unit 5	11	20	98		2		1	2
Unit 6	12	30	21		5		17	7
Extension Units 5 & 6	5	6	7	2			6	3
Unit 7	12	27	4		1		4	
Unit 8	17	60	16	1	1		13	4
Extension Units 7 & 8	7		1					1
Unit 9	10	43	3		5	1	18	
Unit 10	37	22	3	3	1		70	1
Extension Units 9 & 10	2	10	1				9	
Unit 11	12	51	8	1	2		1	
Unit 12	5	30	6					2
Extension Units 11 & 12	3	12						1
Unit 13	23	49	9	1	2		9	4
Unit 14	13	34	22				18	2
Extension Units 13 & 14								
Total (1438)	226	627	271	25	29	1	213	46
Lifelines Pre-Intermediate	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Getting started								
Unit 1	13	40	22	8	5		2	1
Extension Unit 1	1		12				6	
Unit 2	10	11	13		7		3	
Extension Unit 2	5	18			6		2	
Unit 3	18	43	5	2	10		24	5
Extension Unit 3	3	8			6		3	
Unit 4	27	20	13	3	1	1	14	15
Extension Unit 4	41	27	1	1	1		49	
Unit 5	16	12	9				12	1
Extension Unit 5	1		3					1
Unit 6	19	9	5				25	1
Extension Unit 6	17	15			3			
Unit 7	24	26	2		14		18	10
Extension Unit 7	7	18	1		10		8	2
Unit 8	3	17	74				1	
Extension Unit 8	1		2		1			
Unit 9	13	17	5		1			
Extension Unit 9	10		3				1	
Unit 10	22	18	24				4	
Extension Unit 10	4	7	39				2	1
Unit 11	40	41	1	1	1		3	8
Extension Unit 11		16						
Unit 12	11	23			2		9	3
Extension Unit 12	7			4		1	9	
Unit 13	22	32	2		2	1	5	4
Extension Unit 13	12	55	1		4		5	1
Unit 14	15	27	8			5	10	1
Extension Unit 14								
Total (1527)	372	518	250	20	82	8	223	54

Table 4.1: The Distribution of References to Eight Categories in Lifelines Elementary and Lifeline Pre-Intermediate

Notes: (1) Social identity and social groups; (2) Social interaction; (3) Belief and behaviour; (4) Social and political institutions; (5) Socialization and life-cycle; (6) National history; (7) National geography; (8) Stereotypes and national identity

The total 2965 cultural references in *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* were coded using Byram's eight categories. Those references cover many of the cultural checklist categories; however the distribution for each category differs. The most frequent distribution of references is to "Social interaction" in both textbooks, with the number of 627 codes in *Lifelines Elementary* and 518 codes in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, being found in almost all units of study except those in the *Extension* sections. Three categories of culture, including "Social identity and social groups", "Belief and behaviour" and "National geography" rank in the top four occurrences in each textbook. In *Lifelines Elementary*, "Belief and behaviour" is the second most frequently noted with 271 references, followed by "Social identity and social groups" (226 references) and "National geography" (213 references) respectively. As seen in the table, the references within these top four occurrences appear mostly in 14 units, but also emerge in the *Extension* parts to a limited extent. There is no reference to the "Social identity and social groups" category in Extension Units 13 and 14. Four of the five extension sections do not reference cultural information under the "Belief and behaviour" and "National geography" categories. In *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, the second frequent cultural category is "Social identity and social groups" (372 references). The third and fourth frequent cultural categories refer to "Belief and behaviour" and "National geography", with 250 and 223 references respectively. The distribution of the four top categories in each unit/extension section is unequal. Some units/extension sections contain much cultural information while others depict less or none. Examples of units/extension sections with a high frequency of cultural information are Units 1, 3 and 11 and Extension Units 4, 10 and 13, while no relevant information is found in Extension Unit 14. Furthermore, the Extension Unit 11 does not present any information with regard to "Social identity and social groups"; the Extension sections of Units 1, 5, 8, 9 and 12 do not present any information relating to "Social interactions"; the Extension sections of Units 2, 3, 6, 11 and 12 do not relay information regarding "Belief and behaviour"; and the Extension sections of Units 5, 6, 8, 9 and 11 omit references to "National geography".

It is significant to note the cultural aspects which receive less attention in *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. Four cultural categories, namely "Socialization and life-cycle", "Stereotypes and national identity", "Social and political identity" and "National history" are rarely emphasised and are distributed unequally among the units and extension sections of these two textbooks. "National history" receives the least attention, being only referenced once in Unit 9 of *Lifelines Elementary*. Similarly, it ranks least in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, accounting for only eight references in the total coding. Each unit or extension section lacks one to four cultural categories of information, with the exception of Extension units 13 and 14 in

Lifelines Elementary and Extension unit 14 in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, where no cultural information is provided to the student.

In order to further investigate the cultural content of the two Vietnamese EFL textbooks, the distribution in terms of subcategories was analysed. Subcategories were analysed in “Social identity and social groups” (4); “Social interaction” (5); “Belief and behaviour” (7); “Social and political institutions” (5); “Socialization and life-cycle” (3); “National history” (1); “National geography” (2); and “Stereotypes and national identity” (6). The findings are shown in Table 4.2 and illustrate the types of cultural information and the proportion for each. Table 4.3 shows a comparative analysis of the 10 most frequent categories of cultural information included in *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. A discussion follows.

Table 4.2 presents the frequency of 33 cultural themes. The theme “*Modes of addressing*” within the “Social interaction” category is the most frequent in both textbooks, with a total of 327 references in *Lifelines Elementary* and 375 references in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. More cultural information within this theme is included for Pre-Intermediate English level students than for Elementary English level students. The textbooks provide the most emphasis when introducing a wide variety of names and addressing systems in English and non-English speaking countries. “*Modes of addressing*” information enables students to become familiar with the uses of names and titles in different countries, which differ from Vietnamese cultural conventions. Such information may help students avoid experiencing cultural shocks and enable them to be more confident in cross-cultural communication. From an ICC approach, the textbooks integrate a specific cultural aspect in language education and focus students on an aspect of language, which may cause difficulty in student learning.

Three themes, “*Geographic features present the country*”, “*Degrees of formality*” and “*Situations of interaction*” are the next most frequently emphasised themes in *Lifeline Elementary* and account for 115 references each. Also in the *Lifelines Elementary* textbook, “*Dining etiquette*” has almost as much frequency of distribution with a total amount of 113 references. The subcategory “*Countries*” has a similar frequency (98 references) in the *Lifelines Elementary* category. “*Regional identity*” (85 references) ranks fifth and “*Occupational identity*”, “*Greetings*”, “*Social class*”, “*Recreations*” and “*Sports*”, with the numbers of 76 references, 69 references, 65 references, 63 references and 54 references respectively, round out the remainder of the top ten themes in this category.

Categories	Sub-categories	Number of sub-categorised cultural themes	
		Lifelines Elementary	Lifelines Pre-Intermediate
Social identity and social groups (4 sub-categories)	Social class	65	90
	Regional identity	85	118
	<i>States</i>	5	9
	<i>Counties</i>	2	1
	<i>Districts</i>	1	
	<i>Cities</i>	55	67
	<i>Others</i>	22	41
	Ethnic minority		8
Social interaction (5 sub-categories)	Occupational identity	76	156
	Greetings	69	28
	Modes of addressing	327	375
	Degrees of formality	115	57
	Situations of interactions	115	56
	Use of slangs	1	2
Belief and behaviour (7 sub-categories)	Moral belief	13	14
	Religious beliefs		3
	Daily routines	4	7
	Dining etiquette	113	108
	Sports	54	11
	Recreations	63	93
	Shopping	24	14
Social and political institutions (5 sub-categories)	State institutions	4	4
	Health care centres	2	
	Law and order	14	5
	Organisations	3	9
	Voting and elections	2	2
Socialization and life-cycle (3 sub-categories)	Institutions of socialisation	22	51
	<i>Schools and education</i>	5	13
	<i>Families</i>	11	22
	<i>Employment</i>	6	16
	Ceremonies	1	13
	Life-cycle	6	18
National history (1 sub-categories)	Historical periods and events represent national identity	1	8
National geography (2 sub-categories)	Countries	98	82
	Geographic features present the country	115	141
	<i>Statistical facts (area, population, etc.)</i>	1	5
	<i>States</i>	5	9
	<i>Cities</i>	55	64
	<i>Counties</i>	2	2
	<i>Districts</i>	1	
	<i>Others</i>	22	41
	<i>National parks</i>	1	1
	<i>Neighbouring countries and boundaries</i>	14	9
	<i>Nature of country/vegetation</i>	8	6
	<i>Maps</i>	3	
	<i>Climate</i>	3	4
Stereotypes and national identity (6 sub-categories)	Famous people	6	21
	National cultural heritage	15	24
	<i>Famous monuments</i>	5	14
	<i>Literary works</i>	4	1
	<i>Art works</i>	6	9
	Flags	13	
	National buildings	4	6
	National stereotypes	2	1
	Common symbols	6	2
Total	8 categories /33 sub-categories	1438	1527

Table 4.2: The Distribution of Cultural Themes in Lifelines Elementary and Lifelines Pre-Intermediate

Ranking order in Lifelines Elementary	Subcategories/ Cultural aspects	Ranking order in Lifelines Pre-Intermediate
1	<i>Modes of addressing</i>	1
2	<i>Geographic features present the country</i>	3
	<i>Degrees of formality</i>	9
	<i>Situations of interactions</i>	10
3	<i>Dining etiquette</i>	5
4	<i>Countries</i>	8
5	<i>Regional identity</i>	4
6	<i>Occupational identity</i>	2
7	<i>Greetings</i>	
8	<i>Social class</i>	7
9	<i>Recreations</i>	6
10	<i>Sports</i>	

Table 4.3: Top Ten Cultural Themes Presented in Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Textbooks

The top ten themes categories in *Lifelines Elementary* contain 12 cultural themes. Of the 12 cultural themes, ten of them, with the exception of “*Greetings*” and “*Sports*”, are found in the textbook for Pre-Intermediate English level students. As seen in the table, this textbook focuses on similar cultural elements, however distributes them differently. For example, “*Occupational identity*” ranks second in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, but in *Lifelines Elementary* it is less frequently referenced (6th). Likewise, the theme “*Countries*” is fourth in *Lifelines Elementary*; however, it is eighth in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*.

19 themes in *Lifelines Elementary* and 21 themes in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* are the least emphasised. Some of these themes occur in these textbooks’ passages, conversations or pictures, but make only a little contribution to their cultural content. Further, two subcategories, including “*Ethnic minority*” and “*Religious belief*”, are not included in the Elementary level

textbook while the themes, “*Healthcare centre*” and “*Flags*”, are not reflected in the Pre-Intermediate level textbook.

Lifelines Elementary and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* have a similar approach to cultural content. The presentation of “*Geographic features present the country*” mostly includes statistics about the area, population, and location of English speaking countries. The themes “*Countries*” and “*Regional identity*” are represented similarly. The cultural representations of the way people live (opinions, conventions of behaviour, food, hobbies and popular issues) are coded as “*Modes of addressing*”, “*Dining etiquette*”, “*Greetings*”, “*Recreations*” and “*Sports*”. These references focus mainly on native target language countries and only on a very few countries where English is spoken as a second language. Some non-English speaking countries, such as France and Nepal, are mentioned, but little is presented about French and Nepalese culture. Vietnamese culture is not addressed in *Lifelines Elementary* and emerges once in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*.

“*Degrees of formality*” (formal, semi-formal and informal) were investigated to illustrate the nature of communication represented in these textbooks. Under the theme “*Situations of interactions*”, many similar instances are presented in two textbooks. They present people having conversations in different contexts (at home, at the university, at the airport, etc.) about popular topics (families, hobbies, holidays, entertainment, shopping, health, daily life and future plans).

The theme “*Social class*” in both textbooks refers to middle class, working class and upper class people. References to lower class people are only found in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, where the textbook describes New Age Travellers as the rebels in society and juxtapose the poor beside the rich. Relatedly, “*Occupational identity*” is frequently presented with reference to the status of the different professions in these two textbooks. Professions in *Lifelines Elementary* are elaborated in detail whereas none of them are described thoroughly in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*.

Having reported on the frequency and distribution of cultural themes in two Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks, in the following section, I will briefly discuss the cultural content of these textbooks from an ICC perspective.

4.2 Issues Related to Cultural Content Presented in Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Textbooks

Lifelines Elementary and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* are specifically used for the teaching of English language in Vietnamese tertiary educational classroom context. These textbooks' content provides teachers and students with cultural knowledge. This knowledge refers to different aspects of culture, such as dining etiquette, shopping, voting, national stereotypes, etc., which helps construct "the experience in the real world" (Byram, 1997, p. 65). While textbooks strive to include important cultural knowledge to students, four issues need to be considered: (1) cultural information presented in textbooks mostly relates to the target culture, but is limited to the international target culture and students' local culture; (2) textbooks contain ways of thinking about culture – "big C" culture and "little c" culture – and may focus on cultural knowledge, rather than practical strategies for intercultural communication in a globalised society; (3) textbooks contain outdated information, which may impair students' learning; and (4) textbooks restrict content to information about history, stereotypes and identity.

4.2.1 Cultural Information Presented in the Textbooks Mostly Relates to the Target Culture but is Limited to the International Target and Students' Local Cultures

Throughout the textbooks, English speaking countries rather than non-English speaking countries are the focus. Specific representations of English culture ranging from daily lifestyles to national identity are presented. For example, systems of address and the use of first names in *Lifelines Elementary* present characters using first names in communicating with others, even with those they have met for the first time. Full names are sometimes employed in the case of formally introducing somebody in public, such as the case of being introduced by a broadcast presenter. The presentation of full names is also found outside of dialogue passages in these textbooks. Other uses of surnames are found in unit titles, such as: Mrs Clark (Unit 1), Ms Watson, Mr and Mrs Smith (Unit 2). Most are English names (see Appendix G). There is no instance of the use of Vietnamese names and addressing systems. There is naming and addressing from other cultures, some examples being Enrique, a Spanish name, Paolo (Italian), Banu (Turkish), Gábor (Hungarian), Martina Echevarría (Argentinean) and Keiko and Kumiko Tsuchida (Japanese).

Vietnamese and other non-English speaking ESL/EFL teachers and students may find that textbooks hinder their understanding and developing of ICC. The author of *Lifelines Elementary* textbook focuses on names and the addressing system from English culture, which are unfamiliar to Vietnamese teachers and students. In EFL classes, Vietnamese students may

experience confusion about English names and titles. They may continue to address English-speaking people using both their titles and first names, because they are familiar with the Vietnamese addressing system, which consists of a title and name, for example *Anh Quang* (Brother Quang) or *Chị Ngọc* (Sister Ngọc). They may feel that it is impolite to call older English-speaking people by their first name and they are not accustomed to using their surnames.

Additionally, English naming conventions may be unfamiliar to Vietnamese and other non-English speaking ESL/EFL teachers and students. In English culture, the convention of name order is given name, followed by middle names (if any), then family name, whereas Vietnamese people generally adhere to East Asian traditions of surname first, followed by given name(s). Such cultural differences may result in misunderstandings for foreign language students.

In the textbooks that I have analysed, references to “*Modes of addressing*” focus on the target culture. Aspects of students’ local culture are not mentioned and there are only rare references to those from non-English speaking countries. These textbooks do not present three main sources of cultural information including source culture, target culture and international target culture (Cortazzi & Zin, 1999). The textbooks I analysed may enable students to engage with unfamiliar experiences in English, but do not appear to prepare students to negotiate intercultural learning through opportunities to understand diverse cultures, to know how to intervene when cultural differences occur by putting themselves in a “third place” (Byram, 1989; Kramsch, 1993), or to engage in successful intercultural communication.

As noted, “*Geographic features present the country*” provides students with information about the area or population of a country, the localities belonging to a country (such as states, cities, counties, districts, etc.), the national parks, the neighbouring countries and boundaries, the nature of the country/vegetation, the maps and the climate of the country. Most frequently, this information is about cities in English speaking countries rather than non-English speaking countries. The Elementary level and Pre-Intermediate textbooks primarily mention London, New York and Manchester and refer to them many times throughout the textbook, while other cities are mentioned much less frequently in passages, conversations or pictures. Other geographic information is unequally distributed among units and extension sections, when it is presented at all.

This geographic information may assist students in getting acquainted with a few English speaking countries, but these textbooks disregard others. As a consequence, while students may acquire an understanding of English culture and appreciate the position of English in

contemporary world as an international language (McKay, 2002; L. H. Phan, 2008; Sharifian, 2009), these two textbooks provide limited information regarding its use in non-English speaking countries. English is a common means of communication for every country, EFL textbooks should include “lingua franca aims”²⁵ (Byram, 1997, p. 23) in order to enable students to “come to identify with the experience and perspectives of people in the countries and communities where the language is spoken” (Byram, 1997, p. 27). The two textbooks that I analysed may not fully support teachers in cultivating intercultural knowledge in students. Students are not provided with an understanding of English usage in countries like their own. The textbooks do not provide opportunities to integrate students learning with the diverse uses of English across many countries and cultures.

Most examples of English in use is contextualised in England, Britain, the UK, the USA, Australia and Canada throughout the two textbooks. Countries located in Europe and America account for the largest distribution, followed by those in Asia. Australia, Africa and Oceania are also observed through the introduction of some countries such as Australia, Uganda and New Zealand. References to 14 European countries are made (the nations of the UK, Ireland, Spain, France, Hungary, Poland, Italy, Turkey, Sweden, Belgium, Switzerland and Scotland) and 14 American countries are named (the USA, Canada, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Ecuador). Four Asian countries (India, Singapore, Thailand and China) and those of other continents are also named. In addition to countries, the two textbooks refer to geographic locations, which are described through the introduction of the places that characters come from, live in or stay during different periods of their lives. More specifically, they name cities rather than other states, counties or districts. As mentioned above, the highest frequency of cities named are those from English speaking countries. Of 205 locations named in these two textbooks (87 locations in *Lifelines Elementary* and 118 locations in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*), many of them belong to English speaking countries while few are from non-English speaking countries.

The inclusion of different countries and places in EFL textbooks helps teachers cultivate a global worldview among their students. The two Vietnamese EFL textbooks contain a number of locations around the world, which enable teachers to bring students to a multicultural world

²⁵ The lingua franca aims were defined by Byram (1997) including two objectives as follows:

To provide the potential for pursuing academic studies and practical training in English speaking countries or in countries where English is, for some subjects, the medium of instruction.

To increase by means of a common language the possibility of understanding, friendship and co-operation with all people who speak that language.

with the participation of people from diverse countries and different regions within a country. As is mentioned, these textbooks give students the chances to investigate the representative countries of English culture, but limit their exploration about countries where English can be used for intercultural communication. In this sense, these textbooks may present insight into any particular countries of English-speaking people; however, they did not explore intercultural issues within these. Such knowledge focuses on training students to be more like ‘native speakers’ rather than ‘intercultural speakers’. In a globalised context, Vietnamese students are more likely to interact with people from many countries. They are more likely to experience and explore different contexts of communication. It means that, in order to well prepare for such kind of interactions they should perform as ISs. In order to achieve that goal, EFL textbooks need to assist students to develop their intercultural awareness. The two textbooks I analysed focus more on the target language culture, which may hinder the development of intercultural communicative competence for Vietnamese students in particular and for foreign language students in general.

These textbooks link the teaching of English language to the introduction of the dominant English speaking countries and appear to ignore the claim that foreign language students should be exposed to a variety of “others” by creating many opportunities for them to work with different cultures (Kramsch, 1997). Addressing intercultural issues within foreign language education moves beyond providing students with geographic information. Presenting different situations from different contexts helps to bring students into the real world, because through this process students can develop understanding about “others”. In these textbooks, countries provide a representation for “others”. The inclusion of examples of how English is used in many countries outside the Anglosphere in EFL textbooks provides students with opportunities to develop greater knowledge about “others”. Within the content of these textbooks, students may only develop an outsider’s perspective appropriate for only English speaking countries. I would argue this does not provide enough intercultural contexts for students to work through. Students may not fully acquire intercultural knowledge and skills. It is better for them to develop perspectives on their own culture and other diverse cultures (Kramsch, 1997). The limitations of these two textbooks’ content might restrict students to partial cultural understanding and consequently they might experience unsuccessful cultural encounters.

I also investigated instances representing national identity. Again, these textbooks focus on the two dominant English speaking countries. Famous people, national cultural artefacts or national buildings are some typical representations of these nations. Many English and American famous people are mentioned. For instance, in Unit 3 of *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, Hetty Robinson is

presented as an American financial genius, along with her husband (Edward Green), a millionaire, and her son (Ned Robinson), a playboy who “inherited half of his mother fortune, and he spent it all on parties, holidays and expensive jewellery. He even bought a chamber pot covered with diamonds!” (*Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, Unit 3, p. 27). Bill Clinton, the President of the USA, is presented in Unit 13 of *Lifelines Elementary* and Robert Byrd, a Democrats senator from West Virginia, the USA, appears in Unit 11 of *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. The famous English people named are Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher; romantic poet, William Wordsworth; actor, Michael Kent; newsreader and television presenters, Fiona Bruce and Michael Wilson; and singer-songwriter, poet and guitarist, Marc Bolan. Most are briefly introduced with the exception of Fiona Bruce whose career as television presenter is given some attention.

National cultural artefacts are introduced through literary and artistic works belonging to English speaking countries. In these two textbooks, three out of four references to literary works are from famous English novels – *Hamlet*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. *The strange story of Martin Guerre* is introduced as a well-known French novel. The references to art works include songs and film, musicals, and plays. The six songs presented are all written by either English or American songwriters – *Wild thing*, *You’ve got to hide your love away*, *Great balls of fire*, *You’ve got what it takes*, *California dreaming*, and *Summertime Blues*, while the films and musicals are from three different countries. *Sunset Boulevard* and *The Winners* are American films and *Les Miserables* is a French film. *Miss Saigon*, *Starlight Express*, *Fame – The Musical* and *Cats* are the musicals presented. Interestingly, *Miss Saigon* is about a Vietnamese woman, but was written by a French theatre composer.

Eating habits of English speaking people are also a focus of these textbooks. Many kinds of Western food are recorded in Unit 5 of *Lifelines Elementary* and Units 4 and 8 of *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, such as champagne, cheese, chips, sausages, cereals, ham, lamb, wine, pizza, soft drink, coffee, etc., while food and drinks from Asian countries are not mentioned. The discussion on Western food and drinks are only referred to through a conversation between a waiter and customers, therefore only the names of food are listed, but none of them are elaborated in detail.

It is rare to find in these textbooks information related to Vietnamese students’ local culture. No mention of the cultural background of Vietnam is made by the textbook writer in *Lifelines Elementary*, while only some references in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* are coded that reflect Vietnamese culture. Numerous scholars support the significance of culture in foreign language

education, particularly the differences between cultures. Each country has its own culture, which people from other countries should acknowledge in order to be able to make appropriate international interactions. The teaching and learning of foreign languages relies on textbooks, especially when cultural information is concerned, because “the textbook provided a potential core of information” for teachers and students (Byram, Estarte-Sarries, & Taylor, 1991, p. 351). However, the *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* texts that are used in Vietnamese tertiary universities do not present students with many opportunities to broaden their knowledge of their own cultural roots and ascertain the value of their own identity. Therefore, these textbooks may not assist Vietnamese students in developing a strong sense of self-awareness such that they are better able to adapt themselves in communications across cultural contexts.

Almost all cultural references in these two textbooks only help students familiarise themselves with cultural backgrounds of countries different from their own. For example, the references to “Greetings” include eight traditional English greeting models: *Pleased to meet you*, *Nice to meet you*, *How do you do?* *Hi*, *Hello*, *Good morning*, *Good afternoon* and *Good evening*. In the first meeting, English people use three first ways mentioned above to show their respect for others. The first two units of *Lifelines Elementary* introduce these kinds of greetings. They also use five other types that are used in everyday interactions in formal, semi-formal and informal settings. “Greetings” is one of many cultural topics for the teaching and learning of culture in foreign language education (Brooks, 1986; Council of Europe, 2001). The inclusion of different greeting styles in these textbooks represents the cultural conventions appropriate in English speaking countries, but might not be relevant in Vietnamese contexts. Vietnamese students are familiar with greeting phrases, such as *Bác ăn cơm chưa?* (*Have you eaten yet?*) or *Anh đi đâu đấy?* (*Where are you going?*). In English classrooms, they tend to apply such greeting strategies instead of using English traditional greetings. The problems faced by Vietnamese students are closely related to cultural differences, and they can be sorted out if EFL textbooks provide facts about Vietnamese culture or brief descriptions of critical incidents that might cause misunderstandings in intercultural communications.

The theme “*Dining etiquette*” in both textbooks provides no information about Vietnamese culture. European eating habits are discussed through the presentation of different kinds of fast food (for example, hamburgers, hot dogs, cheeseburgers, French fries, pizza) and drinks (for example, cola, lemonade, orange juice, tea, coffee). Five groups of food are found in these textbooks, including meat (for example, bacon, sausages); fruit (for example, bananas, grapes); vegetables (for example, mushrooms, potatoes, tomatoes); drinks (for example, wine, beer,

milk, water); and others (for example, pasta, fish, cheese, rice, bread, sandwiches, eggs). Alcoholic drink is mentioned in Unit 4 of *Lifelines Elementary* and that people in England can only buy this kind of drink after they have turned 18. English people usually have a big meal in a day with traditional English food and might go to the pub at the weekend or eat out at their favourite restaurants. It is true that through the introduction of this theme, the fruitful portray of English people's eating habits was captured by students. However, these customs are strange to Vietnamese students, because they would have grown up influenced by their nation's conventions. They regularly have rice with caramelised salty pork or caramelised salty fish and vegetable soup with their meal. Dairy products are not popular kinds of food in Vietnam. In this sense, these textbooks do not give students opportunities to review the dining etiquettes of their own culture and also those of other cultures, except those of English-speaking cultures. In other words, these textbooks do not present any intercultural elements for cultural learning and teaching. This fact is incompatible with the proposed model for teaching and learning of culture, namely that students must have opportunities to acquire both culture-specific and culture-general knowledge necessary for communicating with people from other cultures (Paige et al., 2003).

There is only one reference to Vietnamese culture in the Pre-Intermediate textbook. The war in Vietnam is mentioned in the reading text of Unit 14 along with some other conflicts, such as the Suez crisis of 1956, the Afghanistan war and the Gulf war. Although these conflicts are not discussed in detail, they could still help Vietnamese students raise their awareness of their local culture and the other cultures. However, these textbooks contain limited content in relation to Vietnamese students' local culture and, thus, do not appear to support students to develop their English competence from an ICC perspective.

In summary, the two Vietnamese EFL textbooks contain different cultural elements that aim to assist students in understanding and becoming familiar with the cultural conventions of different countries around the world. Three sources of culture are mentioned; however, the students have more opportunities to work with the target culture. In foreign language education, the teaching and learning of the target language culture plays a significant role, because it helps students get used to the cultural backgrounds of native speakers and, in turn, avoid cultural misunderstandings in communication. In the past, when the goal of foreign language education was to train students to become native-like speakers, the focus on the target culture was a key element in foreign language classrooms. In the ESL/EFL education field, teachers and students valued the teaching and learning of English culture. However, the goal of English language education differs from the past as it now focuses on improving students' ability to understand

diverse cultures, including the target culture, the international target culture and their own local culture. In this regard, English teachers are asked to offer students an intercultural learning context, through which students can not only expand their cultural knowledge but also compare and contrast a variety of cultures. In the context of Vietnamese tertiary classrooms, English students can build their cultural knowledge, because their current textbooks offer a cultural frame for them to work with. Nevertheless, the limited cultural information about non-English speaking countries in these textbooks has influenced them in creating interculturally communicative interactions with other English language users. As they have little or no understanding of other English language users' cultural backgrounds, students may not know how to conduct themselves properly or they may confront cultural challenges. Such international interactions require the students to have appropriate intercultural knowledge. Therefore, I claim that one of the shortcomings of these textbooks is that they hinder students in demonstrating English intercultural learning for the development of ICC.

4.2.2 Textbooks Contain Two Ways of Thinking about Culture – “Big C” and “Little c” Cultures – which May Focus on Cultural Knowledge Rather Than Practical Strategies for Intercultural Communication in the Globalised Society

The findings from my analysis reveal that the two Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks cover a variety of cultural topics, such as education, daily life, social interaction, literature, politics, employment, etc., which belong to two groups of culture – “big C” and “little c” cultures. However, cultural references to both groups of culture focus on cultural knowledge rather than practical strategies for intercultural communication in the globalised society. The following section will begin by presenting the inclusion of “big C” and “little c” cultures in these textbooks, and close with a discussion on these cultural groups from an ICC perspective.

4.2.2.1 Textbooks Contain Two Groups of Culture, Including “Big C” and “Little c” Cultures

Throughout the textbooks, both “big C” and “little c” cultures are presented. In terms of “big C” culture, these textbooks mention education, literature, music, geography and institutions, while “little c” culture is represented through the introduction of people's ways of thinking, behaving, treating other people or using a language. Some following examples will describe the integration of “big C” and “little c” cultures in *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*.

These textbooks introduce “*Schools and education*” to students by naming several educational institutions and discussing the schooling of some textbook characters. There are seven

references to schools, including Gordon Language School, Westin High School, Brindley College, York University, Bristol University, Istanbul University and Bournemouth University. The above educational topic is raised in Giani's and Mary's conversation (Getting started, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*), Paul's children (Unit 1, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*), Gloria's family (Extension Unit 2, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*), Geoff's life (Unit 3, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*), Emilio's and Maximilian's life (Extension Unit 7, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*), and Tamara's daily routine (Unit 11, *Lifelines Elementary*). These characters have all had a good education and some of them have attended university. Paul's children are small and they do not stay anywhere for a long time; however they still go to school for a few months. Giani, Mary, Daniel – Gloria's brother-and Geoff are students at different universities, while Tamara is a high school student. Emilio and Maximilian have finished their schooling and have different careers. Education is highly appreciated and people strive for a good education, because "nobody can take your education away from you" (*Lifelines Elementary*, Unit 11, p. 79).

"Social and political institutions" is one among eight cultural checklist category defined by Byram (1993a), which belong to "big C" group. Both textbooks contain a number of cultural references to the five themes in this category. There are two health care centres (Forest Health Club and Henley Manor) and twelve organisations (AA Company, Coca-Cola, McDonald, BIC, Volkswagen, Hero Bicycle Company, Reynolds Tobacco Company, Waterman International, Nuffield Electronics, Sainsbury, Ella Marie and Nike). Some examples of the social and political institutions are also named, including Midland Bank, Federal Reserve Bank, Bank of England, Bank of France, Fort Knox post, Science Museum and Grand Theatre. The "*Law and order*" theme is discussed through an introduction to Britain's laws, with a total of 14 rules, and there is one reference to "*Voting and elections*".

"*National cultural heritage*" describes the valued historic products created by the members of a country that are passed down from one generation to another. Famous monuments, literary works and art works are represented for this theme in these textbooks. I found 15 references to "*National cultural heritage*" in *Lifelines Elementary* and 24 references in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. The total of 5 literary works and 15 art works has been reported earlier in Section 4.2.1. 19 historical monuments can be found in these two textbooks, among which some typical examples are: the CN Tower in Canada, Big Ben Tower in England, the Statue of Liberty in the USA, the pyramids in Egypt, the Boudhanath Stupa in Nepal, the Eiffel Tower in France, the Taj Mahal in India, the Parthenon in Greece, Sugar Loaf Mountain in Brazil, the Colosseum in Italy, and Sydney Opera House in Australia.

These textbooks present students with opportunities to learn about invisible “little c” culture. These cultural aspects may not be obvious or well known to outsiders and may often create cross-cultural misunderstanding and communicative obstacles. Among instances of “little c” culture, those belonging to the themes of “*Degrees of formality*” and “*Situations of interactions*” receive the most attention in these textbooks. With regards to the theme of “*Degrees of formality*”, three levels of formality, including formal, semi-formal and informal, illustrate the nature of communication. The utilisation of each degree depends on the relationship between the subject speakers. Informality is most frequently employed by interlocutors. Family members, friends and colleagues usually have informal conversations with one another, while they tend to use formal language with strangers. However, they sometimes use informal language with people they do not know when the situation of interaction is informal in nature. Semi-formal language also appears in the interactions through the use of phrasal verbs in conversations (for example: set off; look for), contractions (for example: I’m; it’s) and polite English (for example: Would you like to...? That would be great/nice; or I’m afraid...).

The degrees of formality presented in these textbooks are somehow similar to those in Vietnam. In communication with English-speaking people, the Vietnamese students may not face alien modes of behaviour; however they may experience the differences in discourse conventions. Traditionally, the students in the Vietnamese educational system are described as silent, reserved and modest (V. C. Le, 2011). This kind of Vietnamese student behaviours is interpreted as showing respect to their interlocutors, however to English speaking people, it may be understood as a lack of interest and unwillingness to speak. In this sense, Vietnamese modes of communication are not in harmony with the traditional conventions of Anglophones. It is necessary to help students master diverse discourse conventions, so they can differentiate between unconscious sociolinguistic situations when interacting with other English language users.

As noted, many instances are coded for the “*Situations of interactions*” theme. Each reference provides a setting of interaction and they combine to create a fully illustrated picture of human society from different perspectives. People talk at a school, a hotel, a pub, a station, a clothes shop, a travel agent’s, a doctor’s, work place, home, a party and a concert, and about families, hobbies, holiday, entertainment, shopping, health, daily life and future plans. These communicative situations reflect humans’ everyday activities, which are one among seven cultural topics suggested for English programmes by the Council of Europe (2001). The teaching and learning of culture in English language education is closely linked to the

integration of “little c” culture. As stated by Tomalin and Stempleski (1993), “little c” cultural knowledge plays a very significant role in promoting students’ ICC, because it contributes to students’ abilities to function socially in a cultural group/community. In such a way, these textbooks may help Vietnamese students familiarise themselves with foreign language societies, their people and their life-styles. As a consequence, they may develop their English learning both linguistically and socio-culturally.

I also investigated many instances representing humans’ daily activities which fall under such themes as “*Recreation*”, “*Sports*”, “*Shopping*” and “*Daily routines*”. These textbooks introduce characters enjoying themselves via different forms of recreation. They love watching television, especially entertainment programs, and make their days and their lives more important by different activities, such as eating out, going on holidays, going to the pub, going to the cinema, etc. (see Appendix H). Either indoor recreational activities (for example, watching television, playing the piano, listening to music) or outdoor activities (for example, going on holiday, having a swim, going to the cinema, eating out, playing sports, going to the park) are chosen. Different kinds of sports are discussed, including football, tennis, swimming, golf, etc. (see Appendix I). The most adventurous sports are helicopter-flying, car-racing, scuba-diving and hang-gliding. Golf is considered to be a game for the rich and has gradually attracted more attention since Tiger Woods won the US Master golf tournament. The text in Unit 13, *Lifelines Elementary*, relates that “millions of kids are going to take up golf now, and they’re all going to want to play like the Tiger” (*Lifelines Elementary*, Unit 13, p. 93). “*Shopping*” is a popular topic in these textbooks. There are many conversations regarding shopping activities. Some dialogues in Unit 1, *Lifelines Elementary*, or Unit 5, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, depict conversations between the assistants and the customers. Also, the topic of shopping is found in Units 3 and 11, *Lifelines Elementary*, and focus on people who want to go to the shops and buy something for themselves or souvenirs.

Numerous references to “*Daily routines*” are found in both textbooks. For example, Unit 1 of *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* describes the morning routines of five people, namely Jo, Christine, Ken, Sam and Colin. They do “exactly the same things” (*Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, Unit 1, p. 8) every morning. Jo’s routine is as follows:

Oh yes, I always do exactly the same things. I wake up at seven o’clock every morning, but I don’t get up till quarter past seven. I switch on the radio and listen to the new. Then I go to the loo and brush my teeth. I have a shower and dry my hair. Then I choose my

clothes and I get dressed. I don't eat anything for breakfast. I just have a cup of coffee. Then I go to work. Yes, it's always the same (*Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, Unit 1, p. 8).

The routines described in these textbooks are varied, such as that found in Unit 1, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, where Paul and Janice are presented as travellers. They have very simple lives and their days are as follows:

During the day they sit and talk to their friends while the children play. In the evenings they usually eat together with other families around a big fire, and somebody usually plays a guitar or switches on a CD player (*Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, Unit 1, p. 10).

The presentation of these examples helps to reveal a picture of people's lives from a cultural perspective. Apart from the above cultural themes, the two textbooks portray people's beliefs and behaviours, including people's opinions on social problems (for example: noisy neighbours in Unit 1, marrying without parents' permission in Unit 3, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*) or the belief about doing the right things (for example: treating other people well in Unit 9, *Lifelines Elementary*; being an honest person in Unit 9, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*). Another kind of belief included in Unit 5 of *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* is religiosity. Three names of religions that are included are those of Christianity, Buddhism and Islam; however no further information is provided about these religions. These instances emphasise "the notion of developing a socialist citizen" (Doan, 2005, p. 451), which enables teachers to integrate moral education into their EFL teaching practices. The textbooks I analysed give students opportunities to learn about the "perspectives, viewpoints and behaviours of people in such social relations as self in relation to other persons, groups and organisations" (Doan, 2005, p. 452). Such cultural content in these two textbooks is an example of a hidden curriculum. It plays a significant part in EFL curriculum, assisting teachers in enacting social and moral values in their EFL pedagogies in order to prepare students for life in multicultural societies, both academically and as moral citizens (Kaur, 2015).

In foreign language teaching and learning, the integration of "big C" and "little c" cultures into teaching materials helps to raise students' cultural awareness. It also provides students with communicative strategies drawn from many realistic situations in English contexts. As a result, students can develop their cultural competence alongside their linguistic competence. These textbooks focus on "big C" and "little c" cultures. They appear to be important cultural sources for EFL teachers and students.

In the Vietnamese context, a common aim for foreign language education as outlined in the Decision No 1400/QĐ-TTg (cited in Section 2.4.2.1) is a focus on international communication. EFL teachers are required to develop students' ICC. Along with this aim, the foremost focus in EFL programs is on the introduction of "big C" and "little c" cultures. The teaching of "Big C" culture provides students with information for the development of cultural knowledge, while the teaching of "little c" culture assists students in practising strategies to have effective communication. In language use, "little c" determines the choice of vocabulary appropriate to the cultural framework of a society. If they dispense with the cultural conventions in people's everyday life, they may create a failure in communication. In summary, it is necessary to develop Vietnamese students' knowledge of both "big C" and "little c" cultures. The textbooks I analysed are suitable for the teaching and learning of cultural aspects related to these two cultural groups. However, these textbooks are also limited to the provision of cultural information rather than practical activities to promote students' ICC, which will be presented in greater detail below.

4.2.2.2 References to "Big C" and "Little c" Cultures Focus on Cultural Knowledge Rather Than Practical Strategies for Intercultural Communication in a Globalised Society

Lifelines Elementary and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* represent cultural content in the form of information, through which students can demonstrate an understanding and awareness of "big C" culture and "little c" culture. Almost all of the cultural instances in the texts provide students with factual information about tangible creations (the representation of "big C" culture) and intangible creations (the representation of "little c" culture), but give few opportunities for them to experience culture-based activities to improve their intercultural skills. In these textbooks, culture is integrated with language content and serves as a reference for teachers to facilitate the teaching of linguistic competence. As noted in Section 3.3.2, each unit is divided into five linguistic sections, including *Grammar*, *Vocabulary*, *Reading and writing*, *Listening and speaking*, and *Pronunciation*. The learning tasks designed for each section aim to drill students in grammar, vocabulary and four language skills. There are no tasks or instructions that guide teachers in dealing with cultural content. Although cultural content is available in these textbooks, it is not provided as a separate or extra component of EFL teaching and learning. The approach of the cultural content of these textbooks does not allow students to engage in more interactive and experiential learning activities, such as discovering aspects of a chosen culture or experiencing the cultural context for themselves. These textbooks are insufficient for intercultural education. English intercultural teaching and learning requires teachers to be aware of the important role of culture and the components of ICC (Byram, 1989; Cortés, 2007;

Deneme, Ada, & Uzun, 2011; Genc & Bada, 2005; Sercu, 2006; Thanasoulas, 2001). Of the five significant abilities of ICC (attitude, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness (Byram, 1997), these textbooks focus only on cultural knowledge. As a consequence, these textbooks limit Vietnamese tertiary EFL students' mastery of ICC.

Providing cultural information can be understood as a first stage through which students can enrich their cultural knowledge (Moran, 2011). In order to become competent users of the studied language, students need to practise using learned knowledge in communication across cultures. In this regard, students should have opportunities to demonstrate not only an understanding of different cultures, but also their abilities to make use of that knowledge in a realistic context. The use of *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes enables teachers to infuse “big C” and “little c” cultural knowledge into their students, however it restricts them in providing activities to develop students' abilities to use English in pragmatic situations and across cultures.

The goal of Vietnamese foreign language education aims to prepare students to become ‘intercultural speakers’ who can “study and work in a multilingual and multicultural environment of integration” (Prime Minister, 2008c, p. 1). From an ICC perspective, Vietnamese language study aspires to integrate culture into language learning in order to promote students' cultural understanding and prepare them for the opportunities and experiences in globalised society. ICC should develop students' awareness and understanding of the differences between cultures, and allow them to practise strategies to cope with a variety of intercultural interactions. English language programs should contribute to improving intercultural knowledge and skills for Vietnamese students. More specifically, textbooks – as the guides for EFL teachers and students – should put students in an intercultural learning context and build up their ICC.

4.2.3 Textbooks May Contain Outdated Information, which May Impair Students' Learning

Two currently used Vietnamese EFL textbooks, *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* were published in 1996. Many parts of these textbooks, especially those related to politics, science, population and famous people are dated. It is interesting to note that the content of these textbooks became dated once they were published, because the publication process often took much time. The information provided in these textbooks reflects the world of the 90s decade, from more than nineteen years ago, in the areas of: people, lifestyle, viewpoints,

society, environment, etc. While this dated cultural information may not affect students' linguistic competence, it may lead to students' misunderstandings or confusions. Some examples are presented as follows.

Unit 13 in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* provides some information about science and technology. The unit reports that personal computers had not been invented. However, Vietnamese students of 2016 know that personal computers are ubiquitous in contemporary society. Another example is found in Unit 4 of the Pre-Intermediate textbook, which reports that scientists calculated that, by the year 2050, America's population will increase by 50 per cent to 383 million. However, a national report in 2008 indicates that the population of the US will increase to 438 million by 2050 (Passel & Cohn, 2008), and the latest research in 2014 estimates that the total US population is projected to rise to 398.3 million by 2050 (Colby & Ortman, 2014). Obtaining knowledge from textbooks is a valuable way to enable students to cultivate a healthy and updated global view. These textbooks do not contain current scientific knowledge; therefore they may adversely affect students' learning.

It seems that the information relating to famous celebrities creates much confusion for students. For example, Unit 13 in *Lifelines Elementary* discusses Bill Clinton as the President of the United States and Tiger Woods as a 21-year-old golf professional. In fact, Bill Clinton retired some years ago and Tiger Woods is now 41 years old, because he was born in 1975, as stated in this textbook. Such information influences the process of EFL teaching and learning, because teachers have to revise textbook content and give students explanations about the outdated information. These textbooks try to appear current by talking about celebrities in the 90s. There are a lot of celebrities to introduce to students in 2016. It would be better if these textbooks presented students with the notion of celebrities and guided them to connect their learning to the current situations. Students may discuss celebrities they know or explore those who are famous in the modern world.

Culture, as described in Section 2.2.1, reflects all aspects of human life, and changes along with the development of human society. Culture is a dynamic form. In order to teach culture well, it is necessary to be current. What these textbooks should do is to provide opportunities for students to explore current cultural forms (see Chapter 6).

4.2.4 Textbooks Restrict Content regarding Information about History, Stereotypes and Identity

There are ten references to historical events, of which only one is investigated in *Lifeline Elementary*. These events in the USA, UK, Yugoslavia, Egypt, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq,

Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Israel provide an opportunity for students to obtain some specific knowledge about these nations. For example, Unit 4 in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* recounts the history of American immigration, describing the USA as a multicultural country with four major ethnic groups of minorities: Hispanics, Blacks (African Americans), Asians and Pacific Islanders. The unit relates how the American population increased very quickly through immigration and how immigration caused many problems, which required the US Government to enact strict policies. Another example is found in Unit 13 of the same textbook, where the rule of Britain first female Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is discussed. Some other historical events are described in Unit 14, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, referring to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, the Suez Crisis of 1956 in Egypt and the wars in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq.

There is no information in these textbooks related to current periods and events in the constitution of a nation and its identity. As the information provided is dated, there are no opportunities for students to connect their learning to contemporary issues. It was interesting to note that there are few references to the subject of “National history”, considering that a number of scholars identify that understanding history is a crucial step to understand the culture of any country (Davcheva & Sercu, 2005; Parkes & Sharp, 2014). Historical information about a country is background information, which enables students to gain in-depth insight into a country. These textbooks provide few examples of national history; therefore they may hinder students from properly understanding any specific country. Since English is used in many countries, not just within the Anglophone communities, EFL students are presented with a good opportunity to get to know various cultures. EFL instruction requires students to have an adequate knowledge of the countries and cultures with which they wish to effectively communicate. It would be better if these textbooks enabled students to learn about both national historical and current events, in order to demonstrate their intercultural learning as they become citizens of the world.

With regards to stereotypes and national identity, these textbooks provide some facts about England, France, Russia and the USA relating to famous people, literary works, art works and scientific achievements (see Section 4.2.2.1). The little information provided is insufficient for students to gain any deep understanding of these countries. As discussed in my literature review chapter, EFL textbooks can provide insight into culture through discussions of social class, gender and religion. These textbooks have missed those opportunities to develop in Vietnamese students’ an extensive understanding of diverse countries.

The above discussions have presented some analysis of the presentation of cultural content in *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. The next section reviews the findings for Phase 1 of textbook analysis, which will serve as the introduction to Phase 2, which investigates teachers' cultural teaching practices.

4.3 Summary of Textbook Findings

What follows are some of the significant findings drawn from my analysis:

As noted in Section 3.3.2, these two Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks include both linguistic and cultural information. Their linguistic content is more substantial than their cultural content. These textbooks provide students with opportunities to learn English both linguistically and culturally. However, they restrict students' development of cultural awareness through their focus on grammatical structures, vocabulary items, phonetic rules and the four language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing).

These EFL textbooks cover Byram's eight cultural categories. In this regard, these textbooks provide information illustrating human culture through different cultural aspects. Few of these cultural aspects are presented in detail, while others are just mentioned, but do not receive much discussion. Despite the attention that ICC pedagogy was given in the 1990s, these textbooks do not invite teachers to incorporate intercultural teaching into their EFL instruction.

The number of references to different cultural categories is distributed unequally in these textbooks. As presented in the previous sections, the most frequent occurrence of references is to: "Social interaction", "Belief and behaviour", "Social identity and social groups", and "National geography". In contrast, the subject of "National history" receives the least amount of attention. These textbooks introduce students to the historical background of only a few countries. Moreover, the embedded information is brief and simplified. In this sense, these textbooks are insufficient for students to obtain a rounded understanding of any particular cultural background.

The same unequal distributions of references to different cultural subcategories are found in these textbooks. The finding uncover the fact that the 33 cultural subcategories are treated differently from each other, among which the top ten most frequent occurrences fall under the following themes: *Modes of addressing*, *Geographic features present the country*, *Degrees of formality*, *Situations of interactions*, *Dining etiquette*, *Countries*, *Regional identity*, *Occupational identity*, *Greetings*, *Social class*, *Recreations* and *Sports*. These themes belong to both "big C" and "little c" cultures. These textbooks provide students with opportunities to

demonstrate an understanding and awareness of “big C” and “little c” cultures, however, the texts focus on introducing cultural information rather than offering the practical strategies necessary for intercultural communication. From an ICC perspective, students may be good at developing their intercultural knowledge, but may have problems performing at an international communication level. These textbooks do not help students to apply learned knowledge for the development of intercultural skills.

These EFL textbooks present three sources of culture: target culture, source culture and international target culture. However, the number of references to different cultural sources is distributed unequally in these textbooks. Target culture is highlighted through the introduction of cultural topics related to England and the USA, while far fewer examples of specific cultural aspects refer to international target culture. Information about the source culture or Vietnamese culture is hardly included in either textbook, except for one reference in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. These textbooks provide Vietnamese students with little cultural knowledge of countries where English is used as an international language, and almost no cultural information about their own nation. The approach to the cultural sources of these textbooks does not allow students to learn about the cultures of different countries in order not only to develop a self-awareness of their local culture but also to draw a comparison with those of other cultures. As a consequence, the use of these textbooks may limit students’ intercultural learning.

These EFL textbooks provide cultural information in order to assist teachers in teaching linguistic competence. Cultural content acts as a means to help students learn grammatical structures and syntactic rules, but not social and cultural practices. The subject of culture is covered in these textbooks, but with a focus on cultural knowledge. The cultural content of these textbooks is inadequate for the teaching of culture due to: their limitations on cultural information about countries where English is not spoken natively; their restriction of some cultural information, such as historical cultural background and national identity; and their outdated cultural information. Although these textbooks present cultural information about foreign countries, they cannot draw students’ attention to the challenges that intercultural encounters may entail. In EFL classes, teachers using only these textbooks may not address culture as a core component. They may not help students demonstrate their learning of diverse cultures and strategies in order to communicate across cultures.

This chapter offers insights into the cultural content of Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks. In the context of Vietnamese EFL classes, *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* are currently used as the official teaching materials and provide the major content for EFL courses.

Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers use textbooks as the guideline for their EFL lessons, with the purpose of developing students' English competence. As my aim was to uncover the teaching of culture by Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers, I approached teachers at a Vietnamese higher institution, conducted face-to-face individual interviews with them and visited their EFL classes. The results of the textbook analysis help to identify the most evident cultural aspects used by Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers in their teaching of culture. In the next chapter, findings and discussion about EFL teachers' teaching of culture in the Vietnamese context will be presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS FROM PHASE 2: THE TEACHING OF CULTURE

BY VIETNAMESE TERTIARY EFL TEACHERS

English language teachers utilise several techniques, practices and strategies which base on methods stemming from approaches or language learning theories shaped by learning theories ... What they do in class is a reflection of a method, the practice of a particular theory and the formulation of a solution imposed proactively on the learning process ... However, several English teachers apply methodological techniques oftentimes without identifying the theoretical associations. For them, palpable transformations and results are valid and vital, they need to observe student learning and witness the progress. Actually, learning is the overall corollary of education and what ultimately matters for language teachers is the evolution of learning which can only be measured by worthwhile learning outcomes.

(Kurt, 2015, p. 309)

English language teachers' awareness of innovative language teaching methodology plays a significant role in teachers' ability to develop students' English competence (Kurt, 2015). As discussed in Chapter Two, the objective of ICC language learning is the acquisition of linguistic and cultural knowledge. Teachers of English adopt an ICC approach work to achieve these teaching objectives in an English course. My study aims to provide insight into Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers' teaching practices in order to examine how they help students acquire cultural knowledge. As EFL teachers rely on textbooks as guides (Wen-Cheng et al., 2011), in the previous chapter I presented an analysis of two common textbooks used in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes. This chapter provides findings from a qualitative case study, focusing on the ways and the extents to which Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers integrate culture in their EFL pedagogies. I conducted this case study at a Vietnamese higher institution in order to address two research questions: 1) *Given that cultural content has many forms, as identified by Byram (1993a), which forms are the most evident in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes?*; and 2) *In what ways, and to what extent, do Vietnamese tertiary teachers infuse cultural knowledge into EFL pedagogy?*

This chapter is organised into four sections: teachers' views of language and culture, EFL teaching materials, the ways teachers infuse cultural knowledge into EFL pedagogy and activities to support the teaching of culture. The analytical framework adopted from Byram (1993a) assists in analysing teachers' interviews and classroom observations in terms of the cultural forms they were working with. I begin with a discussion about participants' perceptions of language and culture teaching (Section 5.1) in order to provide an understanding of how teachers view EFL instruction, particularly teachers' conceptualisation of culture and the teaching of culture. The chapter continues with Section 5.2 which presents the findings about the different types of teaching materials employed by the participants in their own teaching context. It describes the presentation of cultural content embedded in these teaching materials. Section 5.3 deals with teaching practices. The description reveals how participants integrate culture in their EFL lessons. This chapter ends with Section 5.4, a presentation of professional development activities to support ICC teaching, which is a source of information for Vietnamese governmental policy makers, institutional managers and EFL teachers that will be useful for achieving teaching targets.

5.1 Teacher's Perceptions of Language and Culture Teaching

As discussed in Chapter Two, language and culture are interconnected. Language cannot be taught without culture, and consequently language teaching is culture teaching. In EFL classes, there exists available opportunities for teachers to integrate culture with language teaching. Therefore, teachers need to carefully think about how to incorporate culture effectively into their lessons, so that they can develop students' cultural competence alongside linguistic competence. How EFL teachers infuse linguistic and cultural knowledge into their classroom practices depends on their educational beliefs about language teaching (Pajares, 1992). At the outset of this study, I wished to gain an understanding of how teachers incorporate culture in their EFL classes. To achieve this, it was necessary to ascertain teachers' perspectives on the relationship between culture and language learning. The findings from the teachers' interviews focused on four main issues, namely: why they wanted to teach EFL, their goals, their conceptualisation of culture and how they viewed the teaching of culture in EFL classrooms.

5.1.1 Teachers' Rationales for Teaching EFL

This section presents five Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers' rationales for teaching EFL. Their responses are summarised in Table 5.1

Participants	English as a favourite subject	Talented in learning English	Talented in teaching practices	Preferred career for female	Family influence on career choice
Anh	√	√	√	√	
Binh	√	√			
Duyen	√			√	√
Hieu	√		√	√	
Luong	√		√		

Table 5.1: Reasons for Being an EFL Teacher

English as a favourite subject: All of the participants indicated that English was their favourite subject in school. They gave a range of reasons, which included: English plays an important role in the future; English helps to build an understanding about other countries; English helps people to pursue their career passions. For example, Anh foresaw “the significance of English language in the future” and wished “to become a teacher of English” (Anh, Interview 1). Although she did not give any detailed information about the important position of this language to future society, her viewpoint was supported by her perspectives about the lingua-franca status of English in the contemporary world. English and English language teaching seemed “ubiquitous in the world, playing a role everywhere from large scale global politics to the intricacies of people’s lives” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 5). In Vietnam, English was taught nationally from primary to tertiary level at either normal or selective schools. Binh was proud to be a student at an English selective school. As she was proficient in English and had the opportunity to learn English intensively, she cultivated her passion for becoming an English teacher.

Hieu and Duyen both liked English and wanted to master this language to discover new things about England and English people. They felt they could broaden their minds with an understanding about different countries in the world. They had a passion for English learning and wanted to incorporate this language into their careers. Luong was the most experienced teacher in foreign language teaching. She taught Russian and English, and she was satisfied with her occupation as a teacher of foreign languages. Luong expressed herself thus: “I, myself, love foreign languages ... When I teach Russian, I love Russian. Therefore, when I became a teacher of English, I loved English very much” (Luong, Interview 1).

Talented in learning English: Two out of five participants, Anh and Binh, explicitly stated that they were proud of being good at English. Anh described her capacity in learning English by

saying, “I felt I could perceive foreign languages quite well” (Anh, Interview 1). She referred to pronunciation as the most important element to signify achievement in learning and teaching English. Pronunciation directly affects EFL learning to the extent that “limited pronunciation skills can decrease learners’ self-confidence, restrict social interactions, and negatively affect estimations of a speaker’s credibility and abilities” (Gilakjani, 2012, p. 119). Anh felt confident about her pronunciation and found that learning and teaching English language well was possible for her. In her third interview, she again stressed her aptitude for English. She said: “I find that I have the capacity in foreign language learning; that is, how I can make appropriate pronunciation” (Anh, Interview 3). In the same way, Binh showed her aptitude for English by mentioning that she was a student of an English selective class. She stated: “I had learned at English selective class since I was in upper secondary school” (Binh, Interview 1).

Talented in teaching practices: Three of the participants pointed out their perceived talent for EFL teaching. One participant, Luong, worked as a teacher of foreign languages and could teach both Russian and English. She found teaching easy. Similarly, Hieu described herself as a born teacher. She explained her gift for EFL teaching by noting: “I have the feeling that I possess the teaching talent” (Hieu, Interview 1). Another participant, Anh, directly mentioned her strong teaching ability. She possessed pedagogical skills and knowledge that may be viewed as significant requirements for a competent teacher (Liakopoulou, 2011). She had experience in the role of a teacher before devoting her life to EFL profession. She showed her competence in “perform[ing] teaching practice and impart[ing] knowledge on students” (Anh, Interview 3). Anh’s teaching ability enabled her to create effective EFL lessons.

Preferred career for female: Two of the participants, Anh and Duyen, went into EFL teaching because it was considered a preferred career for women. They referred to the advantages of being a teacher and the supporting viewpoints in Vietnamese society. Being EFL teachers helped them support their own families and specifically their children. In Vietnam, teaching is not only seen as a respected career, but as most suitable for women. For example, Duyen reportedly decided to teach EFL because she was female and this career was “suitable for [her] family in the future” (Duyen, Interview 1); whereas, on the other hand, Anh explained that becoming an EFL teacher meant “becoming the teacher of [her] children” (Anh, Interview 3). She added one more reason, which reflected Vietnamese cultural values: “Vietnamese people appreciate[d] a teaching career and a lot of Vietnamese males want[ed] to marry female teachers” (Anh, Interview 3).

Vietnamese core cultural values promote the sense of belonging, filial piety, respect for learning, knowledge and the teacher, and appreciation of effort (T. T. H. Phan, 2011). Each Vietnamese child develops within this culture. The sense of respect for learning, knowledge and the teacher is reflected in the proverb: “Tôn sư trọng đạo” (Respect the teacher, respect morality). This tradition emphasises the social position of educated people, especially the teachers in Vietnamese society. Teaching is an important career for young Vietnamese people (N. T. Tran, 2006). The Vietnamese Government reinforces this tradition, as is evident in Decision No 167-HĐBT (1982), which established November 20 as Vietnamese Teachers’ Day (Prime Minister, 1982), and in Decision No 16/2008/QĐ-BGDĐT (2008), which specified that teaching is a respected and honoured career in Vietnamese society (Prime Minister, 2008a).

Traditionally, Vietnamese women are expected to work in the home and raise children (T. B. Do, N. V. Le, & L. K. Nguyen, 2002). Moreover, women are responsible for maintaining family happiness and the relationships between the family and the society. Women spend much time taking care of their own families and establishing the image of ideal females in the Vietnamese culture. These Vietnamese social morals influenced Anh’s and Duyen’s career selection. Teaching seems to be a suitable occupation for them. Their passions for EFL teaching helped them function satisfactorily in both the role of a mother in a family and a teacher at a school.

Of all these participants, Hieu was the only one who had worked prior to being a teacher. She enjoyed teaching more, because she realised that “it was much more comfortable and did not bring much stress in comparison to some other jobs” (Hieu, Interview 1). She chose to dedicate her whole life to the career of teaching.

Family influence on career choice: Only one teacher reported that her career choice was guided by her father. She explained that many family members on her paternal side have worked as teachers. She chose to be an EFL teachers like her father. She said: “The factor that influences my career choice is my family tradition ... My father wants me to proceed with his teaching career, so I would love to” (Duyen, Interview 1). Her choice reflects an age-old Vietnamese cultural value, which is expressed in the saying: “Cha truyền, con nối” (Father transmits, child progresses). As her father and many relatives devoted their whole lives to education, Duyen inherited both her talent and love for her teaching career from them. She knew her responsibility to maintain the family tradition and bring honour to her ancestors.

In general, the participants in my study showed their interest in and preference for the EFL profession. Their goals for EFL teaching are presented in the section below.

5.1.2 Teachers' Goals for EFL Education

In the interviews, the participants were asked about their main goals for teaching EFL. Table 5.2 summarises the specific teaching goals defined by each participant, and the three sections below present the aspects of teaching that these participants consider to be the most important for their EFL students.

Participants	Helping students to communicate in English	Providing students with cultural knowledge	Helping students to achieve high grades
Anh	√	√	
Binh	√		
Duyen	√	√	
Hieu	√		√
Luong	√	√	

Table 5.2: Teachers' Goals for EFL Education

Helping students to communicate in English: The support of students' development of communicative competence was the participants' most commonly reported goal. They either stated this goal explicitly or implicitly. Duyen defined her teaching goal as "helping students to have a means of communication, so students can own necessary the knowledge to integrate themselves in contemporary global village" (Duyen, Interview 1). Binh used the words "know how" to describe her goal. She said: "My goal for students is that my students must know how to speak [English], know how to listen [to English] and know how to communicate [in English]" (Binh, Interview 1). She focussed her lessons on "concentrating on communicative competence and paying much attention to communication" (Binh, Interview 1). Another participant, Hieu, aimed to "help students [know] how to communicate using their studied language" (Hieu, Interview 1). Two other teachers reported that they applied the CLT approach in their EFL lessons. They mentioned the necessity of teaching students the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), grammar and vocabulary as the background knowledge for them to communicate well in English. They explained that, through applying different classroom activities, they could provide students with many opportunities to make use of their English proficiency and consequently they could develop their communicative competence.

These five Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers saw communicative competence as an important ability, which their students must obtain in EFL learning. This finding reflects the goal of L2/FL

education that L2/FL students, in the process of mastering any foreign language, must achieve communicative competence (Canale, 1983). As communicative competence is “the underlying system of knowledge and skill required for communication” (Canale, 1983, p. 5), it enables L2/FL students to communicate appropriately in a variety of situations. Improving students’ communicative competence has become a significant goal in L2/FL and it has attracted the attention of researchers as an effective teaching approach. The teachers in my study were applying CLT in their teaching practices. Their goal is now a focus of other Vietnamese EFL teachers, rather than the goal of promoting students’ acquisition of grammatical rules and translation, as per the grammar-translation method (S. T. Le, 2011). Aside from the goal of developing students’ communicative competence, the participants’ responses related to the transmission of cultural knowledge, which is presented below.

Providing students with cultural knowledge: Another significant goal in EFL education mentioned by three of the five participants was to equip students with cultural knowledge. Understanding culture enabled their students to be more confident in communication with foreigners and helped them improve their communicative ability. Luong aimed to help her students possess cultural knowledge to facilitate their communication with people from different countries. Anh indicated that the teaching of culture was important and she provided her students with cultural knowledge whenever it appeared in the teaching materials. She focused on developing students’ cross-cultural knowledge by organising classroom activities, such as making comparisons between English and Vietnamese cultures, so that her students could see the cultural differences and similarities. She linked her teaching goals to the development of students’ cultural knowledge, but limited to the teaching of international target cultures. Similarly, Duyen focused her teaching of culture on the presentation of cultural knowledge in the currently used textbooks. She aimed to encourage the students to “join in the contemporary global village” (Duyen, Interview 1). She sometimes used additional materials for her teaching, but particularly referred to the limitations upon the teaching of culture in her case as an EFL teacher at a Vietnamese higher institution. The amount of class time allocated to English is limited. There are no opportunities for teachers to teach culture extensively. She said: “Within a limited time [for EFL program], teachers cannot teach culture as a separate subject such as Country studies, Cross-cultural Communication ... In here, teachers just aim to raise students’ cultural awareness by [presenting cultural information] in additional teaching materials or in textbooks” (Duyen, Interview 1).

The EFL teachers in my study acknowledged the important role of culture and endeavoured to make the best use of their teaching to provide students with cultural knowledge. Their goal of

teaching culture will be discussed more in Section 5.1.4 through a detailed description about teachers' perceptions of the teaching of culture in EFL education.

Helping students to achieve high grades: Only one participant, Hieu, reported that her teaching goal was to “help students achieve high grades in their examination” (Hieu, Interview 1). Her teaching goal was influenced by the testing-oriented system in Vietnamese education. Students have to take the tests every semester. Teachers assess their language proficiency based on their performance on these tests (S. T. Le, 2011). As an EFL teacher, she felt that it was her responsibility to help her students prepare well for their examinations.

In EFL education, it is necessary to evaluate students' learning outcomes in order to investigate “what students know and can do as a result of their ... learning experiences” (Sinicrope et al., 2007, p. 37). From an ICC pedagogy, teachers need to assess students' intercultural competence alongside their linguistic competence. Interestingly, although Hieu was aware of the significant role of assessment in EFL teaching, she did not specify how to assess students' English competence, or what competencies to assess. Under the testing-oriented system in Vietnamese education, EFL teaching and learning focuses on the teaching of linguistic rather than cultural knowledge. Examinations in English focus on grammar and vocabulary. Teachers follow the curriculum assigned by the university or by MOET in order for students to pass the examinations (S. T. Le, 2011). As a consequence, students may achieve high scores but still might not necessarily be able use English at an intercultural communication level. None of the participants mentioned their goal for developing students' ICC as well as assessing students' intercultural learning outcomes. For the aims of my study, in the following section I will present the findings about teachers' perception of culture and the teaching of culture in their EFL pedagogy.

5.1.3 Teachers' Understanding of Culture

The analysis of the participants' responses to the understanding of culture shows that they conceptualised culture broadly, embracing all aspects of human life. In particular, they focused on human behaviours, and viewed them as an important factor in creating the culture of a community. Moreover, the participants stressed the distinct cultural characteristics of different countries. This viewpoint closely relates to the participants' profession as EFL teachers, and is reflected in their teaching practices through an analysis of classroom observations. The following sections present findings about teachers' understanding of culture according to two themes: culture embracing aspects of human life and culture as the distinct characteristics of a country.

Culture embraces aspects of human life: In interviews, these five EFL teachers conceptualised culture as a broad and difficult term to define. For them, the notion of culture referred to various aspects forming human life patterns. They listed these cultural patterns including: manners, customs, life styles, values, behaviour, arts, music, etc. For example, Binh described the extensiveness of culture: “I understand that culture includes those such as manners and customs, life styles. Culture can be presented in the architectural buildings. So culture embraces every aspect of human life” (Binh, Interview 1). In her view, cultural aspects came from two domains, including tangible and intangible culture. Manners, customs and lifestyle were the representation of intangible products, while architectural buildings were allied to tangible products. In the same way, Duyen considered culture to be something related to “materiality and spirituality” (“vật chất và tinh thần”) (Duyen, Interview 1). She gave some examples of spiritual culture: “Hue’s court music, Space of Gong culture in the Vietnam Highlands, Duo of love songs, Ca Tru singing, Xam singing” (Duyen, Interview 1). More importantly, Duyen viewed culture as the ongoing process of transmitting material and spiritual values from generation to generation. She said: “Culture is something referring to materiality and spirituality, which are passed down traditionally from one generation to another” (Duyen, Interview 1).

Binh and Duyen showed their understanding of culture by mentioning cultural patterns and describing culture as a process of developing and transmitting from generation to generation. The cultural patterns listed by both participants were known in terms of perspectives (such as customs and cultural values), practices (such as life style and manners) and products (architectural buildings, Hue’s court music, Space of Gong culture in the Vietnam Highlands, Duo of love songs, Ca Tru singing, Xam singing) – three dimensions of culture (see Section 2.3.2 for dimensions of culture). Other participants shared this view, describing the structural elements of culture. Luong gave a list of cultural patterns including “politics, economics, national defence, arts, music, and so on...” (Luong, Interview 1), while Anh showed her definition of culture as something that centres on humans’ performance in daily life, specifically communicative behaviour. In her first interview, Anh proposed the metaphor: “Culture as an iceberg, the iceberg with a half is the exposed part and the other is the hidden part” (Anh, Interview 1).

According to Anh, the term culture may be understood as an iceberg, which comprises both exposed and hidden parts. The tip of the iceberg represents what can be clearly realised and the submerged part exemplifies implicit cultural aspects. Anh shared a similar understanding of culture to Weaver (1993) and Ting-Toomey and Chung (2005), as presented in Section 2.1.1 of the Literature Review chapter. She described culture by referring to the two layers of an iceberg,

which involved different cultural elements. However, her examples of culture were limited to behavioural aspects. She mentioned manners, gestures, behaviours, etc., of humans as the representations of culture. The cultural patterns provided by Anh were manifested in the form of practices, which described how members in a cultural group communicate and interact with one another. Her understanding of culture focuses on humans' presentation in communication with others. She saw manner or behaviour as a key aspect of culture, which was a point she emphasised in her third interview: "The implicit aspects of culture are as important as the explicit aspects of culture. For each person, the explicit aspects of culture include the ways to eat, to dress, to move and to behave in communication, the ways to use language, so those are what other people can realise. The implicit aspect is the consciousness within each person" (Anh, Interview 1).

Anh was consistent with her conceptualising of culture as manners in daily interactions. People are judged from the manners they expressed in the communicative context. People follow the standard manners to adjust themselves to become cultured citizens. For her, the culture of a community was shaped by each member in that community, so "in order to form a cultured community, each member had to be cultured" (Anh, Interview 1). In her description of culture, Anh moved from talking about cultural patterns to group membership. She implied that individual members shaped the culture of a group of people and cultural patterns enabled them to become connected in that community. Her viewpoint reflected the understanding of culture, as including two separate parts: cultural elements and group membership (H. D. Brown, 1994; Liddicoat et al., 2003; Sowden, 2007). Anh mentioned two cultural elements, including "what people can realise" and "the consciousness within each person", which represented the tangible creations (such as art, music, clothing, etc.) and intangible creations (such as beliefs, norms, behaviours, etc.) of members in a cultural group, as shown by these abovementioned scholars. Further, these cultural elements helped group members to become connected.

The findings from the five participants' understanding of culture reflected the definition of culture found in Section 2.2.1. They described culture in terms of its structural elements, social group relationships and the process of developing and transmitting cultural elements. The next section presents the participants' understandings of culture with respect to their EFL teaching practices.

Culture is the distinct characteristics of a country: These EFL teachers compared Vietnamese with English speaking cultures and explained the differences related to language uses. Hieu responded: "Culture is the specific characteristics of a nation. There are also similar and

different characteristics between this nation and the others, so in the process of teaching I often compare the similarities and differences among cultures” (Hieu, Interview 1). Similarly, Binh gave some examples from her teaching of how English culture differs from Vietnamese culture, in order to raise her students’ cultural awareness. She said: “For English people, at their first meeting, they can say “How do you do?” or they can discuss the weather by asking “What’s the weather like?” For Vietnamese people, it is so unusual to ask others about weather. Vietnamese people commonly use greetings such as “Where are you going?” or “What are you doing?” (Binh, Interview 1).

The participants stressed the importance of understanding culture to better their EFL lessons. They described culture in relation to their EFL teaching, in which culture influenced language use. Owing to the cultural differences between English speaking countries and Vietnam, people used different language structures for their purposes. For example, Hieu noticed the influence of culture in the use of idiomatic expressions transferring between the English and Vietnamese languages. She said:

In English proverbs, the cultural aspects are represented very obviously. For example, people who love each other they also love the other’s dog as shown in the proverb “Love me, love my dog”. For Vietnamese people, dogs are not their interest. Therefore, they do not refer to dog. They do not use the proverb like “Love me, love my dog”, but they offer “Yêu nhau yêu cả đường đi lối về” [Love me, love me the whole way home]. The two proverbs are totally different, if you do not understand English and Vietnamese cultures you will make a mistake (Hieu, Interview 1).

Hieu’s example of English and Vietnamese proverbs about love illustrates the dissimilarities in language uses between these two cultures. Both English and Vietnamese expressions mean that if you love someone, you love everything about him/her. However, English people bring a pet into their proverb while Vietnamese people do not. The introduction of the dog into the English proverb seems to be unfamiliar to Vietnamese people. Similarly, Binh compared the use of prepositions in English and Vietnamese languages, with this example:

My students always mistake “lie on bed” for “lie in bed”. Therefore, teachers have to explain why [English] people use “lie in bed” but not “lie on bed” and why [Vietnamese] people tend to make this mistake. We are wrong because we do not understand their culture ... Similarly, they use “in the sky” while we use “on the sky”. That is the cultural difference (Binh, Interview 1).

Vietnamese students mistook “on” for “in” in the expression “lie in bed” and “in the sky”. It could be explained this way: English people suppose bed to be an enclosed space, so people seem to be surrounded when being in the bed. Vietnamese people consider the position between the speaker and the bed, or the speaker and the sky before deciding which preposition should be used. In these examples, the bed is behind the speaker and the speaker is behind the sky, therefore the use of preposition “on” is considered most appropriate by Vietnamese students. This explanation relates to the ‘reference system’ (V. L. Le, 2000, p. 141) in defining the use of prepositions, which varies between the English and Vietnamese cultures. In Vietnamese culture, the ‘reference system’ is introversion, which means that Vietnamese people tend to consider themselves to be the centre of living beings. They position everything from their existing locations. English people describe the position of any subjects as reflecting the present condition of the subjects, but not by using their physical position as a reference point. The rules of using prepositions in the Vietnamese language reflect its culture. These rules are contrary to those in the English language, and might be different from other foreign languages. Through the examples of English structures and their equivalent translations into the Vietnamese language, the participants implied the significance of raising students’ cultural awareness and addressing culture in EFL teaching. The following section presents teachers’ beliefs about the position of culture and the teaching of culture in EFL teaching.

The importance of culture in EFL teaching: As can be interpreted from teachers’ interviews, they considered culture to be a very significant element in EFL instruction and attached much importance to the teaching of culture. Two of them listed general advantages of teaching culture and three of them gave more specific reasons related to their EFL teaching. According to Anh, “people from different countries have to understand about the cultures of others, so they can work together” (Anh, Interview 1). For Luong, “through the introduction of cultures of different countries, students can broaden their knowledge, discover the advanced cultural aspects of many countries all over the world, so that students can approach the world civilisation” (Luong, Interview 3). As may be seen from their viewpoints, Anh and Luong described culture as the important factor influencing students’ language learning and their performance in society. Without an understanding of culture, students may become unfamiliar in the world of foreigners. Cultural understanding enables them to negotiate their cultures and the others. They could broaden their knowledge of diverse cultures and develop their own identities. As a consequence, they recommended that teachers “give special consideration to culture in English language teaching” (Anh, Interview 1) and concluded that “students have to understand and discover it” (Luong, Interview 3).

More specifically, three other participants viewed culture as an integral element in EFL instruction. They were aware of the inseparable relationship between language and culture, and demonstrated that an understanding of culture assisted students to obtain necessary cultural knowledge to successfully join in the global community. For example, Duyen said:

Language and culture can't be separated. It means learning foreign language aims to integrate students into other communities ... The teaching goal defined by MOET also focused on the provision of cultural knowledge needed for students to participate in the global community ... Therefore, the role of culture is very important because it enables students to integrate into the world common village in order to share and sort out the world problems (Duyen, Interview 1).

Duyen recognised the teaching of cultural element as one of the goals defined by Vietnamese MOET. As an EFL teacher, Duyen was committed to providing students with cultural knowledge necessary for communication in a multicultural community. Similarly, Hieu responded: "If students master culture of the studied language, they are sure to learn better ... Understanding about culture helps them facilitate their future jobs" (Hieu, Interview 1).

In summary, the participants viewed culture as a broad concept embracing all aspects of human life. Their description of culture focused on its structural elements through mentioning various examples in terms of cultural perspectives, products and practices. According to this view, they conceptualised culture as a process when they stated that culture could be transferred from one generation to the next. Culture was shaped, shared and transferred among the individuals in the community; therefore culture represented the group relationship. The participants described culture as a distinct characteristic of a country. Different countries create their own cultures, which contribute to making our world become a multicultural community. It is necessary to help students discover diverse cultures, so that they can become confident in intercultural communication. The participants defined culture in relation to their EFL teaching. They considered the interrelationship between language and culture to be a crucial task to address in their EFL lessons. The next section presents the participants' understanding of the teaching of culture in comparison with the teaching of linguistic knowledge.

5.1.4 Teachers' Understanding of Teaching Culture

All participants were aware of culture in their EFL teaching and attached much importance to the teaching of culture. This finding reflects the aim to develop students' ICC (Byram, 2012) or train students to become intercultural speakers (Aguilar, 2008). From an ICC perspective, EFL

teachers should teach students not only linguistic and cultural knowledge, but also cultural attitudes and skills (Sercu, 2006). In my interviews, the participants shared their practices for addressing culture in EFL classrooms; however, their understanding was limited to the provision of cultural knowledge to students. This finding is discussed in detail below.

Developing students' cultural knowledge: The participants reported their understandings of the term 'teaching culture' as helping students acquire cultural knowledge alongside linguistic knowledge. None of them showed that their understandings focussed on addressing intercultural skills and attitudes in order to help their students negotiate communications across cultures. One participant, Hieu, generally stated that she provided students with cultural knowledge of the studied language, but did not specify what cultural elements should be addressed. The other four participants used examples of their teaching practices. They reported that they focussed on providing students with knowledge about cultural patterns, such as perspectives ("tradition and customs" (Duyen, Interview 1)), practices ("language use in communication" (Binh, Interview 1), "behaviour" (Anh, Interview 1), "weddings" (Luong, Interview 1), "making an arrangement" (Duyen, Interview 1)), and products ("national history of England, Ireland, and Scotland" (Luong, Interview 1)). For example, Luong said: "I have just taught Unit 3 in *Lifelines Elementary* about English weddings ... Or when I teach this unit, students do not understand why there are many ways to refer to the UK ... So, teachers have to explain that the UK contains four countries: England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales" (Luong, Interview 1). And Duyen stated: "Tradition and customs [are mentioned] when I talk to my students ... I teach about "Making [an] arrangement" in Unit 2, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*" (Duyen, Interview 1). Anh described her teaching of culture as focusing on cultural practices: "I teach how to use words, how to use sentences in each communicative situation, discovering foreign cultures through examples about the way to dress, the way to organise events, the way to behave in specific communicative situations" (Anh, Interview 1).

When providing cultural knowledge to students, the participants focused on comparing Vietnamese and English speaking cultures. They showed a tendency to develop students' cross-cultural knowledge. They familiarised students with two sources of culture: target culture and students' local culture. Their students do not have opportunities to work with international target culture. In this sense, the participants' teaching practices limited their students in demonstrating intercultural learning for the development of ICC. One participant, Luong stated:

[With regard to] English wedding, people at the age of 16 can get married without parents' permission. In England, there is a place for the weddings without parents'

permission. And [I] compare with Vietnam. I ask students if there are such weddings in Vietnam. Actually, there are no weddings for people under 16 without parents' permission. It is the difference [between two cultures] (Luong, Interview 1).

Luong used more teacher-centred activities in her teaching and did not invite her students to discuss differences among cultures. Similarly, Duyen did not ask her students to make their own comparisons, but instead directly transmitted cross-cultural knowledge. More specifically, she focused on helping students make use of cultural quintessence and discard outdated culture. She said: "Each culture has its own good and bad things ... In Vietnamese culture, there are some unsound customs which need to be discarded. I told my students about cultural differences and advise them to learn good things from European cultures" (Duyen, Interview 1).

Teaching culture is as important as teaching grammar, vocabulary and four language skills:

All five participants indicated that they treated the teaching of culture equally to the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and the four language skills, though in practice they focused more on the teaching of linguistic rather than cultural knowledge, and limited activities to support intercultural teaching (see Section 5.3.2). They stated that the teaching of culture should not be taught separately, but should be done together with the teaching of linguistic elements. They noted that because culture was integrated with linguistic content in their currently used EFL textbooks, they tended to place culture in alignment with grammar, syntax and phonetics. For example, Anh said: "The teaching of culture, grammar, vocabulary and four skills, I think, are equally important and are taught simultaneously in teaching" (Anh, Interview 1). Luong expressed her viewpoint in more detail, as illustrated in the following extract:

In fact, the teaching of culture can be integrated into every step of language teaching. It is possible to integrate culture into the teaching of grammar, for example, when making sentences we can make sentences related to England. When teaching vocabulary [teachers] can use the words referring to culture. And regarding the teaching of four basic skills including speaking, listening, reading and writing, it is possible to integrate culture into this kind of teaching. In sum, the teaching of culture, teaching grammar, vocabulary and four skills play the same important role in foreign language teaching and they are always taught concomitantly but not until the time when students reach a recommended level of language proficiency, culture can be included in teaching practice (Luong, Interview 1).

In summary, the participants shared similar understandings of the teaching of culture. They focused on students' development of cultural knowledge, which was one of their three goals in

teaching EFL (see Section 5.1.2). They showed their tendency to provide and compare the cultures of Vietnam and English speaking countries. They attached as much importance to teaching cultural competence as to teaching grammar, vocabulary and the four skills. They did not separate the teaching of culture from other language teaching activities, because they understood the interrelationships among them. My participants echoed Liddicoat et al.'s (2003) assertion that EFL teachers should teach both language and culture in order to develop students' ICC. However, when I triangulated these findings with those from classroom observations I found that these five participants showed a strong inclination towards the teaching of linguistic elements and addressed culture to a limited extent. They devoted little time to the teaching of cultural aspects and provided students with superficial information relating to the cultural background of a particular country. Moreover, when they had opportunities to integrate cultural knowledge found in teaching materials, they used it to support the teaching of linguistic elements. Their teaching practices will be described in greater detail in Section 5.3.2.

5.2 Teachers' EFL Teaching Materials

Within the Vietnamese context, textbooks are the most commonly used teaching resources. Vietnamese teachers base their lesson plans mainly on the content of textbooks. The section below reports the findings from teachers' interviews regarding the currently used textbooks in their everyday EFL classes, including those reviewed in Chapter Four, as well as classroom observations. The discussion with the participants enabled me to understand how they think about the set textbooks and additional teaching materials, while the observation of participants' teaching practices allowed me to gain in-depth understanding about how they make use of the teaching materials in practice.

5.2.1 Teachers' Perception of the Cultural Content in the Set EFL Textbooks

In the interviews, when they were asked about the textbooks they used in their everyday EFL classes, the participants mentioned various kinds of textbooks, such as *Lifelines Elementary*, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*, *New Cutting Edge*, *Solution*, *New English File* and *Round up*. These textbooks have been designed for EFL teaching and learning, and they are currently used in many Vietnamese universities. However, within the selected university, only the two first textbooks were used officially while others were employed as supplementary materials. All of the participants confirmed that they used *Lifelines Elementary* to teach first year students while *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* was used to teach second year students in GE classes. For example, according to Binh: "In my university, [I] am using two textbooks, including *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* ... These textbooks are used for GE classes only.

These are two basic and core textbooks. Besides, [I] can combine these textbooks with *New Cutting Edge*” (Binh, Interview 1).

All five participants shared the view that their set EFL textbooks covered different cultural aspects such as “weddings” (Luong and Anh, Interview 1), “life styles” (Duyen, Interview 1), “sports” (Hieu and Anh, Interview 1), “entertainment”, “immigration”, “religions” (Luong, Interview 1), “traditions and customs, behaviours, social values, music” (Luong, Interview 3) and so on. This cultural information was embedded among the linguistic content, because it was presented through pictures, reading texts, dialogues, listening conversations and the vocabulary focus. For example, Anh said: “The content of reading texts mostly covered cultural aspects. The pictures, such as those of landscapes reflect culture, too. The content of reading texts, for example, is about dining habits, sports, weddings, etc.” (Anh, Interview 1). Hieu responded: “I realise that [cultural content] is clearly presented through listening sections, where there are conversations of foreigners ... I also find cultural information in pictures. Reading texts contain cultural information, but as I have just mentioned such information is undisclosed” (Hieu, Interview 1). In addition, Luong stated: “Cultural elements are presented in each unit through the inclusion of pictures or information embedded in listening activities, vocabulary items” (Luong, Interview 1). The participants referred to cultural content in terms of people’s practices (lifestyle, sports, immigration), perspectives (tradition and customs, cultural values, weddings, religion), and products (music), which related to cultural knowledge only. They did not explore cultural content regarding activities to promote ICC among students. They focused their understanding of cultural content on the information that would assist students in developing their cognitive knowledge of ICC, rather than the application of such knowledge in communicative situations.

Cultural information presented in the set textbooks mostly related to English culture, but is limited to addressing an international target culture and rarely refers to Vietnamese students’ local culture. In this sense, these textbooks may limit students’ intercultural learning. Only two participants, Luong and Duyen had opinions about this perspective. For example, Luong said: “The textbooks often present cultural aspects belonging to England. There is nothing belonging to cultures of other countries. So, the intercultural issue is not clearly disclosed, not obvious in these textbooks (Luong, Interview 3). Similarly, Duyen saw the deficiency of these textbooks in terms of unequal cultural aspects representing the country. These textbooks merely mention the culture of the studied language, which is insufficient for L2/FL students to gain a cultural general knowledge of diverse countries. She believed that the cultural presentation in the textbooks is uni-directional and said: “*Lifelines Elementary* presents cultural elements; however

it is one-direction presentation. Our aim is to achieve cross-culture, so it should contain not only the lessons about European culture ... but Vietnamese and Asian cultures in order to enable students to have a general viewpoint and be always ready to make comparisons [between cultures]” (Duyen, Interview 1). Duyen aimed to help students develop their cross-cultural knowledge by focusing on making comparisons between cultures. These set textbooks do not offer adequate materials for the teaching of cultural competence.

All five participants reported that the set EFL textbooks contain content relating to both language and culture. They felt, however, that the presentation of the cultural content is not clearly disclosed, therefore it was difficult for both teachers and students to realise it. More specifically, Duyen compared these textbooks’ content to “an iceberg. Linguistic content is the exposed part and cultural content is the hidden part” (Duyen, Interview 1). Cultural content is in a sense like the hidden part in EFL textbooks and it needs teachers as the cultural mediators to acknowledge and present this hidden content in their teaching practices.

Three out of five teachers referred to outdated cultural information. They mentioned the publication date of these textbooks, which was in 1995, and inferred the necessity to replace them with some up-to-date textbooks, such as *New Cutting Edge* or *Solution*. For example, Binh said: “These textbooks were published in 1995, a long time ago, old textbooks. There are many interesting things regarding culture ... however, we have to use new textbooks because they contain many updated things, for example *New Cutting Edge*, [and] *Solution*” (Binh, Interview 1). Anh stated: “*Lifelines* textbooks were published a long time ago, the information was not updated. The English Division decided to include *New Cutting Edge* in English program, so teachers can take some reading texts, listening parts, writing sections which are more updated” (Anh, Interview 1). More specifically, Hieu directly stated her dissatisfaction with the cultural content of these textbooks and compared the limitation of teaching linguistic with cultural knowledge via these two textbooks. She herself had to provide supplementary up-to-date cultural information in order to help students explore current cultural forms. She said: “In terms of cultural content, I do not satisfy very much ... It is okay if we teach grammar, however it is problematic to teach any cultural topic” (Hieu, Interview 1). She also added:

I think the recently published textbooks are very interesting, because they contain many words used in modern time. For example, there are lessons about abbreviations, such as in Vietnamese language we use “a còng” (literally bent a) for (@). There is not anything like that appeared in our currently used textbooks, however we still have to bring them into lessons and instruct students to pronounce such kind of these words” (Hieu, Interview 1).

Binh, Anh and Hieu tried to be current by talking about dated cultural information in these textbooks. They acknowledged the development of culture over time. The teaching of outdated cultural content may affect their students' development of ICC. In order to help students have a good understanding of culture, the textbooks should provide students with opportunities to be updated with or link their learning to current contexts.

Two participants, Hieu and Anh, claimed that there was no section especially used for the teaching of culture or in their words, there was no section named "*Cultural frame*" (Hieu, Interview 1). All sections in their set EFL textbooks focus on the development of linguistic competence: *Grammar, Vocabulary, Reading and Writing, Listening and Speaking, and Pronunciation*. Although these textbooks provide teachers with opportunities to address culture in their teaching practices, teachers may not view the teaching of cultural knowledge as a significant component of EFL pedagogies. Owing to this fact, EFL lessons focus on linguistic elements. Students may not distinguish cultural learning from linguistic learning and teachers may have difficulty in preparing and delivering their lessons, because of the unclear presentation of cultural aspects in these textbooks. In this regard, Hieu compared her currently used textbooks with those that provide teachers and students with a *Culture frame* section. She wished that she had a set of EFL textbooks that have a separate section that contains cultural content and helpful instructions for enacting cultural knowledge in EFL lessons. She said: "There are no guidelines for the teaching of cultural items, which differs from other textbooks. The authors of the later textbooks include culture in each unit and they design a separate section, for example *Culture frame*" (Hieu, Interview 1). Similarly, Anh suggested that it was necessary to "add one section to explain about cultural items within a unit" (Anh, Interview 1), because "students find it easier [to raise cultural awareness] when there are explanations for cultural information" (ibid.). From an ICC pedagogical point of view, culture should be addressed alongside language elements. These two participants seemed to hold an uncertain viewpoint about the teaching of culture in teaching EFL. In Section 5.1.4 they supposed that culture should be infused into students as a part of the process of teaching linguistic knowledge (such as teaching grammatical items or vocabulary items). They viewed EFL teaching as the integration of culture with language. However, when they evaluated these textbooks' cultural content, they wanted it to be a separated process. What they viewed was not in line with what they wanted. As the set EFL textbooks limited them in addressing cultural knowledge, they felt unsatisfied with their cultural content.

5.2.2 Teachers' Perception of Supplementary Materials

As noted in the previous section, the two set EFL textbooks did not meet the participants' expectations in developing students' cultural competence. All five participants agreed that it was necessary to provide supplementary teaching materials in order to teach culture, and supported the use of these materials in their EFL pedagogies. They all acknowledged the importance and benefits of teaching culture, so they were ready to utilise additional materials whenever the cultural information in the set textbooks was outdated or insufficient (see Section 5.2.1). In the interviews, all of them reported that they were free to use additional materials and they tended to utilise various cultural sources together with their set textbooks.

The participants were allowed to use additional materials they thought useful for teaching cultural knowledge in their EFL classes. They did not heavily depend on the set textbooks, because they could substitute some textbook content with suitable supplementary materials, which might facilitate their teaching practices and raise students' awareness of intercultural issues. For example, Anh stated: "The use of additional teaching materials is encouraged by the university and the English Division. The English Division always stimulates teachers to search for more teaching materials in order to make lessons more exciting and enrich their teaching materials" (Anh, Interview 1). Similarly, Duyen confirmed the free utilisation of additional teaching materials and gave more explanations about why teachers could feel free to go with their decisions. She said: "Teachers are free to design additional materials. Teachers can adapt their textbooks, it means teachers can remove unnecessary parts in textbooks ... If the use of additional materials does not influence the teaching quality, I think it is totally possible" (Duyen, Interview 1).

In terms of the supplementary materials used, the participants could choose different sources of cultural facts, such as magazines, newspapers, English textbooks, stories and websites. The choices for such supplementary materials were also investigated in their classroom observations with the inclusion of reading texts, listening conversations taken from different ELT textbooks; or songs, funny stories, games retrieved from the internet; or add-on cultural information obtained from English books. The next section (Section 5.2.3) will present in greater detail the use of teaching resources, especially the use of supplementary materials. For example, Anh said: "The cultural teaching materials, I think they must be taken from reliable sources such as books, magazines and reliable websites, so I can select additional cultural materials from these sources" (Anh, Interview 1). Binh responded: "I can take [cultural materials] from different sources, different books. I use updated textbooks such as *English File* [,] ... or *Face to Face* ... I can search for some materials on the Internet webpages, those which are relevant can be used"

(Binh, Interview 1). Hieu also said: “My supplementary materials are taken from magazines or books. For listening activities, I use songs and I take from *New English File* because it provides grammatical exercises and vocabulary items along with these songs ... I can search on Internet” (Hieu, Interview 1).

Although the participants were flexible with their teaching practices and the use of EFL teaching materials, they took seriously the selection of further cultural input and aimed for a “variety” (Luong, Interview 1) of additional sources. EFL teachers could choose different materials such as “newspapers, magazines, books, videos, satellite television, texts from Internet” (Byram, 2008, p. 39), among which “the Internet is a rich source” (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002) of cultural information. The Internet is “a great source of information” (Ukraine, 2013, p. 4) and offers teachers and students a number of cultural topics and authentic materials from different organisations. The participants’ choices in terms of additional teaching resources were in line with the suggestions from educational scholars. Further, they selected add-on materials according to two reasons: the add-on cultural input needed to have topics similar to the cultural information provided in the set textbooks, and the add-on cultural input needed to be updated to avoid students’ misunderstanding or confusion when dealing with it as well as motivate them. Luong’s and Duyen’s responses illustrate these perspectives. Luong said: “I can use books written about English culture, or I can use magazines, or I can download some materials from Internet associated with cultural topics appeared in this textbook” (Luong, Interview 1). Duyen also stated: “Depending on cultural topics of the set textbook, I can select similar information from magazines, newspapers, or the Internet. I think teachers should not choose outdated magazines ... Supplementary materials should be updated in order to motivate students” (Duyen, Interview 1). It is clear that the set textbooks drove Luong’s and Duyen’s selection of supplementary materials. They relied on these textbooks’ cultural content in order to find something similar, but updated for use in their EFL classes. They wanted to demonstrate that their teaching was within current cultural context. They did not present cultural issues from the past. As a consequence, their students might miss opportunities to understand the development of cultural forms. Culture is formed and transmitted from generation to another. Therefore, it is better to learn culture from the past and at the present time. From this finding, EFL teachers were supposed to act as cultural mediators, not only in teaching practices but also in the selection of cultural teaching content. These five Vietnamese EFL teachers made allowances for providing students with cultural knowledge taken from both textbooks and additional materials. The section below presents how they used these teaching materials in EFL classrooms.

5.2.3 Teachers' Classroom Use of EFL Teaching Materials

Two issues to do with EFL textbooks and supplementary materials emerged during my classroom observations and are discussed in detail below.

Teaching from textbooks: During many of the lessons I observed, the teachers followed the order of the textbooks, covering all the units consecutively. My description in Section 3.3.2 showed that each unit in the two Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks is divided into five sections: *Grammar*, *Vocabulary*, *Reading and Writing*, *Listening and Speaking*, and *Pronunciation*. In spite of participants emphasising the importance of incorporating cultural content into their lessons during interviews, in practice they tended to follow the textbooks, which, as has already been mentioned, centre on the development of linguistic competence. However, the ways they made use of the set textbooks differed. The below extract from my observation of Luong's classroom illustrates one type of teaching practice:

T: We are now moving to **Unit 4: The future**. [T writes on board, reading aloud]. Now please you focus on grammar: *Will and shall*, and *First conditional*, *First conditional*. Ok, please you read the text. You all read the text, this text, this part. You have 5 minutes to do. Read this text.

[Ss read the text. T goes around the class]

T: Now, stop looking, stop looking. Please you do exercise 1. Look at the title of the article, what is it about? Look at the title of the article, what is it about? Title, what does it mean? Title, title. Article, article. What is it about?

S: It is about free competition and the prize winners will have a night in London.

T: Yes, thank you. Now please you, what is your idea? What is it about? What is it about?

S: This is London and a competition.

T: It is about London, is it ok, right? It is about London or we can say like that, it is about a competition, a competition in London. Yes, ok. Thank you. Now please you do exercise two. Read the text and tick ✓ for what the prize winners will do. Now the first, you focus on..., are there any new words, any new words? *Enter*, what does it mean? *Enter*, *enter*, what does it mean? "*Enter our competition*". *Enter*, what does it mean in Vietnamese? (Luong, Classroom observation 3)

As may be seen from this extract, Luong and her students worked from the grammar section. She developed the lesson inductively. After going through the text and exercises, she explained the grammatical items. Another participant, Anh, utilised a deductive method for her grammar lesson. She introduced new grammatical structures and then provided students with different learning activities, such as discussion, sentence making and exercise practicing. Similar to Luong, Anh aimed to cover all the textbook content, which was designed to help EFL students improve their English proficiency step by step. The following extract describes Anh's actual performance in her class.

T: Come on, today we will learn **Unit 4, Grammar section: The future**. [T writes on board, reading aloud].

T: As usual, we will step by step go through all sections in this unit. The first section is Grammar, it is about *Will* and *First conditional*. In the grammar lesson today we will learn about *Will* and *First conditional* or *Will* and *The conditional sentence type I*. Ok, in English there are three types of conditional sentence including *The conditional sentence type I*, *The conditional sentence type II* and *The conditional sentence type III*. How do you understand about *The conditional sentence type I*, so today we will learn about it? First of all, we need to learn about *Will*. Which tense does it present?

S: The simple future tense.

T: Yes, the simple future tense, right? First of all, we focus on the form [to make sentence with *will*]. The form or the sentence order, if we want to make sentence with *will*, we have to take notice of its form so you can make sensible sentence in writing or in speaking. Form. [T writes on board, reading aloud]. Look at this, I have an example: *I will, I will go to Da Lat next summer*. Also I can say that *We will go to Da Lat next summer*, or we replace other subjects such as she, we, you or they. So I can make these sentences: *I will go to Da Lat next summer; He will go to Da Lat next summer; or She will go to Da Lat next summer; We will and They will go to Da Lat next summer* (Anh, Classroom observation 4).

Luong and Anh both followed the syllabus as defined by the English Division, which set the teaching content for each lesson. They simply stuck to the set materials in order to complete their workload. In contrast to the above two participants, Duyen put herself in the position of a vocabulary-focus teacher, when she endeavoured to introduce her students to various types of clothing. She guided students in recalling the names of different types of clothes they had

learned before and then presented the new clothing items that were provided in the set textbook. Her lesson progressed as follows:

T: Comparisons, Vocabulary, Clothes. The topic for Vocabulary section in this unit is about clothes. Ok now, don't look at the book, look at the blackboard first. You should not look at the textbook but look on the board. **Clothes** [T writes on board, reading aloud]. Alright, so how can you work with this topic? So now, each of you will discuss with a person next to you. You will have to recall your memories about different types of clothes because I remember that you all had learned about this topic when you were at high school, ok. Now please remember and tell me what types of clothes you know. Don't look at the book! Close your book! Don't look at your book! Alright, let's do this! Alright. Now please! Now write down, write down, write down on your notebook! Now please write down. Write down all the words about clothes you know it. Right? The more clothing items you can list, the better. Now, let's get started! (Duyen, Classroom observation 3).

Similar to Duyen, Binh adapted herself to the role of a vocabulary-focus teacher after she had finished teaching the *Reading and Writing* section. She directed students to the examples provided in the textbooks, explained the use of new vocabulary items, helped students to have the right spelling and pronunciation, and ended the section with exercise-based activities. The following extract presents a part of her teaching, in which she paid a lot attention to her students' pronunciation. She tried to correct the students' pronunciation mistakes as soon as they made them.

T: Vocabulary: Countries Adjectives. [T writes on board, reading aloud].

T: Look at three examples in the book. Look at three examples in the book. Please read three examples. Thang, can you please read out loud?

S: Dear teacher. They are from Japan.

T: Japan [T correct S's pronunciation]

S: Japan. [then S continues reading]. They are Japanese.

T: Japanese [T corrects S's pronunciation]

S: Japanese. [then S continues reading]. They speak Japanese.

T: Japanese. That's right. Sit down. What are the examples? They are Japan, and they are Japanese, and they speak Japanese. That's right. Your friend still makes some pronunciation mistakes. For Japan, the stress is on /'pæn/ while this word is pronounced /, ddʒæpə'ni:z/. Now listen and read after me.

T: Japan /ddʒə'pæn/

S: Japan /ddʒə'pæn/

T: Japan/ddʒə'pæn/

S: Japan/ddʒə'pæn/

T: Japanese /, ddʒæpə'ni:z/.

S: Japanese /, ddʒæpə'ni:z/.

T: Japanese /, ddʒæpə'ni:z/.

S: Japanese /, ddʒæpə'ni:z/ (Binh, Observation 5).

It is noticeable that to the participants, EFL teaching was basically the transmission of the textbook content to the students. In these above examples, the participants taught according to their linguistic knowledge. They sometimes addressed culture in their teaching practice. Through my 25 observations, there were seven lessons in which the participants presented students with culture. Only three participants, Luong (4), Anh (2) and Duyen (1) provided students with cultural information. I reviewed my visits to their classrooms and found some relevant evidence below.

T: Ok, let's start. In the previous period we discussed about the form and the usage of simple past tense, right? Now we will move to the next section of this unit, [working with the reading text] titled **Gretna scene**. Students, could you please think about **Unit 14** in *[Lifelines] Elementary* textbook in which we learn and discuss about what people can or cannot do at different ages in England, right? So now, think about that unit and tell me what people can or cannot do at different ages in England. First, what do think at what age can people get married?

Ss: Sixteen

T: Ah, sixteen, sixteen. Now, is there different age for men or for women? Is there different age for men or for women?

Ss: No

T: No, ok, no. Now, in London you can get married when you are eighteen but you can get married when you are sixteen if your parents permit. Ok, if your parent permit or agree you can get married at the age of sixteen. I am talking about the law in England. So, what about our country? At what age can you get married?

Ss: Eighteen

T: Ahh, eighteen. Now, is there the difference for men and women in Vietnam? Ahh, ok. It's different. For women are 18 and for men is...

Ss: Twenty

T: Twenty. And in Vietnam if you want to get married, do you need your parent's permission?

S: Yes

T: Yes, ok. Is this law or custom, the marriage with parents' permission?

Ss: Custom.

T: Ahh, it is custom, it's not law, it's not law (Anh, Classroom observation 1).

And in Duyen's classroom:

T: So many of you answer No, it means that your partner, ok, stayed in the same place, stayed in the same place before moving, ok, to this university. Ok, so that is the difference between the culture, the culture in Asia and in Western countries for many reasons. As we can remember, Western people from Western countries, ok, they have the habit of moving a lot in their life time during their life time, moved a lot for many reasons. Ok, right. But in Asian countries like Vietnam, ok people, ok, seem not want to move. They like staying in the same place, ok, right. Some people for their own reasons, ok, they move to other places but in general they stay in the same place which is the difference between two cultures to remember. Now, answer my question: Do you want to move, ok to many places to live? Yes, or no?

Ss: No

T: Now you.

S: Yes, I do

T: Why?

S: Because I want to...

T: Ahh, I want to explore, explore the world. Ok. I want to explore the world. Thank you. Ok. Now what about the other, wat about you? Do you want to move a lot?

S: No, I don't

T: No, I don't. Why?

S: Because I love my city

T: Ok, I love my...ahh she loves her city. It is the place where she was born and grew up, so she does not want to move a lot. Thank you, right. It means that after graduating the university she may come back to work in her city. That's good. Right (Duyen, Classroom observation 1).

As may be seen from my observation of Anh's classroom, she continued the previous lesson by asking her students to discuss the age by-law for getting married in England and Vietnam. She and her students worked on one of many cultural aspects included in their textbooks. They learned about English marriage and reflected on their own culture. Similarly, Duyen mentioned the difference between Asian and Western lifestyles in one of her observed lessons. After finishing the reading activities, she asked her students to discuss their lifestyles and make comparisons with those from different cultures about which they knew. She divided her teaching into tasks and guided the students in completing them, one by one. In summary, the participants taught from the textbooks. They attached themselves to the textbook activities and organised them in turn. In EFL classrooms, the participants basically performed as textbook transmitters. They rarely integrated culture with language teaching. However, in their interviews they all reported that teaching culture was important and should be taught alongside linguistic elements. Their perceptions seemed not to align with what they did in their EFL classrooms.

Using supplementary materials: Through observations, I found that four out of the five participants included in their lessons further information taken from books, textbooks and websites in the forms of reading texts, listening conversations, situational exercises, funny stories, songs and video clips. Songs were the most popular supplementary materials: three of them brought English songs into their classrooms. Binh introduced three songs in three observed lessons, while Duyen and Hieu gave their students the opportunity to learn and practice English through songs one time. The use of video clips selected by Binh and funny stories selected by herself and Duyen enabled them to set foreign cultural context in English classrooms while reading texts, listening conversations and situational exercises selected by Anh and Hieu supported their students in drilling four language skills.

Luong was the only participant who did not use additional materials in her lessons. As she was the most experienced teacher, she might involve her students in different activities that incorporate cultural input that appear in the currently used textbook for the purpose of developing their ICC, instead of using extra information. In terms of other four participants, they occasionally provided add-on materials, especially when they wanted to supplement their EFL textbooks with authentic texts. However, they spent little time working with such cultural resources. One of the reasons was their teaching workload, which may not be completed if they used some of their teaching time on teaching additional content.

To be more specific, I will now give some examples of their teaching practices associated with their explicit supplementation of teaching materials. My first examples are taken from Binh's lessons. In four out of five observed lessons, she selected additional materials, then designed classroom activities and mixed them among other activities provided in the set textbook. Her first observed lesson focused on the rules and the usages of the past simple tense. She supplemented this with a video clip and a song, which contained many sentences of the past simple tense. Her aim was to help students study more about this new grammatical structure and obtain a thorough understanding of the practical usage of this tense in communicative situations. Moreover, she meant to inspire her students with an interest in learning English. The following extract that has been taken from one of my field notes illustrates this perspective.

In my first visit to Binh's class, I was excited by the inclusion of a video clip about a conversation between a young woman and her boyfriend. The clip provided students with both linguistic and cultural knowledge, because it contained many structures in relation to the past simple tense and cultural information representing different cultures, such as Italian lasagne, Chinese plates and the Wimbledon tennis tournament. Binh downloaded

this clip from an English website which provided various teaching resources for EFL teachers. After teaching students about the rules and the usages of the past simple tense, she quickly guided students to practicing activities. She required them to work in groups, watching the video clip and noting down all the verbs used in the past simple tense by two characters. Then she turned on the clip. The students followed the clip attentively and tried to note important information. After the first watch, Binh replayed the clip and her students kept working with the questions. Then, Binh gave them 5 minutes to discuss in groups. The classroom became very noisy with so many different voices. The students concentrated in their group work and quickly finished the discussion. During the time students worked in groups, Binh divided the board into two columns with correspondent attributes including infinitive verbs and past simple verbs. After five minutes, she checked with all students in the class. They seemed to understand the clip well, so they completed the table with ease. The classroom was very exciting (Field note 6, Binh's classroom observation 1).

Binh's supplementation of additional materials allowed her to support her students' development of linguistic competence and the building of their motivation to learn English. Although the supplementary materials contained cultural information, Binh did not address any cultural issues in her teaching. She focused on grammar-related activities, but did not provide students with culture-related activities, such as discussion about Italian lasagne, Chinese porcelain products, or a comparison of Vietnamese traditional food with those from other countries. She did the same thing in three other observed lessons, in which she used other materials retrieved from websites to facilitate the teaching of vocabulary and four language skills.

The two other participants, Hieu and Duyen, presented their students with additional materials, such as funny stories with questions, reading texts with exercises and English songs with several missing words. They generally started their lessons with textbook activities and then expanded the lesson content with extra materials. Hieu gave her students opportunities to learn about "superstitions" found in many different countries through the provision of an additional reading text; however the main purpose of this activity was to build comprehension rather than to raise cultural awareness. Similar to Binh, she did not focus on the teaching of cultural issues embedded in both her main and additional teaching materials. Duyen revised grammar lessons about the past simple tense by asking her students to listen to a story that was set in the past and to complete a summarising task. No discussion was held regarding the story content, but some explanations were provided about the meanings of new words. Thus, Duyen did not integrate

culture into her EFL lessons. This teaching method resulted in the Vietnamese students learning EFL without understanding culture. They gained the linguistic knowledge to become competent English users, but had trouble with the cultural aspects of EFL learning. Given that cultural competence is an important factor in EFL education, teachers are supposed to address culture in their teaching practices. They should integrate teaching activities, which enable the acquisition of cultural knowledge and intercultural skills, with those designed to teach language elements. By doing so, they could meet the goal of promoting students' ICC – the new required competence for EFL learners defined by The Council of Europe, which was discussed in Section 2.4.

The remaining participant who was observed using supplementary materials in her teaching was Anh. Unlike the other participants, she aimed to equip her students with cultural knowledge of English speaking countries. She was aware of the presentation of cultural points in the set textbook and incorporated culture in her lesson. She introduced cultural content embedded in the main teaching material and supplemented this with further information for any cultural points if necessary. Her teaching practice displayed a detailed presentation of cultural information. However, she did not use many student-focused activities such as discussion, group work, role plays, culture quizzes, culture capsules, etc., but instead used more teacher-centred approaches, such as lecturing and expecting students to take notes. Further, I only observed her explicitly teaching cultural content in one out of five lessons.

Teaching materials in the case Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes, as discussed in Chapter Four, seem to limit teachers to providing students with cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes. The cultural content of two currently used textbooks is presented in a biased approach, such as focusing on the Anglophone cultures rather than diverse cultures. Such teaching materials create major obstacles for teachers in the process of addressing culture in EFL classes. In addition, the teaching context, such as classroom size, the time allocated for the subject of English and the teaching facilities have a significant influence on teachers' teaching practices. A detailed description of the participants' educational setting, including obstacles, was presented in Section 1.6. The two main obstacles for the participants in the teaching of cultural competence include large classes and time restraints. In terms of class size, the participants had to teach a large number, which they named as "lớp học đại trà" [large-scale class] (Duyen, Interview 1). The lowest number of students in an EFL class was approximately 40 while the highest number was 80. The students in Vietnamese EFL classes come from various places with different learning styles, hobbies and cultural backgrounds, but they share the same objectives of improving their English proficiency. In EFL lessons, they should be treated equally and provided with the same

opportunities to practise their English skills. However, the allocated time for English program hindered the participants from organising classroom activities. In my classroom visits, I realised that while the participants attempted to give students as much time as possible to practise their English and share their ideas with other class members, because of overcrowding and time restrictions (each lesson was only 45 minutes), it was difficult to give all students the opportunity to actively participate. Time restrictions also influenced the participants' teaching of culture: they seemed to feel forced to prioritise teaching grammar, vocabulary and four basic skills.

The ways the participants employed teaching materials reflected their practices and contributed to shaping the type of English speakers their students could become. Since English is used globally as a means of communication, English users need to be communicatively and interculturally competent. The main task for teachers from an ICC perspective is to assist students to achieve intercultural knowledge and skills. It was necessary to understand if the five participants in my study enacted cultural content in their EFL lessons. In the following section, a description of their teaching practices is presented.

5.3 Teachers' Teaching Practices leading to an ICC Perspective

This section aims to paint a picture of teachers' practices focusing on the integration of culture in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes. Three issues will be addressed in turn: the forms of culture incorporated in the participants' EFL classes, the teaching activities employed by the participants, and the students' responses to the teaching of cultural aspects. The findings consist of the participants' reports on the integration of different cultural elements through interviews and the description of the participants' teaching of cultural forms, as observed by me during their daily practices.

5.3.1 Interviews

Cultural Forms Incorporated in Vietnamese EFL Classes: All five participants reported to address different forms of culture in their teaching practices. They expressed their viewpoints in two different ways: they explicitly named the cultural elements which had been included in their lessons; or gave some instances of their teaching, in which they incorporated any cultural aspects. Two participants, Anh and Hieu, used both ways to talk about the forms of culture in their EFL teaching, while three other participants chose the second way to report. In interviews, Anh first mentioned different cultural forms such as "geography, tradition and customs, regulations and law" (Anh, Interview 2), and then provided some examples of her teaching as

the illustrations of these cultural forms. One example of her cultural teaching practice is illustrated in this extract: “I work with a lesson about wedding. For example, I often draw my students’ attention to something like the clothing for the bride and the groom, the wedding protocol, [and] the food” (Anh, Interview 2). Similarly, Hieu reported that she provided her students with “cultural knowledge related to the use of language, geography, landscapes, festivals and forms of communication” (Hieu, Interview 2) and illustrated with this example: “Unit 14 is about geographic names, there is Hawaii, etc. Actually, students do not know well about this place, so I provide them with detailed information such as location, activities they can do like whale watching, bird watching” (Hieu, Interview 2). She also added: “The reading titled *The Witch of the Wall Street* is about stock exchange. It is actually unfamiliar to Vietnamese people ... so I have to explain that this street is the stock exchange market located in the USA” (Hieu, Interview 2).

The teaching of cultural competence by these two participants covers the different cultural categories developed by Byram. Their viewpoints reflect five out of eight categories, which can be named as “Social interactions” (the use of language, forms of communication); “Belief and behaviour” (traditions and customs, whale watching, bird watching); “Social and political institutions” (regulations and law); “Socialisation and life-cycle (weddings); and “National geography” (geographic locations such as Hawaii, the USA).

The two other participants, Binh and Duyen, described the opportunities they used to introduce culture to their students. Their explanation helped to understand what elements of culture were presented in their EFL teaching. The following extracts present Duyen and Binh’s standpoints respectively.

In my teaching, for example I teach a lesson about food and drink ... I also teach them about manners and customs, lifestyles. Recently, I taught them about the wedding in England and Scotland ... Besides, there are some lessons about geographic places. Because my students are good at music and drawing, I can provide them with songs such as those of ABBA or Carpenters; or I provide them with paintings of famous painters such as Picasso (Binh, Interview 2)

I always work with cultural aspects depending on each unit, it means I introduce [culture information] appeared in each unit. For example, in Unit 1: *Getting started*, the cultural aspect is about greeting strategy ... This unit is about routines ... or another unit, for example Unit 3 is about holiday ... and this unit is about life story (Duyen, Interview 2)

As may be seen from the above extracts, Binh and Duyen's content relates to five categories of culture, including "Belief and behaviour" (Food and drinks, manners and customs, lifestyles); "Socialisation and life-cycle" (weddings); "National geography (geographic places); "Stereotypes and national identity" (famous people: Picasso; national cultural heritage: music, art works); and "Social interactions" (greetings). This finding shows the availability of cultural content in the textbooks and these two participants' tendency to cover such information in their teaching practices. As has been presented in Chapter Four, a number of references in the set textbooks were made to Byram's eight cultural categories. Moreover, the finding related to the participants' use of teaching materials, as discussed in Section 5.2.3, showed that the participants tended to teach from the textbooks. In this way, Binh and Duyen provided their students with different topics according to Byram's eight cultural categories.

Binh and Duyen's examples of cultural aspects were taken from their currently used textbooks. Their responses indicated that they were familiar with the two set textbooks and used them preferentially in transmitting both linguistic and cultural knowledge to their students. Similarly, Luong relied on the textbook and kept providing her students with cultural information provided by the textbook author. She said: "We have not made a list of cultural aspects. We have not spent much time addressing culture in English teaching. We just, whenever the set textbook contains any cultural aspect, we of course introduce them to our students" (Luong, Interview 2).

My participants' dependence on the set textbooks seemed to be a problem, which could be explained when I triangulated my data sources and the findings generated from both phases. In Phase 1, the finding indicated that the two Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks contain outdated information and restrict their content to cultural information about history, stereotypes and the identity of any particular country. Moreover, these textbooks do not provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their intercultural learning. In Phase 2, the finding from interviews concerning teachers' perception of teaching materials, as presented in Section 5.2, revealed that the cultural content in the set textbooks is out-of-date and insufficient. In this regard, these participants may not provide students with cultural knowledge that is sufficient and current in order to promote their students' ICC. They reported that they supplemented the EFL textbook content with additional cultural information. They were also observed to utilise different resources and select up-to-date additional cultural information on the same topics as that found in the set textbooks (see Section 5.2.2). However, they focused on transmitting cultural information rather than providing students with opportunities to discover different cultures. Although they covered the eight different cultural forms, they limited students to experiencing

these cultural forms in communicative situations. This finding will be discussed more in the next section.

The most evident cultural forms: With regards to the interview question about the most evident cultural forms for students, four participants related their viewpoints regarding the significant role of particular cultural items introduced to students. Binh stated that the most important thing about teaching culture in her classes was to “introduce to students about the lifestyles of foreign communities and compare that lifestyle with the lifestyle in students’ country” (Binh, Interview 2), while Anh referred to the use of the target language in pragmatic situations. Hieu explicitly named some relevant cultural aspects, including “context, famous landscapes, manners and customs, habits, traditions” (Hieu, Interview 2). Luong reported: “Cultural aspects related to human beings’ lifestyle must be taught in order to understand and compare the lifestyle of people who speak the studied language” (Luong, Interview 2). It can be seen that these four participants focused on the teaching of “little c” culture. What they normally worked with in their EFL lessons was the collection of cultural items under the forms of “Social interaction”, “Belief and behaviour”, “Socialisation and life-cycle”, and “National geography”. However, their perception of teaching culture mismatched their teaching practices when I cross-checked this finding with their pedagogies in EFL classes. They rarely included such cultural information in their lessons. Further, the ways they dealt with a specific cultural element, if they addressed it, were superficial and focused on the acquisition of cultural knowledge rather than strategies to communicate interculturally.

The last participant, Duyen, presented any particular cultural items that appeared in the textbooks, because she considered they were all important to EFL learners. She said: “The integration of culture, as I have said, depends on the textbook content, so it is hard to say ... For me, I think all cultural aspects in [the textbooks] are equally important, I cannot define which one is more important than others” (Duyen, Interview 2). Duyen did not explicitly mention the most evident cultural aspects in her classes; however her dependence on the textbook content indicated that she shared the same teaching approach as the other four participants. As concluded in Chapter Four, “little c” culture references were more common than “big C” culture in the two textbooks. Duyen thus showed her inclination towards the teaching of “little c” culture.

Another issue drawn from the participants’ interviews related to the correspondence of the students’ characteristics and the teaching of culture. Two participants, Binh and Luong, described their students as being good at music and drawing. They reported that they

endeavoured to include cultural information in the field of art. For example, Luong said: “The students in this university are good at music and fine arts, it is better to include information about music and fine arts” (Luong, Interview 2). According to Byram’s cultural content checklist, the cultural forms described by Luong fall into the “Stereotypes and national identity” category. This finding suggests Luong and Binh’s consideration regarding the presentation of cultural knowledge of a particular country. As discussed by a number of scholars, one among many strategies that assist people find a ‘third place’ in intercultural interactions is to equip them with knowledge of the cultural backgrounds of a nation, including those of different countries and their own (Byram, 1989; Casrnir, 1999; Kramsch, 1993; Liddicoat, 2002). These two participants may assist their students to acquire culture-specific knowledge necessary for communicating with people from other cultures.

Activities for teaching cultural forms: In my interviews, the participants mentioned a number of classroom activities specifically used for teaching cultural knowledge. Their culture-based teaching activities included: (1) lectures (e.g., providing students with cultural information or giving examples/explanation to illustrate the use of cultural items appearing in the teaching materials), (2) discussions (e.g., organising the class with students’ participation in pairs/groups discussing about cultural topics), (3) dialogues (e.g., guiding students to practice dialogue and understand the use of specific dialogue in its own context), (4) quizzes (e.g., asking questions relating to cultural topics), (5) the provision of authentic materials (e.g., using additional reading passages, stories, songs, video clips, pictures to enable students to thoroughly understand the cultures of different countries), (6) games and acting games (e.g., helping students to position themselves in the role of drama characters), (7) comparison of culture in the teaching materials (e.g., identifying differences between cultures and relating to students’ local culture the use of language in communication, lifestyle or behaviour), (8) sharing cultural experiences with students (e.g., telling students what they have experienced such as cultural encounters with foreigners or cultural shocks they may have had); (9) student research (e.g., asking students to research about a particular cultural topic). The following extract from my interview with Duyen illustrates her familiarity with two techniques for teaching practice.

I explicitly introduce [cultural aspects] to my students, it means I do not teach culture in indirect way. For example, when I teach the lesson with cultural aspect focusing on the greetings I directly tell my students about the way English people greet each other ... In terms of activities, discussion is my frequently used strategy because students only discuss when teachers ask them to compare between cultures (Duyen, Interview 2).

As may be seen from this extract, Duyen normally dealt with cultural forms through lectures or discussions. She set about to “teach culture explicitly” (Duyen, Interview 2) by providing students with cultural information, or by asking them to establish differences between cultures. Her first technique was teacher-focused, because she acted as a knowledge transmitter, while her second technique was student-centred, which mostly required students’ participation. Similarly, Anh organised her lessons using these two activities, supplemented by bringing to her class authentic materials, such as pictures, newspapers, video clips, etc.; familiarising her students with academic study through student research activity; and sharing her cultural experiences with students. She was the only teacher who was flexible in utilising culture-based techniques during her teaching practices. While the other participants mentioned two or three frequently used activities, Anh linked her teaching with five techniques, as is illustrated in her second and third interviews.

The teaching methods I use for teaching culture include using pictures, video clips, books, newspapers, magazines or sharing with students my cultural experience. I introduce cultural aspects to students. I do not only teach cultural aspects of foreign countries but also make a comparison with our own culture” (Anh, Interview 2)

I can also guide my students to search for cultural information from the Internet ... Students can search for articles or pictures on the Internet. It is a way to help students do research” (Anh, Interview 3)

Regarding the three other participants, their cultural teaching practices were characterised by the use of English songs, pictures of famous people or paintings by famous painters as their most favoured authentic materials; the teaching of dialogues; the practice of quizzes; and the performance of acting games. For example, Luong said: “I can find an English song and my students can sing along ... Second, they can do acting games ... They can position themselves in the role of Charlie Chaplin ... I can use pictures for my students to practise describing a person” (Luong, Interview 3). Binh reported: “I can let my students involve in listening to songs performed by famous singers, or practising different dialogues, or providing them with paintings of famous painters such as Picasso ... I designed classroom activities in the form of quiz solving” (Binh, Interview 2). In case of Hieu, she responded: “I present students with specific examples and situations. Or I can include supplementary materials such as reading texts or listening activities” (Hieu, Interview 2).

My participants mentioned different cultural activities which can be categorised into five groups. First, the participants provided their students with opportunities to involve themselves

in the academic learning of diverse cultures through lectures, discussions and student research. Second, they enabled students to become familiar with other cultures by bringing to their classrooms authentic materials such as pictures, video clips, songs, stories, etc., reflecting foreign cultures. Third, they helped students experience foreign cultures by acting as characters from the other culture, by practising language structures in dialogues, or by engaging in the teachers' sharing of cultural understanding. Fourth, they allowed students to check their cultural knowledge by asking them to answer quizzes. Fifth, they guided students to find contrasts with their own culture in order to develop intercultural identity for their students.

The extent of teaching particular cultural forms: The interviews with participants focusing on their teaching of culture indicated the frequency and the extent to which they dealt with cultural aspects. All five participants reported that they enacted cultural content in their English teaching practices frequently. They stated they were ready to act as cultural mediators to develop students' cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills whenever the teaching materials contained cultural content. However, they addressed culture to a limited extent because of many difficulties they confronted in their culture teaching. Four main obstacles mentioned by the participants included: the insufficiency of teaching facilities, the inadequacy of culture content in the set textbooks, the time constraints and the teachers' limited cultural knowledge.

The participants referred to the inconvenience of employing technology-based activities to teach culture. The teaching facilities at their university were unavailable, so they tended to work on cultural aspects through lectures or discussions. The participants simply spent time engaging their students in non-technology based activities. They rarely designed classroom tasks "for which the technology served as a visual aid or used the tool to do similar non-technology based activities in a more efficient manner" (Hollebrands, McCulloch, & Lee, 2016, p. 273). According to them, the utilisation of teaching facilities, such as televisions, CD players, projectors, etc. allowed them to present a realistic depiction of foreign countries, through which their students could obtain a more relative understanding of people' cultural practices or behaviour. However, they had limited opportunities with which to enable the creation of a technology-based learning environment. For example, this extract from an interview with Hieu presents this perspective.

For example, I wanted to include in my lesson a video clip as I intended to do so last week, but I could not borrow the projector, so how can I transmit cultural knowledge to my students. I have to conduct my lesson using my traditional ways such as directly presenting cultural information to students or ask them to talk about a cultural topic.

Therefore, this week I decided not to bring computer with me because I could not borrow the projector from the university to use with. It is not easy to pass cultural knowledge on students when we lack of necessary teaching facilities (Hieu, Interview 2).

There was another problem that related to the cultural content of the textbooks in use. As mentioned in Section 5.2.1, the participants were not fully satisfied with the set textbooks' cultural content. Their textbooks seemed to focus on English speaking cultures and the inclusion of cultural knowledge. Further, the presentation of cultural content was not clearly disclosed, therefore it was difficult for both teachers and students to understand it. As a consequence, the participants limited their teaching of cultural competence to the provision of cultural facts about Anglophone countries. This obstacle was mentioned by Anh in her member-checking interview. As well as referring to the inadequacy of cultural content in the textbooks, she indicated two other limiting factors in the teaching of cultural aspects. She said:

I want to add something about the reasons why the teaching of culture is not really taken into consideration in foreign language lessons at my university. I think the first reason relates to the time constraint ... Another reason is about teachers' limited knowledge about their own culture and foreign cultures, so I think such restricted knowledge influences much the presentation of cultural content. The third factor relating to the limitation in teaching cultural competence was the inadequacy of cultural content in the teaching materials (Anh, Interview 3).

As can be seen from Anh's response, the participants' restrictions upon the teaching of culture depend on two more factors including time constraint and the teachers' limited cultural knowledge. Time constraint was a factor that influenced the amount of time teachers devoted to their cultural teaching practices. As mentioned in Section 1.5.3, the teaching time for English was limited, although a heavy teaching workload had to be accomplished. They attached substantial importance to the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and the four language skills in comparison with the teaching of culture. It follows that the more their culture teaching time was limited, the more briefly they dealt with particular cultural aspects. Luong explained this as follows: "In terms of a particular cultural aspect included in a particular unit, if I have much time I can present extensively and if I do not have much time I just introduce briefly" (Luong, Interview 2).

One more obstacle considered by the participants was their lack of cultural knowledge. In cases where the cultural content was familiar to them, they could give students in-depth information.

However, in cases where the cultural content was unfamiliar, they were obviously limited in their ability to provide this information, as demonstrated by Anh's response below:

In terms of cultural aspects which are familiar to me and I think my students can understand them easily and they can share some of their understanding about such cultural aspects, I will devote my time teaching them thoroughly. Whereas, if the cultural items were unfamiliar to my students and I have limited understanding about them, I will work with them to a limited extent (Anh, Interview 2).

It is worth noting that the participants reportedly addressed culture to only a limited extent, giving four main reasons for the restrictions upon their cultural teaching practices. This finding was drawn from interviews which will now be triangulated with those from classroom observations and field notes. As the teaching of cultural competence was part of the participants' teaching practice, it was necessary to investigate their perceptions of how students responded to this practice. Given that cultural competence is an important factor in foreign language education, understanding students' reactions to the teaching of culture enabled the participants to evaluate their teaching practices and facilitate their integration of culture so as to make their EFL education maximally effective. The following section specifically demonstrates this issue.

Students' responses to the integration of culture: All five participants reported that their students were motivated when they integrated culture into their EFL lessons. The teaching of cultural aspects enabled them to raise the levels of their students' "motivation" and "curiosity" (Hieu, Interview 2), and consequently they could understand the lessons well and improve their English proficiency. For example, Binh said: "My students in these lessons are very motivated, very interested and very excited. For example, in the lessons I employ techniques such as games or listening to music, my students are very motivated and my class is very exciting" (Binh, Interview 2). Binh used "very" ("rất") as a modifier four times to describe her students' motivation. She appreciated the activities that she used for teaching culture. She compared her teaching approach based upon an ICC perspective with the traditional teaching method and implied that there were benefits her students could achieve from the application of an ICC pedagogy. She stated: "These lessons differ from others, in which I do not integrate culture and I simply teach grammar. For example, [when] I teach my students about the past simple tense, I just provide them with its form and usages, then I ask them to do exercises, so my students can, of course, complete all tasks but they are not active" (Binh, Interview 2). Similar to Binh, Luong used "very" before "motivated" and "interested" to describe her students' response to the

integration of culture. She said: “When learning about these cultural aspects or specific information about people and cultures of other countries, my students are very interested, very motivated” (Luong, Interview 2). Duyen reported that teaching culture met her students’ needs and interested. She said:

I find that my students have need to learn [culture], so they are very motivated. When discussing about culture they are very motivated, they share their ideas, it means they take consideration into foreign cultures. Therefore, it is a shortcoming if we teach a foreign language without addressing culture (Duyen, interview 2).

Anh agreed that when introducing cultural aspects in EFL classes she could raise her students’ motivation. However, the level of motivation that was achieved depended on the particular types of cultural aspects taught. She focused on two groups of cultural information, which included familiar and unfamiliar cultural aspects. She stated that: “Regarding familiar cultural aspects ... I find that my students seem to be more motivated because they can share their knowledge about these cultural aspects. For those which are unfamiliar to them, they show their less motivation” (Anh, Interview 2).

The integration of culture in my participants’ EFL lessons allowed their students to learn English both linguistically and culturally. It provided their students with opportunities to understand foreign cultures. In such lessons, the students could practise many culture-related activities instead of silently listening to their teachers or doing exercises provided in the textbooks. They could work in pairs or in groups in order to discuss a particular cultural point, make cultural comparison with other countries, or relate a culture to their local culture. They also experienced practical situations that helped them evaluate cultural aspects from their own point of view. As a result, the students not only became motivated in classroom activities, but also developed into competent English users.

5.3.2 Classroom Observations

The most evident cultural forms incorporated in Vietnamese EFL classes: The participants were observed five times each in their EFL classrooms. As has been mentioned in the previous section, the participants used textbooks as their main teaching materials, and they sometimes added supplementary materials taken from different sources. This section aims to discover what cultural forms were the most evident in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes. I will therefore provide a description of, and discussion about, the cultural content addressed by the participants in their EFL teaching, no matter which teaching materials they used. As noted in Section 5.2.3,

only three participants, namely Anh, Duyen and Binh, integrated culture into their EFL classes. Table 5.3 was designed to demonstrate this.

Participants	Observations	Cultural content presented in teaching practices							
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Anh	Observation 1					√			
	Observation 2								
	Observation 3								
	Observation 4			√					
	Observation 5								
Duyen	Observation 1			√					
	Observation 2								
	Observation 3								
	Observation 4								
	Observation 5								
Luong	Observation 1			√					
	Observation 2			√					
	Observation 3				√				
	Observation 4				√				
	Observation 5								

Table 5.3: Cultural Content Presented in Teaching Practices

Notes: (1) Social identity and social groups; (2) Social interaction; (3) Belief & behaviour; (4) Social and political institutions; (5) Socialisation and life-cycle; (6) National history; (7) National geography; (8) Stereotypes and national identity.

As can be seen from Table 5.3, three participants were familiar with three cultural forms, including “Belief and behaviour”, “Social and political institutions” and “Socialisation and life-cycle”. They focused on the presentation of “Belief and behaviour”, because all of them related their teaching to this cultural form. Luong referred to it in her two lessons, while Anh and Duyen presented their students with this cultural form in one of their five lessons. Only Luong provided her students with cultural information under the “Social and political institutions” category in her other two lessons. In addition, Anh was the only participant who gave her students opportunities to learn about the “Socialisation and life-cycle” category. These three participants did not help their students acquire the cultural knowledge related to other five cultural forms. In the EFL lessons I observed, these participants provided their students with information about their daily routine (for example: Hetty Robison’s habits); dining etiquette (for example: the introduction of some kinds of food, drinks and dessert); law and order (for example: British’s and Scotland’s laws about the marriage age); family (for example: Hetty Robison’s family, Marcus Lee-Curtis’ family). This information was mostly included in the

reading texts, dialogues, conversations and pictures in the set textbooks, while some was taken from their additional materials in the form of reading passages.

The participants rarely addressed culture in their teaching practices. Although the set EFL textbooks allowed teachers to organise their lessons working with eight different cultural forms (see Chapter Four), they overlooked many opportunities to present the information provided in these textbooks. As a consequence, they could not help their students obtain a full understanding about culture in general. They limited their students to understanding a particular cultural background from different aspects.

It was also discovered from the participants' teaching practices that the frequency at which they presented a particular cultural aspect differed from its proportionate allocation in the main teaching materials. For example, my analysis of *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* – the textbook was used by the five teachers in each of their observed lesson – revealed that cultural references to “Social interaction” is the most frequent, followed by, “Belief and behaviour”, “Social identity and social groups” and “National geography”. However, the participants did not focus their teaching on the “Social interaction” cultural category. This finding was then triangulated with those from their interviews in order to check whether there were any influences that derived from their perception. All five participants reported that “Social interactions” was the most important cultural aspect that needed to be addressed in EFL education. It was clear that, although the participants were aware of the importance of teaching students to communicate appropriately and this was included in their textbooks, they did not integrate cultural information belonging to this category in their lessons. This can be seen as the gap between teachers' perception and their actual teaching performance.

Another finding from the triangulation method related to the presentation of culture under the “National geography” category. The interview analysis found that this cultural category was the fourth most important, and the textbook analysis demonstrated that relative rating of this cultural content by ranking it in fourth place. However, the participants did not have a tendency to provide students with this cultural knowledge. Their teaching practices did not correspond to their perception, which contributed to their students' difficulties in developing their ICC. Regarding the significance of culture in language teaching, the participants are supposed to place culture at the core of EFL instruction and then prioritise both teaching content and culture-based activities. The section below focuses on how the participants blended cultural elements into their EFL classrooms.

Activities for teaching cultural forms: Of the 25 classroom observations, seven, conducted with Anh, Duyen and Luong, were analysed. In these EFL lessons, the teachers employed some teaching activities to teach cultural knowledge for their students. As EFL teachers, the participants performed different roles with the aim of training their students to become competent English users. In other words, the participants acted as knowledge transmitters as they focused on providing students with cultural information; otherwise they worked as facilitators to guide students to engage “in the pragmatic, authentic, and functional use of language for meaningful purposes” (H. D. Brown, 1994, p. 245). As mentioned, the participants could use nine different methods to develop their lessons, as they reported in their interviews. Table 5.4 was designed to use these nine teaching techniques as the checklist to summarise the main ways in which the participants were observed to teach cultural competence for their students. The findings are later discussed in greater detail.

Participants		Activities and techniques for teaching of culture								
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Anh	Observation 1	√				√				
	Observation 2									
	Observation 3									
	Observation 4	√							√	
	Observation 5									
Duyen	Observation 1		√					√		
	Observation 2									
	Observation 3									
	Observation 4									
	Observation 5									
Luong	Observation 1	√						√		
	Observation 2							√		
	Observation 3							√		
	Observation 4							√		
	Observation 5									

Table 5.4: Teachers’ Occasions to Work with Culture-Based Activities

Notes: (1) Lectures; (2) Discussions; (3) Dialogues; (4) Quizzes; (5) Provision of authentic materials; (6) Games and acting games; (7) Comparison of culture in the teaching materials; (8) Sharing cultural experiences with students; (9) Student research

Table 5.4 shows that the participants designed their lessons using five culture-based activities, which included: lectures, discussions, the provision of authentic materials, the comparison of culture in the teaching materials and the sharing of cultural experiences with students. In other words, they implemented three different groups of cultural practices, as categorised in the

relevant interview finding, when they dealt with cultural aspects in their EFL lessons. However, their teaching approach revealed two issues: first, the frequency of utilising culture-related activities was not considerable; second, the ways that different teachers employed culture-related activities varied from each other. Each issue will be discussed in detail below.

It can be seen from Table 5.4 that the participants sometimes involved their students in activities designed to teach understanding of cultural aspects. They organised EFL lessons with or without cultural based techniques. For example, in the observed lessons 2, 3 and 5 by Anh, the observed lessons 2, 3, 4 and 5 by Duyen, and the observed lesson 5 by Luong, no classroom practices relating to cultural aspects were offered to students. They focused their teaching on grammar rules and drilled their students in grammatical exercises or introduced to them some new vocabulary items and taught them how to pronounce these appropriately. They displayed their roles as teachers of linguistics, and did not give students any opportunities to connect their language learning with culture learning. With regards to some of their other lessons, their opportunities to teach culture were limited because they rarely employed culture-related techniques. Their teaching methods seemed to restrict their students to the acquisition of intercultural knowledge and skills, which reflects the finding from the international research conducted by Sercu (2004). Teachers from seven countries, including Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Mexico, Poland, Spain and Sweden were involved in Sercu's study. They spent little time teaching culture and did not take much advantage of appropriate teaching techniques when they had opportunities to integrate culture. This teaching method by my participants and those from these seven countries does not enable them to prepare students for the use of the studied language in intercultural contexts. What they needed to do was to adapt their teaching approach towards an ICC perspective and integrate cultural aspects with language teaching.

The participants restricted their utilisation of culture-related activities and compounded their habituation to linguistic-related activities. They were observed to deal with cultural aspects once, twice or three times in one lesson. By putting culture at the core of language education, the incorporation of culture becomes the teachers' most important task (Sercu, 2006). It means that foreign language teachers should identify key cultural items in every aspect of the language they teach. The activities should then be organised in order to raise students' cultural awareness, as well as develop their intercultural attitudes and skills. As noted by Doganay (2013), "every cultural activity has shown plenty of advantages and effectiveness in English language teaching in many different ways" (p. 112); the more teachers counted on ways to address culture into their everyday lessons, the more they put their students in different cultural situational practices.

The five teachers in my study reported that they employed nine culture-related activities; however, in teaching they did not make much use of these techniques. Little importance was placed upon the utilisation of cultural based activities in their lessons. They either went through an EFL lesson without addressing any cultural aspects, or rarely touched on cultural input. Additionally, their most common practice was to compare cultures. They provided comparisons among cultures instead of asking students to make comparisons of cultural items. Although their preferred teaching technique allowed them to provide their students with cultural information, it could not enable them to promote their students' learning involvement. EFL teachers should organise intercultural teaching lessons with many learner-centred activities in order to help students engage in a number of practices (Byram & Planet, 2000). The collection of techniques to develop students' ICC was various (see Section 2.5.3.3). In observed lessons, the participants overlooked many chances to focus students upon a learner-centred practice. Activities such as discussions, dialogues, quizzes, games and acting games requiring students' participation were not frequently used. In terms of comparing and contrasting activities, the participants tended to explicitly transfer ready-made information to students, as seen in the extracts below from Luong's and Duyen's classroom observations:

T: In some foreign countries, such as England the young people can get married at the age of 16 without parents' permission. However, some parents do not agree with their children's marriage and they oppose it. The bride's parents and the groom's parents have an argument with each other and they have to appear before the court. In Vietnam, we have not had such kind of law yet. First, people only can get married if they are 18 of age. Second, if parents of young couples do not support their wedding, they may end with a quarrel but not a trial (Luong, Classroom observation 1).

T: Ok, so that is the difference between the cultures, the culture in Asia and in Western country for many reasons. You should know that for people from Western countries, they have the habit of moving a lot during their life time for many reasons. But in Asian countries such as Vietnam, people seem not want to move, they like staying in the same place. Some people for their own reasons, they move to other places but in general they stay in the same place, which is the difference between two cultures (Duyen, Classroom observation 1).

As I will discuss in Chapter Six, the participants might have integrated culture with language teaching effectively if they had attached much importance to learner-centeredness and designed their classrooms with more techniques of this type. For example, in the cases of Luong and

Duyen, they might have asked their students to reflect on their own culture or ask them to make comparisons between cultures. Thus, the participants in my study, despite employing various culture-based activities in their EFL pedagogies, showed their tendency for teacher-centred techniques and the provisions of cultural knowledge. They did not seem to update their teaching approach towards ICC perspective. They missed a number of opportunities to present the target culture through its culture, which revealed their lack of engagement in cultural teaching practices. This finding also reflected Sercu's (2005) investigation from the Mexican teachers' teaching method, in which she stated that "they do not know how to integrate intercultural competence teaching in their own foreign language teaching" (p. 129). In an ICC classroom context, students learning is described as "learner-centred, engaging, interactive, participatory, and cooperative" (Moeller & Nugent, 2014, p. 4). It follows that EFL teachers are expected to take roles of the facilitators to help students "explore, discover, analyse and evaluate meaningful information through primary and authentic texts, audio, videos and media (ibid., p. 5).

In terms of the second issue, the participants were varied in their pedagogies. In the case of Anh, Table 5.4 shows that she had tendency to allow her students become accustomed to academic study. That is, she implemented the cultural techniques belonging to the first and second groups of cultural techniques, as reported by the participants in their interviews. She focused on providing cultural information and sharing her own cultural experiences. She supplemented the main teaching materials with some cultural points related to the Anglophone countries. In this way, she enabled her students to discover some other cultures with their own eyes. In contrast to Anh, Duyen was observed to guide students to participate in discussing activities and making comparisons between Vietnamese and English speaking cultures. Her teaching approach covered two out of five groups of cultural teaching techniques. Luong showed an inclination for a comparison of cultures, which represents the fifth teaching group. She compared cultural values, regulations and laws in English and Vietnamese cultures, but did not provide students with opportunities to investigate cultural differences or similarities.

These three participants' utilisation of culture-based activities is incompatible with their perception, as described in Section 5.3.1. They reported that they use various techniques; however in their EFL classes, they transmitted cultural information and made comparisons among cultures rather than invite students to explore other cultures themselves. In this sense, their teaching practices could not be characterised as working towards the full attainment of ICC. On the basis of the classroom observations and the cultural content presented in the participants' EFL textbooks, I will now investigate to what extent they infused cultural

knowledge into their EFL pedagogies. The following section focuses on describing how extensively they dealt with particular cultural items.

The extent of teaching particular cultural forms: The discussion in Section 2.2.3 indicated that the teaching of cultural competence should focus on the development of four domains, namely cultural awareness, cultural sensitivities, cultural knowledge and cultural skills. Taking these domains as a kind of checklist, I found that the participants displayed their teaching in terms of the provision of cultural knowledge. This finding may be influenced by the cultural content of their textbooks, as reported in Chapter Four. These textbooks include cultural knowledge (the information about cultural backgrounds of different cultural groups: education, politics, literature, customs, behaviour, etc.) rather than cultural awareness (the understanding of factors affecting intercultural contacts), sensitivities (the ability to adjust attitudes to establish harmony in interactions) and skills (the strategies to perform appropriately in intercultural communications). The participants rarely referred students to the strategies to have success in intercultural interactions. They rarely created opportunities for their students to raise their cultural awareness or develop their cultural sensitivity. The examples below describe Luong's and Anh's cultural teaching practices, and this helps to understand how extensively the teaching of culture was conducted by the participants.

The first example is taken from Luong's classroom. Her lesson included a reading passage about recreation activities from the textbook. As her lesson aimed to drill students in reading skills, she devoted most of her teaching time to helping students understand the content of the reading passage, answer comprehension questions and participate in discussion activities. The ways she addressed the cultural input embedded in the reading passage included: providing information about people's recreation, explaining some vocabulary items, such as "Greece" or "million pounds", and comparing the ways English and Vietnamese people spent their free time. It was clear that she assisted her students in their attempts to acquire cultural knowledge. She gave her students an explanation about Greece and English currency and guided them as they compared kinds of recreation in England and Vietnam. Her cultural practice was limited, because she missed an opportunity to focus on strategies to communicate interculturally. For example, in her first lesson about an English wedding, some cultural issues arose, such as the age of consent to be married and wedding customs, which were introduced by the textbook. She asked her students to read through the reading text and complete the comprehension questions. She then took the answers and translated the text into Vietnamese. She addressed culture when she talked about the differences between English and Vietnamese law about the marriage age. As will be discussed in Chapter Six, if Luong had given consideration to the development of her

students' ICC, she might have provided them with culture-based activities to help them understand more about the wedding topic, for example: discussing the practices associated with the celebration of weddings in England, Vietnam and other countries; investigating how a bride and groom spend their honeymoon; and discovering the role of wedding in people's life.

Another example is taken from an observation of Anh's classroom. Her lesson focused on the simple future tense and the first conditional sentence. The textbook contains a reading about life in London and a photo of Big Ben, which she used throughout her lesson. She started the lesson by asking her students to read the text so as to find new vocabulary and to underline new grammatical structures. Next, she explained these new words, translated the reading into Vietnamese, analysed the structure of new grammatical items, and guided the students in practising activities. She asked her students to work with Exercises 1 and 2, then organised them into groups to discuss life in London and Hanoi. She expanded the discussion, returning to the photo of Big Ben, and provided students some information about it (for example, where and when it was built). She listed some other famous monuments from other countries (for example, Eiffel Tower in France, the Statue of Liberty in the USA, Hoan Kiem Lake in Vietnam). She provided her students with cultural knowledge associated with the textbook and broadened their understanding of cultures from other countries. She helped her students make connections to their own culture. What she and her students did in their EFL classes basically supported the development of cultural knowledge, one of the four elements of cultural competence, as also investigated in her other lesson. In her fourth lesson, she and her students worked with the reading text entitled *The Witch of Wall Street*, which relates to economics, beliefs, behaviour, social groups, and lifestyles. In this lesson, she mentioned Wall Street as a well-known stock market located in the USA, but did not give any further information regarding how and why it is famous. She also shared her experience of being a stock investor.

On the basis of these above examples, I would now combine my analysis with some other examples taken from my observations and devote to a discussion of their teaching practices under ICC analytical lens.

Luong and Anh did not devote their teaching to develop students' ability to interpret or explain particular foreign cultural forms. They lectured in order to assist their students in understanding Vietnamese translation. In Luong's and Anh's lessons, they gave explanations about the use of new vocabulary. For example, Luong explained that a "pound" was English money. However, she could have taken the opportunity to allow her students to discuss the role of money as a medium of exchange in many countries, the history of British pounds, the different forms of

money (for example, coin, paper money and banknote), or refer to the names of various currencies, such as U.S dollars, Australian dollars, European euros. Through such activities, the students could have developed a more thorough understanding that may have broadened their intercultural knowledge as well as improved their language skills.

These two participants did not ask their students to become involved in classroom practices so as to discover other countries and learn strategies to be able to have successful communication in other cultures. They both missed opportunities for their students to develop abilities to deal with cross-cultural encounters. In their lessons, they focused on teacher-centred activities. Duyen was the only teacher who organised for her students to compare the different perceptions of moving house that exist between English and Vietnamese people. Anh only provided cultural information and Luong focused on comparing cultures. However, they could have assisted their students to develop these skills by asking them to make connections with their culture, give possible explanations for critical incidents of cross-cultural situations that may cause misunderstandings, and learn how to have effective communication. In the case of Luong, she could have organised students to discuss how English and Vietnamese people spend their free time. For example, she could have guided students to share their opinions of overnight relaxing activities. The discussion could have been from the students' personal viewpoints and according to Vietnamese law. Through such a practice, her students could have obtained general knowledge of a specific cultural topic from different aspects and know how to negotiate their intercultural interactions. In another lesson, she helped her students learn about superstition. She asked students to read the text, find new words, translate them into Vietnamese and answer comprehension questions. She missed opportunities to involve her students in many culture-based activities. For example, she could have asked students to discover why and how people from different countries had or showed their belief in superstition. She may have designed her lessons to allow students' participation in discussing why Chinese people believe that going to the pagodas at New Year could bring them luck, what (else) could bring luck to Chinese people or people from different countries, then compare and relate this to the students' local culture. Similarly, Anh could have asked her students to discuss and evaluate Hetty Robinson's – the Witch of the Wall Street, as described in Unit 3, *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* – behaviour from their own perspective. She could have guided them in exploring their own feelings and reactions to Hetty Robinson's actions. Through this process, they could have developed an understanding of the underlying values and attitudes of foreign cultures.

Luong and Anh limited their students in developing critical cultural awareness. Duyen also paid little attention to raising this awareness among her students. As noted, these three participants

missed a number of opportunities to help students explore foreign cultures. They limited their students' experience in different communities. In their EFL lessons, the students were not asked to put themselves into interculturally communicative situations, which required them to overcome cultural obstacles by knowing how to implement what they had learned in practice or how to perform appropriately in communication. If the students had been given chances to develop the skills to deal with critical incidents, they could have acknowledged diverse situations and have been able to negotiate themselves in flexible and proper ways. For example, in Luong's lesson about an English wedding, as described earlier, she helped her students understand the concept of English weddings and compared it with those in Vietnamese culture. She did not organise for her students to discuss and evaluate the cultural values which influence English and Vietnamese wedding customs (for example, English people organise a wedding at the church while Vietnamese people celebrate their wedding at home; English young couple can live together before marriage, while it is forbidden for Vietnamese people). As mentioned by Diller and Moule (2005), in order to raise students' cultural awareness, EFL teachers need to help them understand and always be aware of cultural factors that occur during interactions. In this sense, Luong did not help her students make evaluations of foreign cultures and their own. Further, she did not provide her students with adequate opportunities to understand the importance of culture in communication across cultures. She seemed to lack the competence to address her students' development of cultural awareness.

Anh and Duyen focused on the provision of English speaking cultures rather than international target cultures, but Luong did not. Although Anh and Duyen made connections with other cultures, they devoted little time for this practice. For example, Anh spent most of her teaching time explaining new vocabulary and grammatical items, and translating the reading passage into Vietnamese. Interestingly, she developed her lesson in the same ways as her colleagues did. There was only one moment observed when she mentioned Big Ben as part of the cultural heritage in England and referred to some famous monuments in other countries, such as the Statue of Liberty in the USA, the C.N. Tower in Canada, the Sydney Opera House in Australia. In Duyen's lesson, she was observed to refer to English speaking cultures which were included in the set textbook and were different to the cultures of Asian countries. Her teaching approach was similar to Anh's method. She spent little time addressing the differences between European and Asian perceptions of moving house. I observed that my participants seemed to pay much attention to incorporating cultural knowledge of English speaking countries into their EFL teaching than those from non-English speaking countries. As a result, their students were simply accustomed to cultural knowledge within the English-speaking world, but were unfamiliar with a learning environment that demonstrates intercultural knowledge.

The findings from both interviews and classroom observations indicate that the participants performed their teaching of cultural competence to a restricted extent. They gave much emphasis to providing their students with the understanding about cultural facts in relation to English speaking cultures and restricted their teaching to culture-based activities (for example, figuring out cultural conflicts or giving appropriate explanations for critical incidents), through which their students could experience themselves in the world of foreigners. From an ICC perspective, the participants displayed their limitations in helping students to develop an ICC skill set and cultural awareness. If more attention was paid to the improvement of these domains, the students would be able to become intercultural speakers. In Vietnamese EFL tertiary classrooms, in order to fully develop students' ICC, it is necessary to address culture as a core component. One significant area that allows teachers to integrate culture with language teaching is professional development. The next section focuses on this area.

5.4 Professional Development

In my interviews, the five participants reported various professional development activities that support the teaching of culture at their university. They shared their experience of engaging with foreign cultures and offered some suggestions to promote the teaching and learning of English, particularly the development of students' English competence, both communicatively and interculturally. They suggested activities at two levels: at the level of the individual teacher and at the level of the university and the MOET. Table 5.5 presents the main activities reported by the five participants and each specific activity is elaborated on below.

Participants	At teacher level				At the university and the MOET level						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Anh	√	√		√	√					√	√
Binh		√		√	√		√			√	
Duyen	√	√	√	√	√		√			√	√
Hieu	√	√		√	√	√		√	√	√	√
Luong	√	√	√	√	√					√	√

Table 5.5: Activities to Support ICC Teaching

Notes: (1) Reading publications about culture; (2) Learning about cultures from mass media and Internet media; (3) Participating in conferences and workshops; (4) Meeting and connecting with foreigners; (5) Improving teaching and learning facilities; (6) Updating the set textbooks; (7) Reorganising class sizes; (8) Expanding time for the subject of English; (9) Redesigning English assessments; (10) Giving teachers and students opportunities to interact with English speaking foreigners; (11) Providing teachers with opportunities to attend courses or programs for professional development

EFL teachers' self-development: The participants mentioned various ways to obtain cultural knowledge and intercultural skills, which would enable them to improve their teaching of cultural competence. Four main themes emerged from their opinions, including:

- Reading publications about culture
- Learning about cultures from mass media and Internet media
- Participating in conferences and workshops
- Meeting and connecting with foreigners

As may be seen from Table 5.5, four out of the five participants stated that they could enrich their cultural knowledge by reading books or other publications about culture, which would enable them to provide their students with cultural information about different countries. All five participants reported that they learn about cultures by listening to the radio or watching television. Additionally, they could make use of the Internet as a plentiful resource to search for such cultural information. For them, learning about cultures from mass media and the Internet seemed to be an easy and frequent way to enrich their cultural knowledge. Only two participants, Duyen and Luong, shared the experiences of and suggestions for participating in conferences and workshops. This activity not only helped them gain cultural knowledge and intercultural skills to support their ICC teaching, but also updated them with current EFL teaching approaches to improve their teaching. Another way to promote the teaching of cultural forms used by all five participants was through 'abroad contact' with foreign communities. They talked about the experiences gained from their interactions with foreigners, such as their English teachers, their English colleagues, their English friends or English speaking tourists. They demonstrated that these international communications gave opportunities for them to learn about other cultures, to make comparisons between different cultures and to relate to their local culture.

There were four methods which the participants personally adopted in order to support their intercultural English teaching. Among them, the participants valued Activities 2 and 4 the most. The direct contact with people from different countries, specifically with those who spoke English, helped them gain intercultural experiences. Through such interactions, they realised the differences and the similarities between their local culture and with the other cultures. They knew how to negotiate their communication with people from other cultures. In this sense, they could develop their cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills. This finding supports Sercu's (2006) viewpoint that the demands for EFL teachers and their tasks from an ICC perspective include necessary knowledge (linguistic and cultural knowledge), skills (the use of different

culture-based activities) and attitudes (the willingness to integrate culture in foreign language teaching). In terms of Activity 2, the participants found that the availability of mass media made it easier to access foreign cultures. Further, they enriched their knowledge by reading books or stories, which falls into the third group of activities that support EFL teachers' teaching practices. Four participants reported that they used this method in order to accumulate knowledge for their EFL teaching. For example, Anh stated:

I have had quick conversations with English speaking tourists. I think I do not have many chances to communicate with foreigners, however I can know about other cultures through movies or mass media ... Apart from the time I am at school, I can engage with many aspects of foreign culture through movies, books, newspapers, magazines and stories written in English ... A recent activity I am doing is reading English stories. These are my ways to obtain contact with foreign communities and these are very useful. Especially in my situation, when I cannot go abroad, so I can get information from movies, internet and English stories (Anh, Interview 2).

My participants could enhance their teaching of culture by their self-teaching about different cultural issues. Apart from the three self-taught activities described above, they could increase their exposure and develop their skills by providing themselves with opportunities to take part in conferences or workshops useful to their professional development. Two participants referred to this method as a way to promote their teaching. For example, Duyen said: "I went to conference in Cambodia ... I have to make my way for my professional development. In the past I participated in an English Teaching Club at the British Council ... now I join a club in the American Centre" (Duyen, Interview 2)

Professional development activities from the university and the MOET: When asked for suggestions for the university and the MOET as to how to support EFL teaching and the learning of culture, the participants offered seven recommendations:

- Improving teaching and learning facilities
- Updating the set textbooks
- Reorganising class sizes
- Expanding time for the subject of English
- Redesigning English assessments
- Giving teachers and students opportunities to interact with English speaking foreigners

- Providing teachers with opportunities to attend courses or programs for professional development

As can be seen from Table 5.4, at this level (the university and the MOET level), the participants shared generalisations. I will first discuss the issues related to the current situation of EFL instruction at the participants' university. By referring to the factors influencing the teaching and learning of English in general, and the teaching of cultural competence in particular, the participants implied that the university and the MOET should improve. All five participants made suggestions for the improvement of teaching and learning facilities. They stated that a lack of equipment, such as projectors, televisions or CD players, prevented them from providing their students with opportunities to expand their understanding about different cultures or to motivate them in EFL lessons. They reported that although they spent time designing culture-related activities, they could not implement them because they did not have access to teaching aids. Two of them proposed reducing the number of students in EFL classes. Similar to other universities in the Vietnamese context, the participants were having difficulties in teaching large language classes. They found it hard to provide their students with enough opportunities to practice individually. In addition, the assigned time for teaching EFL was limited. Hieu was the only participant who advised the need to expand the times for English. She was also the only teacher who suggested that the textbooks be updated and assessments redesigned.

As noted in Section 5.2.1, all five participants were dissatisfied with their set textbooks, because they were outdated and did not offer enough materials for teaching cultural aspects. As an EFL teacher, Hieu realised the difficulties in using these textbooks, especially when she wanted to focus on the teaching of cultural competence. According to her, the university leaders could enhance intercultural English teaching by renovating and updating the textbooks. With regards to the testing of English, she stated that the EFL teachers at her university used a set of English tests to assess grammar and vocabulary presented in the textbooks. The examinations did not assess cultural content. The teachers and students at her university placed more emphasis on linguistic knowledge provided in the textbooks, and restricted cultural points in order to enable students to do the tests well. She suggested that students should be given opportunities to understand different cultures and improve their ICC through the inclusion of cultural information in the English tests or other forms of assessment. By doing so, students could be made aware of the important role of culture in EFL instruction and consequently they would become communicatively and interculturally competent English users. She proposed that: "The English tests should contain the questions such as *How to reply in this situation ...* That is the

way to include culture in testing papers ... The current English tests only focus on grammar, which are designed to assess grammar, for example the present simple tense or present continuous tense” (Hieu, Interview 2). She also added: “The necessary thing is to increase English class hours for students. Currently, teachers and students meet once per week ... Second, the teaching facilities should be improved, so teachers can perform their lessons well” (Hieu, Interview 2).

Together with the above suggestions, the participants discussed the necessity of providing teachers and students with opportunities to exchange cultures with English speaking foreigners. All five participants appreciated cultural exchange activities because it allowed teachers and students to experience foreign cultures. The direct contact with people from different communities assisted teachers and students to discover other cultures, make comparisons with their own culture and develop their intercultural awareness and skills. Another suggestion, which was strongly recommended by all five participants focused on addressing the development of EFL teaching pedagogies and teachers’ cultural knowledge and skills. They all acknowledged the changes in EFL teaching and that they would like to attend courses, workshops or programs in order to update themselves, not only with language knowledge but also with cultural knowledge. The overseas programs seemed advantageous to the participants, because they permitted personal exploration about the cultures. The following extract taken from an interview with Duyen serves as an example of the participants’ viewpoints regarding increasing the chances of international contacts for EFL teachers and students, and enhancing the teaching and learning of culture:

The university should provide teachers with opportunities to improve their teaching profession, such as attending overseas programs. If they learn abroad they can acknowledge the important role of culture in foreign language teaching or investigate how the researchers in English language education perceive the position of culture, if not they will not understand why the teaching of cultural competence should be made alongside linguistic competence ... One more thing that can be done is to give teachers and students more opportunities to interact with foreigners. It can be done by inviting foreigners to the university and they will present about their cultures (Duyen, Interview 2).

In this chapter, I have presented and discussed the findings in relation to the teaching practices of five teachers at a Vietnamese non-English major institution. First, the findings demonstrated the participants’ perceptions of culture and the teaching of culture in their EFL lessons. The

participants held a basic understanding of culture and were aware of the teaching of cultural competence. One of the important goals they set for their EFL teaching related to providing cultural knowledge for their students with the aim of developing their understanding about different cultures. The participants reported that they attached much importance to the teaching of culture alongside the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and four language skills. Second, the findings described the textbooks, which influenced the participants' integration of culture in their teaching practices. They showed their dissatisfaction with the set textbooks' content in terms of cultural information and reported that they supplement these textbooks with additional materials to facilitate their EFL teaching. Third, the findings presented the most frequent cultural forms addressed by the participants and their cultural teaching methods. In lessons, the participants specifically depended on the cultural content embedded in the textbooks. They had a tendency to cover just three cultural forms. In terms of teaching techniques, the participants reported that they employed a number of culture-based activities. However, in their EFL lessons, they were used to cognitive techniques (for example, lectures and reading), which enabled them to explicitly provide cultural knowledge to their students. It was clear that there was a mismatch between teachers' perception of teaching EFL and their actual teaching practices. In this regard, they limited their cultural teaching practices. From an ICC perspective, their teaching methods could not enable students to have successful communication with people from foreign communities. The participants missed opportunities for students to experience themselves in other cultures and determine strategies to overcome cultural incidents. Last but not least, the findings centred on eleven professional development activities to improve intercultural English teaching, as proposed by the participants. In terms of teachers, they felt that they should pay attention to the matter of self-development through reading publications, following mass media, participating in conferences and workshops, and making use of interactions with foreigners. In terms of educational leaders, they suggested that they should consider the obstacles to teaching, such as teaching and learning facilities, the teaching materials, the large sizes of the EFL classes and time constraints. In addition, they suggested that teachers and students should be provided with opportunities to interact with English speaking foreigners and support teacher professional development.

The description of the cultural content in two EFL textbooks in Chapter Four, the presentation of the participants' perceptions and practices in the teaching of cultural competence in Chapter Five, as well as the literature review in Chapter Two combine to provide a detailed discussion of what and how to teach culture in Vietnamese EFL classes. The next chapter aims to address this issue.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF WHAT AND HOW TO TEACH CULTURE IN VIETNAMESE TERTIARY EFL CLASSES

The aim of my study was to examine the cultural content embedded in Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks and the teaching practices presented by teachers in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes. This chapter provides a detailed discussion of two of the key findings presented in the previous chapters: the gap between how cultural content is presented in Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks and conceptualisations of cultural competence from an ICC perspective (Section 6.1); and the gap between Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers' teaching practices and the development of students' ICC (Section 6.2). The discussion will be carried out with reference to the review of relevant literature in Chapter Two and previous studies in the area of foreign language teaching, with special consideration for developing ICC for students. Based on these two discussions, I will present a framework for the teaching of culture in the Vietnamese context in Section 6.3. The framework presents the cultural content and culture-based activities that seem to enable Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers to develop students' understandings of different cultures, intercultural skills and intercultural awareness most effectively. It is intended to serve as a model for teaching cultural competence in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes and as a reference point for EFL teachers to help students to become interculturally competent. The chapter continues with Section 6.4 that discusses possible implications for EFL teachers, textbook authors/providers and English language education policy makers. Section 6.5 will close the research with a summary of the key points, an acknowledgement of the limitations of the study, suggestions for further studies, and my personal reflections.

6.1 The Gap between the Cultural Content in Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Textbooks and the Conceptualisations of Cultural Competence that work towards an ICC Perspective

Chapter Two reviewed the conceptualisation of cultural competence in L2/FL teaching. As discussed, from an ICC perspective, cultural competence is the ability to communicate successfully in intercultural communications, and there is increasing recognition of the importance of teaching students to be culturally competent during their L2/FL courses. In the context of Vietnamese classrooms, teaching and learning is heavily dependent on the textbooks because they provide the major content for individual EFL lessons as well as EFL programs. They are used as guides for EFL teachers to develop students' new competence. Chapter Four

provided insight into the cultural content of two Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks. Based on my analysis, I determined that the cultural content in such textbooks was of little relevance to the process of improving students' ICC. There are five issues regarding cultural content in Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks, which contribute to the clear gap between how culture is presented in the textbooks and conceptualisations of cultural competence from an ICC perspective.

6.1.1 The Textbooks Focus on the Target Culture with English and American Cultures as the Dominant Representatives, while ICC Stresses the Need for an Acknowledgment of the Multicultural Reality of Our Contemporary Global Society

In my study, the results from the textbook analysis and the teachers' interviews indicate that a central issue related to the inclusion of cultural content in the set textbooks is the fact that these textbooks do not attempt to present cultural information using an intercultural frame. These textbooks focus on two countries where the studied language is the official dominant language, namely England and the USA, but pay little attention to the introduction of different countries, including the students' local country. The target cultural content in these two Vietnamese EFL textbooks accounts for a more significant distribution in comparison with the international target cultures and the students' local culture. As discussed in Chapter Two, traditionally, most EFL textbooks are written by English speaking authors and focus only on the native culture, providing a stereotypical representation of that culture. For instance, Hamiloğlu and Mendi (2010) found that the textbook *New Streetwise* does not refer to any international features, but centres on British and American cultures as the representatives of English cultures. Similarly, Liu and Laohawiriyanon (2013) demonstrate that the cultural content of Chinese tertiary EFL textbooks is mostly concerned with the target culture. The findings from Shin et al. (2011) research show that the internationally distributed EFL textbooks reflect the cultures of English speaking countries.

These textbooks provide students with an understanding about English and American cultural backgrounds. EFL teachers using these textbooks present different cultural topics, such as food and drinks, weather, daily activities, geography and other items belonging to the above dominant cultural groups, which give no opportunities for any exploration of the multicultural reality of our global society. We are living in a culturally diverse community with increasingly frequent intercultural interactions with people from different countries through diplomacy, education, trade, tourism and so on. These international contacts require our understanding of not only English or American, but other English speaking and non-English speaking cultures. What we should do in order to communicate successfully in our multicultural society is to

develop a global view and prepare thoroughly for intercultural encounters. In this respect, the two sets of Vietnamese EFL textbooks reflect the shortcomings of training students to be English native speakers, instead of intercultural English speakers. These textbooks may be of little relevance to students from Vietnam and many non-English speaking countries, and are therefore inadequate for teaching ICC.

6.1.2 The Cultural Content in Vietnamese EFL Textbooks Does Not Seem to Meet the ICC Requirement of Allowing Students to Understand and Experience Other Cultures

As noted, the two Vietnamese EFL textbooks focus on providing students with superficial information about the cultural backgrounds of two dominant cultural groups representing English culture. These textbooks thus seem to guide teachers on how to teach cultural issues of only dominant English speaking nations, but limit them in helping students acquire cultural understanding of diverse countries. As culture is comprised of the distinct characteristics of a country, the lack of sufficient cultural knowledge of any specific country contributes to a number of misunderstandings in intercultural communications (Xiao, 2010). Section 2.5.2.1 describes a conceptual model of culture learning by Paige et al. (2003), which contains culture-specific and culture-general learning. The process of culture-specific learning enables students to become acquainted with the culture-specific knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to successfully communicate with individuals from particular cultural groups, rather than culture-general issues that allow for the integration of different cultures and that foster mutually reciprocal understanding. In the context of globalisation, the teaching and learning of foreign languages has been characterised by “conceptual shifts from culture-specific to culture-general models of intercultural competence, cultural stereotypes to cultural generalisations, cultural absolutes to cultural variations (within and across cultures), and culture as distinct from language to culture as integral to language” (Paige et al., 2003, p. 4). In this sense, the textbooks are supposed to guide teachers on how to emphasise the knowledge of different cultures, the role of culture in cross-cultural communication, the nature of cultural adaptation and the strategies to perform appropriately in intercultural communications. Further, the textbooks should deal with the cultural content within which the target culture information is found.

The two sets of Vietnamese EFL textbooks do not provide students with opportunities to address culture-general knowledge, attitudes and skills, and consequently they influence the process of understanding and experiencing other cultures. In foreign language education, a significant principle for the teaching of culture is that students need to be exposed to a variety of ‘others’ (Kramsch, 1997). In this sense, students should be provided with numerous opportunities to get to know diverse cultures, not only through the acquisition of information

about cultural background of different cultural groups, but through the development of attitudes with which to value other cultures, and the skills to understand the others' perspective. By taking these ideas into consideration, teachers should be in a position to provide their students with the opportunity to engage with the cultures of 'others'. Their students should be well prepared for encounters which may appear in their future intercultural interactions. From the conceptualisation of cultural competence, intercultural teaching and learning has to be allied with culture-general issues. The intercultural education should be carried out to help students "to try to create new categories in one's understanding of the world, to be open to new information and to be aware of more than one perspective" (Lund, 2007, p. 94). My analysis of these Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks reveals that they contain limited information about diverse cultures, meaning that teachers will find it challenging to help their students understand diverse cultures and view the world from the perspective of others. These textbooks do not meet the objectives of an ICC pedagogy, and thus are not likely to support the development of ICC among students.

6.1.3 The Textbook Content Limits Students' Opportunities to Deepen Their own Cultural Identity and to Strengthen It

Researchers conceptualise ICC as the ability to understand one's own culture and others' cultures, use one's existing cultural knowledge to evaluate and negotiate diverse and complex situations. It follows that foreign language teaching can be used to assist students in connecting with their own local cultural background knowledge in meaningful ways, and to strengthen their sense of their own identity. However, I found that Vietnamese culture is not mentioned at all in *Lifelines Elementary* and is only referred to once in *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate*. Therefore, I argue that these textbooks do not provide students with an adequate opportunity to connect with their own identity. In communication with people from different cultures, students are considered to be agents who act as the ISs who are put in the 'third place' and have to negotiate successful interactions for themselves. In such situations, they may deal with multiple cultural identities in the other parties, so unless they are aware of their own identity they may have difficulty interpreting and relating events from another culture to their own culture, as well as in forming evaluations of other cultures. Developing self-awareness about students' cultural background is one of the keys to developing critical cultural awareness for students.

In the context of Vietnamese EFL classes, because teachers are using outdated textbooks with limited information about students' cultural backgrounds, they find it difficult to raise students' awareness of cultural identity. People from different countries develop their understanding of identity in different ways. This means that the conceptualisation of cultural identity in a

particular setting might not be accepted in other cultural context. For example, Vietnamese people's understanding of cultural identity may not make much sense in English or American cultures and vice versa, whereas the understanding based on English or American ideology may not be embraced in Vietnamese society. For that reason, intercultural learning should aim to enable students to obtain a "collective cultural identity" (Brøgger, 1992, pp. 37-38), including concepts of identity, from their own country and other countries in the world.

6.1.4 The Cultural Content in Textbooks Is Not Sufficient for Students to Obtain a Full Understanding of a Particular Cultural Background

The EFL textbooks that I analysed introduce a number of cultural topics, however, when it comes to national history, the information presented is brief and simplistic. In this sense, these textbooks' content is unlikely to support the development of ICC. Many scholars state that understanding the history of a particular country plays a significant role in the process of understanding its culture (Davcheva & Sercu, 2005; Dweik & Al-Sayyed, 2015; Parkes & Sharp, 2014). Learning historical information can help to introduce students to the specific characteristics of a country alongside the common characteristics shared with other countries. It can also assist students to appreciate different cultures, and the different changes and events occurring in a particular country. Students taught through an ICC pedagogy not only possess cultural knowledge of diverse countries, but also make a clear distinction with others. As historical cultural background teaching is mostly absent from these textbooks, students may not obtain a full understanding about other cultures, and consequently may fail to develop ICC.

6.1.5 These Textbooks' Author Presents Cultural Information in Reading Texts, Conversations and Pictures but Designs No Culture-Based Techniques, which Influences the Process of Teaching and Learning English Culturally

As noted in Section 3.3.2, these two Vietnamese EFL textbooks are divided into five sections: *Grammar*, *Vocabulary*, *Reading and Writing*, *Listening and Speaking*, and *Pronunciation*, and then provide teaching materials and activities for teachers and students to follow. There are no separate sections for the teaching of cultural competence, and no teaching activities specifically designed for the teaching of cultural forms. Similarly, Aliakbari (2004) found that EFL textbooks used in Japanese, Chinese and Korean contexts emphasise linguistic aspects for the development of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, rather than cultural aspects. In spite of their limited cultural content, my observations revealed that these textbooks seemed to be the main source of cultural learning in Vietnamese EFL classrooms, because teachers tended to add culture to their teaching practices only when these textbooks offered any cultural information. In this regard, such textbooks hinder the teaching and learning of culture to the

extent that teachers and students complete their EFL lessons following the textbook author's guidance in terms of linguistic practices, and overlook opportunities to introduce students about cultural information that appears in the textbooks.

Another concern regarding cultural content in these textbooks is that those textbook sections which include cultural content offer only cultural information, but no culture-based tasks. For example, these textbooks introduce cultural facts in reading texts, conversations or dialogues with the aim of helping teachers to raise students' cultural awareness. However, there are no tasks, such as discussions about or comparisons of English with students' local cultures, quizzes, role plays, etc. for students to practice and explore different cultural backgrounds as well as communicative skills. With respect to the understanding of intercultural competence, the weakness of these textbooks is that they do not support students in developing two sets of intercultural skills, including skills of interpreting and relating, and skills of discovery and interaction, but merely focus on introducing cultural knowledge. As a result, the cultural content of such textbooks is incompatible with the objectives of an ICC pedagogy.

In summary, the cultural content provided in the two Vietnamese EFL textbooks assists teachers in training students to be more indigenous rather than to become interculturally competent English users. My analysis revealed that these textbooks' focus on presenting only the target culture does not reflect the lived status of English as a means of communication in modern world. Moreover, it does not meet the needs of teaching English as an international language. In every context where English is taught, students should be provided with the opportunities to extend their knowledge and experience of different cultures in the world. I would claim that expanding the amount of textbook content on foreign cultures is necessary since it enables students to learn English in terms of intercultural issues.

As noted in the literature review, researchers conceptualise ICC as consisting of five significant factors: attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness. An EFL textbook written from an ICC perspective would therefore need to provide pedagogical materials for each of these components. These Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks address the cultural knowledge component of ICC. The other four components are not addressed by the textbooks. As Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers depend on these textbooks' content in presenting their EFL lessons, they are disadvantaging themselves with respect to the cultivation of ICC among their students. For those teachers who take account of the teaching of culture, they might have to design culture-related activities or supplement further cultural content for their teaching practices. Thus, I argue that these

textbooks do not meet the requirements of promoting intercultural competence in Vietnamese EFL students.

6.2 The Gap between Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Teachers' Teaching Practices and the Development of Students' ICC

Chapter Five presented a discussion of the five Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers' teaching practices, especially the teaching of cultural competence. My analysis revealed a gap between their pedagogies and students' development of ICC. The following discussion presents five issues regarding this gap.

6.2.1 Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Teachers Privileged the Teaching of Linguistic Rather Than Cultural Knowledge, which Limited Students' Mastery of ICC

In most of the EFL lessons I observed, teachers showed a strong inclination towards the teaching of linguistic elements. They organised their EFL to cover different aspects of language and divided their teaching into five separate linguistic sections, including: *Grammar*, *Vocabulary*, *Reading and Writing*, *Listening and Speaking*, and *Pronunciation*. They brought to their classrooms a number of practicing activities and exercises aimed at developing students' mastery of grammatical structures and syntactic rules. As noted in Chapter Five, the five EFL teachers played different roles in their everyday EFL lessons, because they flexibly changed themselves into those who could guide students to learn grammar, help students to make appropriate pronunciation, familiarise students with new vocabulary items or organise lessons with practicing tasks for four language skills. As there were no activities for the teaching of cultural knowledge in their EFL textbooks, they rarely addressed culture in their lessons. In my classroom observations, two teachers did not touch on culture even though their textbooks covered cultural information. The three other teachers introduced cultural knowledge to their students when these textbooks' content reflected cultural forms. However, they addressed culture as a support to students' language use. For example, in vocabulary lessons, teachers would explain new words by providing students with cultural information related to those vocabulary items and demonstrating how to use them in different cultural contexts. Similarly, in reading lessons, teachers would supplement further cultural input and organise their students for linguistic activities, such as correcting grammatical mistakes or choosing correct verb tenses. These teachers had a superficial rather than an in-depth engagement with cultural aspects. They may have implicitly or explicitly infuse cultural knowledge into EFL lessons and their students may have acquired it subconsciously. However, it was clear that the teaching of such cultural items was conducted with the aim of deepening students' understanding about language elements rather than their concern about culture. The teaching of culture helps students to be

able to produce appropriate phrases in real communicative contexts. Thus, I would argue that these teachers' teaching practices do not meet the requirement of teaching both linguistic and cultural competence required by an ICC pedagogy.

6.2.2 Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Teachers Addressed Culture to a Limited Extent, Which Could Not Enable Students to Broaden Their Cultural Knowledge, Enhance Their Skills of Discovering and Interpreting Foreign Cultures and Strategies Useful for Intercultural Contact Situations, or Reflect Critically on Any Cultural Materials

Two issues addressing the question of to which extent Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers enacted cultural knowledge into EFL pedagogy included: first, teachers devoted limited time to the teaching of cultural aspects; second, the ways teachers implemented cultural content in EFL lessons were superficial and focused on the provision of cultural knowledge rather than intercultural skills. Each of these issues is elaborated in detail as follows.

Teachers spent limited time and attention introducing students to cultural knowledge and designing their lessons to contain culture-based activities. The findings from Chapter Five indicate that teachers acknowledged the important role of culture in teaching EFL, and the necessity of teaching intercultural English for students, especially in this era of globalisation. They valued the benefits of incorporating culture into EFL lessons, and witnessed the increased motivation and interest from their own students. However, they organised their EFL lessons with little consideration for the teaching of cultural forms. Through my 25 classroom observations, I discovered that teachers addressed culture in seven lessons. Further, whenever they had opportunities to integrate culture they spent limited time on it. They addressed culture at the beginning of the lessons as a way to conduct a cerebral warm-up or expand their teaching with cultural information to motivate their students. Most of their time was spent on teaching grammar, vocabulary and the four language skills, as discussed in Section 6.2.1. They helped students to master grammatical structures, build up their vocabulary and use the studied language linguistically. Moreover, they assisted students to achieve high scores in examinations. Their teaching approach, generated by a linguistic focus and a teaching-for-exams focus allowed them to achieve the short term goals of assisting students to pass the exams but limited them in developing in students the competence of understanding and using English in terms of practical functionality. To be more specific, the teaching practices directly influenced the students' process of learning English to the extent that students came to view English learning as acquiring a number of linguistic rules necessary for examinations but not as understanding the meaning of English documents either in spoken or written form. In other words, students may fail to link English language to its practical use in different contexts.

In EFL education, culture can be taught inside or outside the classroom (Aguilar, 2010). In classrooms, teachers assist students in acquiring cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills through different activities, while in the outside-classroom context students may obtain cultural understanding through contact with foreigners, reading publications about culture or discovering cultures from mass media and Internet media. The classroom is suitable for the acquisition of knowledge and skills of interpreting and relating, whereas the outside-classroom context is the learning location for students to experience the contacts with foreign cultures and independently develop their ICC. One of the advantages of a foreign language class is the opportunities available to teach cultural competence alongside linguistic competence. As language is inseparable from culture, the foreign language classes can provide students with both language and culture. Moreover, in the today's society, thanks to the advantages of modern technology, teachers and students can access different cultures for the exploration of multicultural reality or gain experience for communicative situations arising from interactions with members of other cultural groups.

However, the EFL teachers in my study did not try to promote students' ICC. They were influenced by a test-oriented system, which resulted in a tendency to allocate teaching time for language elements. Their priority was to accomplish the teaching workload assigned to them and help students revise for examinations. They did not have enough teaching periods to cover both the language curriculum and to teach culture.

Regarding this second issue, the Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers did not address culture in a comprehensive way due a numbers of factors: the understanding of the teaching of culture; the goals for EFL teaching; and the teaching obstacles, such as insufficiency of teaching facilities, inadequacy of cultural content in textbooks, and teachers' limited cultural knowledge. In the Vietnamese EFL context, teachers understood the teaching of culture as working with cultural information rather than developing students' intercultural awareness and cultivating in them a global view. For that reason, they aimed to develop the cognitive domain of ICC for students. They missed a number of opportunities for students to achieve the acquisition of intercultural skills. In EFL lessons, whenever they spent time teaching cultural aspects they provided students with limited information about a particular cultural point or explained the meaning of culturally new vocabulary items. They played the role of knowledge transmitters rather than cultural facilitators. As EFL teachers in the Vietnamese context, they confronted many difficulties (as listed above) that explained why they addressed culture to a limited extent. They rarely organised for their students to experience foreign communities through techniques such as screening movies or providing maps and realia. They limited their teaching to cultural

knowledge found in the set textbooks, which was found to be incompatible for the teaching of cultural competence, as demonstrated in Section 6.1. They showed their lack of confidence in teaching culture because they considered themselves insufficiently familiar with foreign cultures and with the appropriate pedagogies to teach culture. In this sense, they could not provide their students with thorough cultural information or organise many culture-based activities, which would require their students to take the initiative in classroom activities and practise the skills of exploring other cultures.

6.2.3 The Content for Cultural Teaching Practices Was Insufficient for Intercultural Education, and Consequently Could Not Promote Students' Intercultural Learning

In most of the EFL lessons I observed, teachers endeavoured to cover everything provided in their textbooks. As demonstrated in Section 6.1, the cultural content of these two Vietnamese EFL textbooks does not support the teaching of cultural competence to some extent. For that reason, the teachers' dependence on the textbooks limited them in fully developing their students' intercultural knowledge, attitudes and skills. I will now discuss the shortcomings of the cultural content in these textbooks which directly influenced the lack of an infusion of cultural knowledge in teachers' EFL lessons and hindered the students' development of ICC.

First, the textbook content contains cultural forms which are information-based and implicitly embedded in reading texts, conversations and dialogues. It was therefore understandable that teachers did not really address culture in their EFL. It was hard for them to decide which textbook content would be appropriate for the teaching of culture. As a consequence, they paid no attention to cultural content if they did not recognise any specific cultural element within their textbooks. Further, while these teachers could distinguish cultural points amongst the linguistic elements, but they could choose to ignore them, because there were no instructions or activities specifically designed for teachers in developing students' cultural competence. The teachers' teaching practices were more or less influenced by the textbook structure to the extent that the teachers developed their lessons by focusing on language domains provided in the textbooks.

Another shortcoming of the textbooks influencing the teachers' teaching practices relates to the insufficiency and outdatedness of cultural information provided. The textbooks are restricted to information about national history. Moreover, this is described in brief and is dated. As a result, the teachers limited the opportunities for students to understand a particular country from different perspectives, such as its people, society, cultural values, economy etc., as well as develop any understanding of single cultural issues such as lifestyles, behaviours, literature, art,

etc. Teachers should provide additional cultural materials in their lessons so they can examine cultural items in full depth and enable students to practise their learning thoroughly. The dominant teaching characteristic of Vietnamese teachers, namely that of teaching from the textbooks cannot help students to achieve considerable cultural knowledge and be assured that they will remember long-term what they have been taught.

The textbooks do not meet the demand of assisting students to learn English from an intercultural perspective, because the information presented in the textbooks mostly relates to target culture and is limited with respect to international target culture and students' local culture. Yet, while the teachers could engage students in unfamiliar communicative situations with English speaking cultures, they failed to create an intercultural context necessary for learning English as the lingua franca in their EFL classes. They brought students to the societies of English speaking people such as England, the USA, Canada, etc. and overlooked those of non-native people. Thus, the teachers revealed the tendency to familiarise students with the worlds of English speaking people, rather than prepare them to be ISs. Their students learned the English language and grew to know English speaking people and cultures, instead of developing a worldview about the English language and aiming at becoming interculturally competent English users. As a result, students might face culture shocks when interacting with people from other foreign communities. It was clear that there were many differences among the students' culture, the target cultures and other international target cultures, so it would be better to help students to get to know about these cultures and enable them to practise their English learning from an intercultural perspective.

The five teachers realised the shortcomings of their EFL textbooks and reported that they provided additional cultural materials in their lessons. However, in my classroom observation there was only teacher who used additional materials in one of five lessons. Similar to other teachers, her habit of teaching from the textbooks resulted in the limited cultural content for her teaching practices. The teaching content was not enough to create an intercultural education for students.

6.2.4 The Classroom Activities for the Teaching of Culture Were Not Varied and Instead Focused on the Provision of Cultural Information, Consequently Students Could Not Fully Develop Their Cultural Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills

The findings from Chapter Five indicated that although teachers employed some kinds of culture-based activities in their EFL lessons, they overlooked those that would provide thorough practices of any single cultural input. These teachers sometimes involved students in classroom

activities as a way of teaching cultural aspects. They were observed to use some techniques such as lectures, discussions and comparisons of culture in the textbooks in their EFL classes. As noted in Chapter Two, EFL teachers could engage their students in a variety of culture-related activities. In their interviews, they named nine activities. Some examples of those which these teachers had not utilised included: dialogues, quizzes, games and acting games, student research, culture capsules, culture islands and culture assimilation. These techniques could have been used by these teachers alongside those they were working with, so their students could have spent much time practicing intercultural situations for in-depth acquisition of cultural issues. Also, their EFL lessons could have been more student-focused and motivated.

Instead, Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers showed their inclination for the use of cognitive techniques. They demonstrated a preference for lectures via which they could transmit information to their students about culture itself. They were acquainted with sharing their own experiences about foreign communities. They were observed to set a cultural context for classroom participation by bringing video clips or English books into their classrooms, however the insufficiency of teaching and learning facilities prevented them from helping their students experience and interact in a realistic English context. It was clear that these teachers were endeavouring to provide and explain cultural points, but lacked the time, resources and, to some extent, capacity, to bring culture out and away from the textbooks. Their teaching practices prevented their students from developing the skills of discovering, interpreting, explaining the cultural issues and relating to their own culture. Learning culture is a way of knowing and understanding cultural facts and communicative interactions, together with developing the strategies to negotiate and adjust to different intercultural communications (Castro et al., 2004; Kramsch, 1993; Liddicoat, 2002). According to ICC scholars, it would be better for Vietnamese students to go beyond the stage of just learning about different cultures. It is more beneficial for them to learn a culture via experiencing foreign contexts for themselves, understanding and reflecting on their own cultural values, and developing the ability to discover other cultures and to put themselves in the third place for successful interactions. Such an approach is compatible with Moran's (2011) process of culture learning that includes four interconnected culture learning interactions: culture as knowing about, culture as knowing how, culture as knowing why, and culture as knowing oneself.

6.2.5 Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Teachers Mostly Gained Knowledge for Their Cultural Teaching Practices by Self-Teaching rather than Being Supported by the University and the MOET, which Does Not Assist Teachers in Developing their Intercultural English Teaching Practices

The finding from the interviews with teachers regarding professional development activities to support the teaching of ICC in Chapter Five indicated two things: first, teachers mostly attempted to improve their teaching of culture through self-taught activities; second, they were looking for support from the university and the MOET on a number of issues. Each of these will be described in detail below.

Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers reported enrichening their cultural knowledge and developing their intercultural skills through three methods: reading publications about culture, discovering cultures from mass media and Internet media, and meeting and connecting with foreigners. In the context of Vietnam today, these activities were possible for them to pursue, thanks to the availability of books, newspapers, magazines, movies, etc. from foreign countries. Additionally, teachers found that attendance at conferences and workshops not only helped them improve their cultural knowledge and intercultural skills, but also their teaching methods. The opportunities for them to participate in these programs depended on support from their university and the MOET, which was one of many things they needed to better their EFL teaching.

Teachers made a total of seven recommendations of what could be done by the university and the MOET in order to help them improve their intercultural English teaching practices. They referred to the obstacles in integrating culture as a key component of EFL instruction, such as lack of facilities, outdated textbooks, large-sized classes and time constraints. They found it hard to make changes in their teaching practices, which privileged the teaching of language elements, because the examinations focused on the assessment of students' linguistic knowledge. They wanted the university and the MOET to make changes in what and how to assess EFL students. Further, they were looking for supportive policies in terms of professional development, for example, having opportunities to participate in educational programs to update their teaching methods and the ability to teach culture for students' development of ICC. It was clear that teachers were challenging themselves regarding their EFL teaching. Many things needed to be taken into consideration so they could prepare students to be proficient and confident English users.

There need to be various effort and changes made in order to help teachers integrate culture into their language teaching. The teaching goal from an ICC pedagogy requires teachers to develop

students' ICC. Through their teaching practices, teachers provide students with linguistic and cultural knowledge, as well as an awareness of differences between nations and the strategies to cope with a variety of intercultural interactions. EFL teaching is no longer considered the acquisition of grammatical rules and translation, as per the grammar-translation method or the acquisition of grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence of the CLT approach. However, in the Vietnamese context, especially in my participants' EFL classes, teachers' teaching practices focus on linguistic knowledge and language skills. One significant factor that affects their teaching is assessment. As reported by Hieu in her interviews, the students were assessed on grammatical knowledge. The content of their English tests focuses on language elements introduced in the set textbooks. In order to make it possible for culture to be a core component of EFL education, assessment needs to cover both linguistic and cultural content. In this sense, teachers are asked to integrate culture with the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and four language skills. They need to provide their students with opportunities to understand cultural forms and learn English for the development of ICC. It is necessary to assess students' ICC frequently throughout their learning process rather than just in examinations. Teachers' teaching content serves as the basis for assessing students' learning outcomes, while teachers' practices affect the way students develop their English proficiency. In order to ensure the achievement of cultural competence in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes, it is necessary to address what cultural content should be taught and how to work with this content. The following section offers some recommendations in terms of teaching content and teaching methods for the Vietnamese context through an ICC pedagogy.

6.3 A Framework for Change

As has been discussed in previous sections, the participants displayed that their teaching of culture limits the development of students' ICC. The teaching content and classroom practices for the teaching of cultural competence within the context of a Vietnamese higher institution were not satisfactory for students to learn the English language such that it touches all five components of ICC. Further, they faced a number of obstacles in teaching, which required the support from the university and the MOET. Three areas of recommendations will be proposed that aim to help teachers enhance their EFL, especially the teaching of culture as the core component of English language education.

6.3.1 Recommendations for Cultural Content to Be Taught in Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Classes

This section presents some recommendations for cultural content to be taught in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes and suggestions for textbook authors to consider when designing textbooks for non-English speaking students in light of the ICC pedagogy. In my study, I used Byram's cultural content checklist to evaluate the content of two Vietnamese EFL textbooks. My recommendations will be based on this checklist. Five components in Byram's ICC model will also be used as the main factors to be dealt with in developing students' ICC. Further, the recommendations for cultural teaching content build on teachers' viewpoints and observations of their teaching practices.

These recommendations aim to support the development of ICC in three main dimensions: knowledge, skills and attitudes.

6.3.1.1 Knowledge

A. Cultural forms: As discussed in Section 5.3 regarding the content for cultural teaching practices, Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers showed their strong inclination to the inclusion of five main cultural forms, including "Social interaction", "Belief and behaviour", "Socialisation and life-cycle", "National geography", and "Stereotypes and national identity". In their EFL lessons, students were motivated in learning these cultural forms. In this EFL teaching and learning context, these five groups of culture are supposed to be given the priority over the other three cultural categories.

In order to enable students to obtain a full understanding about culture, teachers should provide students with opportunities to learn each cultural dimension. In the context of Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes, besides teaching the cultural forms of preference, teachers can improve their cultural teaching by also including "Social identity and social groups", "Social and political institutions", and "National history". What follows are some suggestions for cultural content to be taught in Vietnamese EFL classes, according to Byram's eight cultural forms. The topics of each cultural form derive from the content of teachers' textbooks and are recommended with reference to the priori classification of cultural forms (see Appendix E).

FIVE CULTURAL FORMS OF PREFERENCE:

(1) Social interaction

Greetings and farewells: The cultural content contains information describing the ways people greet or make farewell to each other formally or informally in different cultures. For example: Hello, How are you, or Good morning are used in some English-speaking countries. Also, the English-speaking people may wave their hands as a sign in meeting. Thai people greet each other by putting their hands together before their chest and taking a bow.

Addressing: The ways people address others in communication. For example: English people use first names or shorten names in informal conversation, whereas they use family names with titles to address people in formal situations. Vietnamese people are accustomed to using titles such as *Bác* (uncle or aunty), *Anh* (brother) or *Chị* (sister) before given names to address people.

Degrees of formality: Teachers should cover the following content:

- + The ways people show their manners/actions in communication, for example: close friends usually make informal chat while strangers tend to perform formally in communication.
- + The factors influencing the level of politeness in conversation, for example: age, social class, degree of familiarity, etc.
- + The politeness markers, the politeness strategies and their usage in context, for example: in order to ask somebody to do something, people can use these structures: Could you close the door for me, please! Would you mind closing the door for me? or Close the door!

Use of slang: Informal language used by a particular group of people should also be mentioned by teachers. For example: Australian people use some slang in their daily conversation, such as avos (avocados), footy (football), lollies (sweets, candies), rego (vehicle registration).

Situations of interactions: The teaching content centres on the cultural conventions of making conversations in interactive situations both verbally and non-verbally. The situations of communication derive from daily and social interactions among people. For example, teachers introduce some situations such as First meeting/Making friends with others; Having a conversation with friends/family members/colleagues/strangers; Making an appointment; Making a phone call; Booking for a table/room/taxi; Invitation/Suggesting others to do something; Asking somebody for help, etc.

(2) Belief and behaviour

Moral beliefs: The teaching content provides students opportunities to discover different moral beliefs associated with different cultures. For example: the way to treat the elderly or the young, how to have appropriate behaviour at a party.

Religious beliefs: Teachers could discuss different religious beliefs associated with different cultures. For example: The beliefs found in Christianity, or in Buddhism or Hinduism, the groups of people who engage in different branches of religion.

Routines/recipe knowledge: Teachers include in their teaching practices the procedures of doing something within a social group. For example: the ways to use public transport, the ways to behave appropriately in a ceremony.

Dining etiquette: The topic of people's eating habits or polite manners is discussed. For example: teachers help students to know about different kinds of food such as rice, bread and sandwiches or the habit of using fork and knife in English culture compared to how chopsticks are used in some Asian countries such as Vietnam, China, Japan, Korea, Philippine, Malaysia, etc. They may also include information about family meals (what kinds of food or drinks, times for different meals) or dine-out meals (on what occasions people eat out, what kinds of food or drinks).

Sports: The teaching content includes information about activities requiring physical exertion, skills and competition such as football, basketball, tennis. Different kinds of sports publically shown in a country will also be included. For example, football is generally played by Brazilian people, or cricket is a popular sport in Australia.

Recreation: Teachers mention in their lessons the activities that help people to renew their health and spirits. For example: listening to music, watching television.

Shopping: The teaching content helps students to become familiar with different ways of shopping in countries in terms of how to ask about prices or the quality of the products, or how to make a payment.

(3) Socialisation and life-cycle

Schools and education: Teachers include in their teaching content information relating to educational systems (what kinds of educational institutions: public/private schools, single-sex/co-educational schools) and educational issues (school time, tuition fee, curriculum, etc.) across countries.

Families: Teachers raise students' awareness on the topic of family and provide them with information about the concept of family across cultures, for example discussing different kinds of families, the relationships among family members, etc.

Employment: This content aims to offer students information associated with employment issues, for example work environment (types of employment), workplace legal issues (health and safety, discrimination and unfair dismissal, training and retraining), work place disputes (working conditions, unions, employers and employees), taxation and superannuation.

Ceremonies: Teachers help students to become acquainted with knowledge related to events of ritual significance and those that are performed on special occasions. The teaching content focuses on different kinds of ceremonies across cultures (ceremonial occasions of human life: birth, engagements, weddings, graduation; ceremonial occasions of society-wide events: opening and closing ceremonies of sporting events such as the Olympic Games, the coronation of a monarch, etc.), the procedures to celebrate these events (declaratory verbal pronouncement: I declare open the games of/I pronounce you husband and wife, etc.; physical/theatrical performances: dance, procession).

Life-cycle: The teaching content focuses on the presentation of information addressing common life-cycle events: birth, the passage from childhood to adulthood, marriage and death. Teachers draw students' attention to different series of changes in the life of a person and the accepted practice on these occasions (the do's and don'ts). For example: in Vietnamese culture, within a month of a person's life, people hold a ceremony at home to welcome and bless the child. For a baby girl, the food and offerings must be given in sets of nine while for a baby boy they must be in sets of seven. Also, Vietnamese people avoid complimenting newborns for fear of attracting evil spirits. In some European countries, especially the followers of the Christian religion, infant christenings happen during the first few months of life in church. All people need to dress modestly and conduct themselves formally.

(4) National geography

Geographic factors: The teaching content centres on the geographic features of any particular country, as listed below:

- + The different regions in the country such as states, districts, counties, cities, capital city, etc.
- + National parks

- + The climate
- + Nature of country/vegetation
- + Statistical facts about the area, the population of the country
- + The distribution of industrial area or agricultural area, etc.

For example: Teachers introduce students to London as the capital city of the UK.

(5) Stereotypes and national identity

National cultural heritage: Teachers centre on the introduction of information about the valued historical products that are created by members of a country and have been passed down from previous generations, as follows:

- + Famous monuments, (for example, the Statue of Liberty in the USA, the C.N. Tower in Canada, the Sydney Opera House in Australia, the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum in Vietnam)
- + Literary works, (for example, some works in the textbooks such as *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The strange story of Martin Guerre*, *Wild thing*, *You've got to hide your love away*, etc. and others from different sources such as *Gone with the wind*, *Harry Potter*, etc.
- + Artworks, (for example, paintings, photos, music, sculpture, films).

Famous people: The well-known people in the country or even in the world, (for example, Bill Clinton – the former President of the USA, Celine Dion – the singer).

Flags: Teachers help students to make distinction between countries by introducing flags with different designs specifically representing the countries (for example, the flag of Australia: a blue ensign with the Commonwealth Star in the lowest hoist quarter and the five stars of the Southern Cross in the fly half; the flag of Vietnam: a yellow star centred on a red field).

National stereotypes: The teaching content avoids the introduction of characteristics that describe people of any particular country, (for example, American people tend towards generosity, optimism, hard work, volunteerism, materialism, overconsumption, racism and obesity), but focuses on discussions about the importance of questioning and problematising stereotypes, such as explaining why it is problematic to generalise about people, or how to deal with stereotyping.

THREE ADDITIONALLY REQUIRED CULTURAL FORMS:

(6) Social identity and social groups

Social class: The content of cultural teaching practice covers different classes existing in a particular society and makes connections to other societies. For example, teachers and students work on different social classes in English society, Vietnamese society, or Japanese society, etc. The class divisions vary across countries, so teachers highlight the differences within cultural groups.

Regional identity: Teachers introduce the distinct characteristic representing a group of people. For example: The inhabitants of Central Vietnam mostly make a living by fishing and they are diligent and hard-working. They consider family to be of paramount importance and take their children's studying and future seriously. In informal conversation they use their own dialect. In Jingdezhen, Chinese people manufacture porcelain to earn money. Jingdezhen is famous for its porcelain and has a history of making this product for 2000 years.

Ethnic and cultural minority: The small communities belonging to countries should be presented by teachers. For example, some ethnic communities in the USA are peopled by Pacific Island Americans, White Americans, Native Americans, African Americans and Asian Americans. Some ethnic groups in Vietnam are Vietic, Tai-Kadai, Kadai, Hmong-Mien, Malayo-Polynesian, Chinese, Tibeto-Burman and Austroasiatic.

Occupational identity: Teachers help students to learn about different kinds of jobs: the skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled professions and jobs. For example, skilled jobs, which require specific qualifications from educational institutions can include: teachers, office clerks, nurses and so on. Semi-skilled jobs do not need any advanced training, but require careful consideration of the risks of misadventures that may happen at work places. Some examples of semi-skilled jobs are waiters, taxi-drivers, nurse's assistants, retail salesmen. Unskilled jobs do not require any training, but may require physical strength. Unskilled jobs consist of cleaners, fast food workers, vegetable pickers, etc.

(7) Social and political institutions

State institutions: Teachers raise the level of students' knowledge about the organisations run by the state governments of different countries. For example: public health services, transportation services, central banks, police forces and water authorities.

Law and order: Teachers identify what actions are considered legal or illegal in any particular country based on the particular issue provided in their official teaching textbooks, then provide students with opportunities to enrich their knowledge through reflecting upon other cultures. For example, a unit in the ELT textbooks in a Vietnamese higher institution is about weddings, which introduces a legal issue: In England and Wales the Government permits people under 18 years of age to marry if they obtain parental consent. So, in lessons, teachers are encouraged to cover this information and help students to broaden their understanding through investigating this issue in other cultures, including students' local culture (for example, in Vietnam it is legal to marry at the age of 18 for females and 20 for males).

Organisations: Teachers help students to learn about different types of organisations (business organisations, community organisations), the functions/management structures of organisations (defining the role of the individual, defining authority, defining the relationships between different activities and personnel, deciding how to make the best possible use of its human resources, etc.).

Voting and elections: Information about the ways to vote for and elect someone for a political office within any particular country should be mentioned by teachers. For example, in Vietnam, at the age of 18 people have the right to vote. Elections are conducted every five years on the national level, and there is only one political party.

(8) National history

Historical periods and events representing national identity: For a better understanding about the history of any particular country, teachers should introduce into their lessons information about the historical development of countries. Teachers may review/discuss timelines, constructions and historic events in the development of any countries. Teachers also need to make connections with other countries and students' local nations.

Contemporary periods and events representing national identity: Together with information about the past, teachers should focus on the development of countries in present and draw distinctions with other countries. It is important for teachers to check this information to ensure it belongs to the past or the present.

B. Sources of cultural information: In their teaching practice, teachers should consider different sources of culture in order to familiarise students with societies of different countries and give them experience with cultural backgrounds from the viewpoint of intercultural

speakers who have “knowledge of one or, preferably, more cultures and social identities” (Byram & Fleming, 1998, p. 9). The three main sources of cultural information to be dealt with by teachers include: source culture or students’ local culture, target culture and international target culture.

Source culture or students’ local culture: This teaching relates to students’ cultural background and enables teachers to cultivate in students a deep understanding about their own cultures, and subsequently assist them in strengthening their individual identities. Students become able to interpret and understand the “patterns of behaviours, values and ways of thinking” (Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 336) defined by their own cultures. They become aware of their national identity from such intercultural learning, and step by step build up cultural self-awareness. One of the requirements for the complete development of ICC is to raise the critical cultural awareness of students, through which they may obtain the ability to think with a double perspective by understanding the behaviours, values and beliefs of both their own and other cultures. Furthermore, cultural self-awareness is a kind of foundation for intercultural education because “understanding culture makes it easier to recognize other cultural practices, anticipate where cultural differences are greater, and thus be better prepared for those cultural challenges”, according to (Paige & Goode, 2009, pp. 336-337). It is worth noting that developing students’ understanding about their own cultural backgrounds is a key factor in cultivating their critical cultural awareness. In the context of Vietnamese EFL classes, the textbooks which are deficient in information about Vietnamese culture make it challenging for students to strengthen their own national identity. For that reason, intercultural teaching and learning should provide students with many opportunities to learn about their local culture.

The inclusion of students’ local culture in foreign language classrooms helps to decrease the probability of assimilation and alienation (Mahmoud, 2015). Students can feel comfortable and freely express their ideas about any cultural aspects because they have opportunities to deal with something familiar with their cultural backgrounds. Additionally, many things can only be explained and understood if teachers and students take account of the cultural backgrounds of different countries. For example, the ways to address old people in English-speaking countries such as England, the USA or Australia differ from those in Vietnam. It is conventional to call elderly English-speaking people by their first names while it is unacceptable for Vietnamese old people. Therefore, students can easily understand new concepts associated with new cultures if teachers insert their local culture into English lessons, especially right from the initial phases of the teaching process (Mahmoud, 2015).

From an ICC pedagogical point of view, teachers should practise teaching about students' local culture right from the beginning of the language teaching process and combine different cultures. The teaching content could be designed and organised based on the topic provided in textbooks or culturally supplementary materials. For example, the textbook contains information about the lifestyle of people from England. What teachers could do in order to support intercultural learning for students is to spend time designing their lessons and supplement them with further cultural input about Vietnamese lifestyle. In the case of cultural themes which are not mentioned by the textbook providers, teachers must add cultural materials related to English culture, Vietnamese culture and also other cultures in the world.

Target culture: The teaching of target culture in EFL education has to do with the information about the cultural backgrounds of native English speaking countries, as discussed earlier in the review of literature. In this sense, EFL teachers and students should work with cultures of the countries where English is spoken as the first language. Clouet (2006) and Sercu et al. (2004) assert that EFL teachers must act as mediators to help students familiarise with the target culture, otherwise their students might create a third cultural interpretation different from what is perceived by members of the target language community. Erfani (2014) supports the teaching of the target culture for the students' development of cultural competence, and explains that the lack of knowledge about native English speaking countries and people will lead students to possibly making meaningless utterances. Similarly, Byram (1997) and Pulverness (2003) identify the indispensable relationship between the teaching of target culture and students' mastery of cultural competence. Bada (2000) recommends the need for promoting students' interests in exploring the cultural backgrounds of people who speak the target language. More specifically, García (2005) lists five advantages of introducing students to the target culture:

- enhancing students' knowledge of the world and their knowledge of foreign communities;
- familiarizing them with the most salient behavioural patterns of the target societies;
- promoting attitudes of respect and tolerance;
- fostering reflection upon one's own culture;
- emphasizing the relative role of one's cultural assumptions or developing real intercultural communication in an intercultural world (p. 57).

From her point of view, having access to English speaking cultures is "of utmost importance for more effective language learning" (García, 2005, p. 58). When students learn about the cultural backgrounds of these countries, they become confident and flexible in their international

contacts. They acknowledge the differences and similarities between their culture and the other cultures and endeavour to negotiate in the world of target language.

The cultural content of EFL textbooks is one of the best sources for teachers to use to provide students with cultural knowledge of countries different from theirs. As mentioned in Section 2.5.2.2, almost all global EFL textbooks focus on the introduction of target culture and traditionally contain information about the cultural backgrounds of two dominant native English speaking countries, namely England and the USA. The two Vietnamese EFL tertiary textbooks discussed in this thesis focus on English and American cultures as the representatives for English speaking cultures, as is discussed in Section 4.2.1. In this sense, EFL textbooks are useful for teachers in the transmission of English speaking cultures to their students. However, one thing to consider regarding the content for the teaching of target culture is the selection of countries and cultures. As mentioned above, two countries with strong positions in the native English speaking world are England and the USA, therefore EFL teachers and students tend to focus on these cultures. There are numerous countries in the English speaking world which could be integrated into EFL classrooms, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Singapore, etc. Teachers can thus select a number of different countries as they prepare students to engage in intercultural contacts.

International target culture: The teaching of international target culture refers more broadly to the acquisition of cultures from both English and non-English speaking countries. The teaching of culture from an ICC perspective requires teachers to provide students with a culture-general learning context where they can acquire cultural knowledge of different countries, discover the differences and similarities among diverse cultures and become skilled at figuring out intercultural encounters. In order to meet this objective, teachers should organise their English lessons by working with cultural universals and a concept of culture that can be transferable across cultures. Culture-general learning differs from culture-specific learning in a sense that it helps cultivate in students a broadly global worldview. Culture-specific learning limits students to the acquisition of target culture and a knowledge system that is only accepted within the countries of native English speaking people. Similar to the teaching of target culture, teachers may question which countries and cultures to teach. While this is totally flexible for teachers, they should consider the transferable features of universal culture and the cultures which students may deal with the most in their daily life or in the future. For example, teachers can teach about Japanese or Korean cultures, which are the representatives for Asian culture. They may also focus on these cultures in order to prepare students for intercultural communication

with people from Japan or Korean who may come to visit the students' countries or work with them in upcoming years.

English is used by people from different places for a variety of purposes (Pennycook, 1994). It does not belong to any single country but is used as a *lingua franca* among diverse societies in the world (Crysal, 2003). The world of English in the modern time includes both English-speaking countries and non-English speaking countries and, consequently, English speakers have many opportunities to experience various cultures through intercultural communications. In contemporary society in which intercultural contacts are increasing, English speakers need to acknowledge the differences and similarities among cultures. They also need to prepare themselves for encounters which may occur in intercultural interactions. In this respect, it is important for teachers to raise students' cultural awareness and engage them in culturally communicative situations so as to develop their ICC. Additionally, Aguilar (2008) and Byram (1997) state that the objective of foreign language teaching from ICC perspective is to train students to become intercultural speakers rather than native speakers of the studied language. In terms of EFL instruction, it is necessary for teachers to offer students an intercultural learning context through which their students can obtain cultural knowledge of not only English speaking communities, but also non-English speaking communities. It follows that the cultural information presented in EFL classrooms must allow students to become involved in the intercultural English learning context and obtain experience in the use of English language in international contacts (Nault, 2006). However, the two Vietnamese EFL textbooks are limited to the provision of information related to international target culture, as discussed earlier in Chapter Four. The cultural teaching practices performed by the five Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers reflect their dependence on two official textbooks, as presented in Chapter Five. It is worth noting that the cultural teaching content in Vietnamese EFL classes was not sufficient for intercultural education, and consequently it could not promote students' intercultural learning. Therefore, it is high time that Vietnamese EFL teachers reconsider which cultures should be taught in daily EFL lessons and in what ways they can improve students' English proficiency towards an ICC pedagogy.

6.3.1.2 Skills

As can be seen from the findings in Chapter Five and the discussions in Chapter Six, the teaching of culture by the five Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers was of little relevance to the process of improving students' ICC. In Vietnamese EFL classes, teachers are used to teaching cultural knowledge rather than developing students' intercultural skills. They spend little time involving students in culture-based activities, such as discovering and experiencing foreign

cultures. This kind of teaching method is incompatible with the necessity of promoting intercultural skills for foreign language students, as asserted by Byram (1997) and many scholars such as Cankova et al. (2007), Liddicoat (2004), Paige et al (2003) and Risager (2007) and improving their English competence specifically in a multicultural world. Similarly, it does not meet the requirement that teachers need to develop among their students the strategies to communicate interculturally with people from different cultures, as defined by The Council of Europe and the governments of many countries such as the USA, England and Wales, China, Vietnam (see Section 2.4 for more details). From an ICC pedagogical point of view, the teaching practices of the five Vietnamese EFL teachers will not have helped their students develop the abilities to perform appropriately in communication across cultures.

The aims of EFL teaching according to an ICC pedagogy are to prepare students to become skilled at intercultural interactions. The relevant skills include two sets identified by Byram (1997): (1) skills of interpreting and relating; (2) skills of discovery and interaction. As noted earlier about the restrictions in the teaching of intercultural skills, it is important for Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers to include in their EFL lessons teaching content that focuses on cultural practices and provides opportunities for the development of students' intercultural skills. To be specific, the first skill set guides teachers as they develop in students the ability to analyse and interpret the cultural aspects of different cultures and make connections with their local cultures. The second skill set allows teachers to build up in students the capacity to observe and explore other cultures, and make use of their cultural knowledge in cross-cultural communications. For example, in a lesson about *Food and drinks* teachers could organise the following activities for the class: First, the teachers ask students to discover different kinds of food and drinks in English speaking countries as well as from the students' country and some other countries around the world. Second, the teachers organise them in groups so that they can discuss the differences and similarities among the eating habits from these countries. Third, the teachers give them time to figure out the reasons why people have different eating habits and the situations that may cause misunderstandings in relation to eating manners. Fourth, the teachers request that students participate in some activities that test their cultural knowledge such as cultural quizzes. Teachers should also bear in mind that they are to be cultural mediators who help students to work through any cultural aspects that focus on developing the two skill sets of ICC.

The textbooks used for EFL teaching and learning should provide possibilities for intercultural education (Cheng et al., 2011). In this regard, the textbooks should include content that involves students engaging in cultural practices around the world, focuses them on cultural encounters

and prepares them for some of the challenges in communication with people from different cultural backgrounds. The cultural practices should be both culture-specific and culture-general, as this will enable students to obtain a clear understanding of specific countries and culture, as well as the cultural references to multicultural contexts. Additionally, the textbooks must make it possible for students to explore the differences between cultures and accumulate the strategies for coping with intercultural encounters. As discussed in Chapter Four, the two sets of Vietnamese EFL textbooks limit students in practising strategies for intercultural communication in a globalised society. As Vietnamese EFL teachers rely on these textbooks, they may miss opportunities to develop students' intercultural skills. In this respect, it is recommended that Vietnamese EFL teachers should consider these skills and plan their lessons in order to help students "make connections between cultures, comparing and contrasting cultural practices, linking culture and language, reflecting on their own culture through the eyes of others, and having opportunities to interact in a culturally competent way with a target language community" (Conway, Richards, Harvey, & Roskvist, 2014, p. 453).

6.3.1.3 Attitudes

On the basis of the findings and discussions of my study, it can be concluded that Vietnamese EFL teachers limit their students in developing intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes. The above two sections provide some recommendations for two ICC dimensions, including knowledge and skills. This section focuses on students' development of ICC attitudes. The requisite attitudes that need to be addressed by EFL teachers in the process of teaching ICC include "curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own" (Byram, 1997, p. 91). Plus, teachers also have to help students foster "the ability to relativize one's self and value others" (ibid.). The training process towards the development of ICC aims to cultivate such four attitudes among students: first, in terms of an attitude of 'curiosity', teachers are supposed to cultivate in students a strong desire for learning or knowing more about other cultures; second, an attitude of 'openness' requires teachers to promote in students a willingness to understand other cultures/exchange information without concealment or judgment; third, an attitude of 'readiness' involves teachers' teaching practices aiming at helping students to be ready to discover other cultures/make distinctions between other cultures/make a change to facilitate the communications/build up relationship with others; and fourth, an attitude of 'respect' requires teachers to develop in students an esteem for other cultures.

These four attitudes allow students to "create successful interaction with members of other cultures as they foster the willingness to analyse exhibited behaviour and cultural meaning as

fundamental to understanding and appreciating other cultures” (Arévalo-Guerrero, 2009, p. 90). They are considered to be the crucial attitudes required for an IS or a cultural mediator (Byram et al., 2002). More specifically, they are the foundation of ICC, which determines the improvement of knowledge and skills necessary for students to fully develop their ICC (Arévalo-Guerrero, 2009; Okayama, Furuto, & Edmondson, 2001). For these reasons, teachers should make use of their EFL teaching practices when designing cultural teaching content that covers the development of necessary attitudes alongside cultural knowledge and skills.

6.3.2 Recommendations for Culture-Based Techniques to be Employed in Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Classes

This section is devoted to the recommendations of techniques that can be employed in Vietnamese EFL classes in terms of an ICC pedagogy. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the teaching of culture plays a significant role in EFL instruction. The teaching of cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes can be understood as the ongoing component in the intercultural training process. A number of researchers offer different culture-based activities for teachers and students to work on and I have attempted to make a list of common techniques for the teaching of culture in foreign language classrooms (see Section 2.5.3). Within the Vietnamese context, the common goal for EFL education, which is noted in Decision No 1400/QĐ-TTg, focuses on the international aspects and requires the need for developing ICC among Vietnamese students. Along with this strategy, I will now make a suggestion regarding the techniques that can be utilised in Vietnamese tertiary EFL classes and how teachers can use these techniques. This recommendation is also made on the basis of findings and discussions about the participants’ activities for cultural practices. Their familiarity with cognitive techniques only supports their students in gathering information and acquiring knowledge about the products, practices and perspectives of a culture, which meets the first stage of the culture learning process suggested by Moran (2011) – the stage of learning culture as knowing about. The other three stages, knowing how, knowing why and knowing oneself, require students’ engagement in different practicing activities and do not receive enough attention from the teachers. Table 6.1 provides a list of techniques that can be included in EFL classes in a Vietnamese context.

Techniques	Descriptions	Aims
Provide Information about Different Cultures	In lessons, teachers provide students with information related to cultural aspects of any particular country. Teachers may directly/indirectly transmit cultural information to their students through a number of activities, such as lectures, reading, culture capsules, culture clusters.	Teachers help students to obtain background knowledge about cultures of different countries.
Use Authentic Sources	Teachers bring to their classrooms different sources such as pictures, objects, maps, video clips, films, magazines, newspapers, stories, etc., and use them as additional teaching materials to set a classroom context related to English/non-English speaking countries. Teacher can adapt the supplementary materials to suit students' language proficiency level.	Teachers provide students with opportunities to learn English language in a realistic educational environment. Through visual interaction, students can raise their understanding of culture.
Discussions	Teachers guide students to work in pairs/groups discussing cultural topics, and students share their personal ideas about provided topics. Teachers can engage students in theme-based discussions or problem-solved discussions. A theme-based discussion requires teachers to offer students opportunities to discover and explore cultural issues from different perspectives. A problem-solved discussion allows teachers to provide students with cultural situations that may lead to misunderstandings in international communications and then ask students to figure out appropriate solutions.	Teachers help students to be confident in expressing ideas or giving opinions about cultural forms. Further, teachers help students develop critical thinking skills, which contributes to the development of students' intercultural skills.
Make Connections with Other Cultures	Teachers organise the lessons providing students with opportunities to work with cultural forms and make connections between cultures. Teachers provide students with opportunities to investigate cultural forms from	Teachers help students develop the ability to understand a specific cultural form from the perspectives of different

	the perspectives of their own culture and other English/non-English speaking cultures. Teachers can ask students to make a connection with students' familiar/unfamiliar cultural forms; however for unfamiliar cultural forms, teachers need to give students clear instructions and suggestions to make sure students can accomplish the learning task.	countries.
Compare and Contrast Different Cultures	Teachers involve students in classroom activities to investigate the differences and similarities among diverse cultures. Teachers may ask students to work with any aspects of culture from other countries and then contrast it with their own local culture. They may also ask students to compare the cultures of different English/non-English speaking countries.	Teachers help students to have a deep understanding about other cultures through experiencing the differences/similarities between their local culture and another culture, or between diverse cultures.
Interact with English Speaking Foreigners	Teachers provide students with opportunities to connect with English speaking foreigners. Teachers may invite guest/visitors from different countries to their classrooms (face-to-face contact). Teachers may also design indirect contact with English speaking foreigners through Skype/phone.	Teachers help students gain experience through real contacts with people from different countries. Through such interaction, students can learn from them the way to behave or respond to different situations in their cultures.
Acting games (role play/ drama/mini drama)	Teachers choose the dramas, stories, etc. (and design them if necessary) and guide students to position themselves in the role of drama characters. Students practise as their assigned characters, which are totally different from themselves. Teachers can ask students to act out a misinterpretation of something that occurs in other cultures.	Teachers help students to be familiar with culture from different countries through acting themselves as the characters of another culture.

Table 6.1: Techniques for The Teaching of Culture in Vietnamese EFL Classes

In the Vietnamese EFL classes context, teachers can address culture by employing seven techniques, as suggested in Table 6.2. This takes into consideration the moral economy of Vietnamese classrooms wherein teachers are used to organising their lessons with teacher-centred activities rather than focusing on students' learning involvement (Harman & T. B. N. Nguyen, 2010; T. T. H. Le & L. H. Phan, 2013); the suggested cultural-based techniques help teachers reconsider their roles and the goals of EFL from an ICC pedagogy. It means teachers need to integrate culture with the teaching of language elements and provide more chances for students to learn culture through student-centred practices, such as describing, discovering and interpreting cultural aspects, so as to develop students' ICC.

Providing information about different cultures is an applicable technique, because it helps students easily obtain background knowledge about the cultures of different countries. By taking notes about cultural information through lectures or investigating cultural content embedded in reading materials, students can enrich their cultural knowledge. As Vietnamese students are rote learners (Pennycook, 1998; T. T. H. Pham, 2010; T. T. Tran, 2013), it is easy for them to remember any cultural aspects provided in EFL lessons. They can "use memorisation, rehearsal and repetition as a means to achieve learning goal" (T. T. H. Pham, 2010, p. 65).

Using authentic sources from foreign communities helps students to be involved in realistic cultural experiences. Through the insertion of printed materials, video clips, movies, etc. teachers can bring the real world into their EFL classrooms, which makes their teaching more meaningful and motivating (Brinton, 2001). In a visual learning context, students can obtain much more information than they can without visual support, therefore they can enhance their understanding of a new concept. Further, visual aids can help students to raise interest, curiosity and creativity, which consequently allow them to improve their learning outcomes. It is recommended that Vietnamese EFL teachers should make use of these in their teaching and engage students in authentic cultural experiences.

It is suggested that discussions to be used in order to help students develop independent and competitive learning (Byram & Planet, 2000). Furthermore, discussions enable teachers to develop students' critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills. This technique requires initiative from students, so teachers should encourage students to confidently participate in discussion activities. Also, teachers should organise for all students in EFL classrooms to have opportunities to discuss. Group discussions or working in pairs can help teachers engage each student in activities. In the case of large-sized EFL classrooms in the Vietnamese context, the

utilisation of discussion techniques enables teachers to increase time and opportunities for students to talk or to share their ideas with friends. By doing this, EFL learning can be conducted with a focus on students' learning involvement rather than teachers' participation.

Making connections with other cultures, comparing and contrasting different cultures, interacting with English speaking foreigners, and acting games are also good techniques that Vietnamese EFL teachers can utilise in order to integrate culture into EFL classes. These techniques require students' participation in a number of classroom practices, such as describing cultures, discovering cultures, interpreting cultures, making appropriate cultural responses, etc., which help them develop intercultural skills. To be more specific, the first method allows students to understand the cultural backgrounds of different countries by not just discovering any particular cultural aspect of a specific country, but relating to/reflecting on their own culture and other cultures. The second approach gives students opportunities to make distinctions between diverse cultures. In EFL lessons, teachers using this technique focus on comparing different cultures. This technique appears to be appropriate in EFL classes, because it supports teachers in developing students' intercultural awareness and skills. The third technique offers a good opportunity for students to experience interactions with English speaking people who differ from them in terms of languages and cultures. When using this activity, teachers should firstly introduce some facts about the culture, country and people of the visitors. In so doing, the students will feel more comfortable with the contact. Last but not least, acting games are ideal activities for students to learn about culture. Teachers can guide students to position themselves in the role of drama characters or instruct them to practice real-life communicative interactions (for example, asking about open/closing time for shops, discussing daily activities, buying clothes, etc.). This technique is useful for involving students in experiencing cultural practices; however it takes time and effort for teachers and students in preparing and performing their acting roles.

These above culture-based techniques may enable Vietnamese EFL teachers to address culture as a core component with the aim of developing students' ICC. What follows are some issues that they can consider in order to improve their cultural teaching practices.

- The first issue relates to the integration of culture early in EFL program. In so doing, students will become familiar with cultural forms right from the beginning of the course. Also, they can acknowledge the connection between language content and culture content.

- The second issue is for setting a cultural context for classroom practices. Teachers are encouraged to employ different culture-based techniques to achieve the set of objectives for teaching EFL from an ICC pedagogical point of view, including knowledge, awareness, attitude and skills.
- The third issue is associated with the supplementation of cultural input. Although the textbook authors weave culture into the textbooks, the cultural content in such textbooks might be of little relevance to the process of improving students' ICC. Thus, teachers are required to add further cultural points and organise students' intercultural learning touching on different aspects of culture.

The evolution of an ICC pedagogy in the field of foreign language education has shed light on Vietnamese EFL teaching and learning. As the teaching of culture is very important, teachers should be flexible in utilising teaching techniques that achieve the best outcome of EFL teaching practices. The more they consider the significant role of culture in EFL instruction, the more they will address culture in their everyday lessons. The implementation of these culture-based techniques may help Vietnamese EFL teachers infuse culture into their lessons so as to raise their students' cultural awareness and improve their necessary skills for intercultural communication.

6.3.3 Recommendations for Intercultural English Teaching

Teachers confront many obstacles in addressing culture in their teaching practices, such as insufficient intercultural content in textbooks, unsatisfactory teaching facilities and time constraints. Further, they do not have enough opportunities to improve their teaching practices. The two sections above have provided recommendations for teachers in deciding the content and activities for EFL classes. The following recommendations focus on two main issues that can support teachers in developing their English intercultural teaching practices.

Making it possible for teachers to develop their own ICC: The teaching of English through an ICC approach requires teachers to adopt the role of “intercultural communicative competence teachers” (Sercu, 2006, p. 55) and focus on developing in students each component of ICC, including knowledge, skills, attitude and critical cultural awareness, so as to prepare them for their future independent lives in a multicultural society. It follows that EFL teachers include necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes demanded from an ICC perspective (Sercu, 2006). Appropriate knowledge refers to linguistic knowledge, knowledge of their own culture and culture-general knowledge. Basic skills consist of teaching techniques that help students to

become intercultural learners who can communicate competently and mediate with intercultural challenges. Crucial attitudes are signified by a willingness to integrate ICC into foreign language education and by endeavours to achieve teaching goals from an ICC approach. These requirements are put forward as being necessary for EFL teachers with an aim to improve the current situation of English teaching and learning in general and in Vietnam in particular. This can be done firstly by making it possible for EFL teachers to develop their own ICC.

Two main ways of supporting teachers in achieving ICC include: self-teaching intercultural knowledge, attitudes and skills; and taking opportunities from the university and the MOET for teacher professional development in the field of EFL education. First, there are various strategies that enable teachers to develop their own ICC by themselves. As described in Section 5.4, they can obtain cultural knowledge and intercultural skills by reading books about different cultures, watching foreign movies and/or meeting people from other communities. These strategies are available for Vietnamese EFL teachers either at school, at home or in public places, and provide them with many opportunities to access other cultures. Second, teachers can develop their ICC if the university and MOET allow for them to participate in EFL programs or workshops. The findings of the study reveal that Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers do not treat culture as a core component of EFL. Their teaching offers insufficient content for English intercultural education. The use of only a few culture-based techniques does not enable them to promote intercultural knowledge and skills among their English students. Therefore, workshops or programs are needed to help teachers update their teaching in relation to an ICC perspective. As noted, EFL teachers in a globalised society are required to become ‘intercultural communicative competence teachers’, thus it is necessary to provide them with many learning opportunities to obtain appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes in these programs. By so doing, teachers will be aware of the importance of addressing culture. They will develop the ability to enhance their practices that integrate culture and language. Additionally, these programs should help teachers develop the ability to adapt textbooks. Teachers should be taught to identify cultural content provided in the textbooks and make a distinction between linguistic content, supplement their lessons with additional teaching sources and/or design culture-based activities. It is important to inform teachers about the assessment of intercultural learning outcomes. When teachers take account of the teaching of English from an ICC perspective, they need to know how to assess their students’ ICC. There are different methods to measure students’ intercultural learning progress, such as standardised tests, self-evaluation reports, portfolios, collection of written products, journals, observation checklists of the students’ progress, etc. (Skopinskaja, 2009). There are three areas of ICC that need to be assessed, namely intercultural knowledge, intercultural know-how and intercultural being (Cankova et al., 2007).

The workshops provided by the university and the MOET are supposed to help teachers be skilled at assessing their students' learning outcomes.

Through these above programs, teachers can update themselves with current teaching approaches in the field of foreign language education as well as learn to become EFL teachers in the multicultural world. The shift from a Grammar-Translation approach to an ICC approach allows teachers to become intercultural mediators. These programs or workshops could either be domestic or international. However, if teachers can study abroad, their experience of living in foreign communities will help them gain the cultural knowledge and skills necessary to overcome intercultural encounters. In short, the development of foreign language education in the light of an ICC approach requires teachers to own ICC as the prerequisite competence to fulfil their new professional tasks of promoting ICC among language students; thus they need to bear in mind that they need to develop their ICC and always be aware of the integrated role of teaching both language and culture.

Making it possible to develop intercultural English learning environment: Typically, an EFL class in Vietnam meets once a week. One teacher is responsible for a relatively large class. Teachers and students are accustomed to traditional teaching methods of drilling students in grammar, vocabulary and four language skills for the development of linguistic competence. They use outdated textbooks and rarely organise the classrooms in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) practices. Furthermore, teachers and students face difficulties in expanding their engagement outside EFL classrooms through which they can immerse themselves in communicative situations with foreigners. Under these conditions, students' learning is limited when it comes to the development of cultural competence and commitment for intercultural education. In order to solve this problem, it is better to create an intercultural English learning environment for students. Not only teachers are in charge of this change, but the educational leaders from the university and the MOET should be responsible for this.

Some suggestions for improvement are as follows: (1) improving teaching and learning facilities in the ways that are available for teachers to make use of; (2) updating textbooks following the guidelines of cultural content for EFL textbooks as outlined in Section 6.3.1; (3) reducing the number of students so that students have more opportunities for classroom practice instead of simply just listening to the teachers; (4) increasing the time for the subject of English subject so that teachers can teach cultural competence alongside linguistic competence; (5) redesigning English tests to include the cultural information so that students can become aware

of cultural forms in EFL education; (6) giving teachers and students opportunities to interact with English speaking foreigners by inviting foreigners to the classrooms or sending students to other countries. These solutions should be taken into consideration so as to ensure the efficacy of teaching and learning English in relation to intercultural education.

6.3.4 Designing a Teaching Model to Develop Cultural Competence in Vietnamese Tertiary EFL Classes

This section is devoted to designing a teaching model for EFL teachers in the Vietnamese tertiary context to cultivate ICC among English language students (Figure 6.1). The model can also be used by foreign language teachers whose professional task is to help students master a sound English competence necessary for communication in the multicultural world. The model has been developed according to the literature review and the findings and the recommendations presented in the previous sections. In this model, the process of teaching cultural competence focuses on teachers' teaching practices and the factors supporting their intercultural English teaching, which are presented in greater detail below.

I will firstly provide an explanation of the components in my model. In any class, particularly EFL classes, it is important for teachers and students to work together in order to achieve the goals of an EFL course. Issues concerning teaching content, teaching methods, supporting factors and learning outcomes play significant roles in the context of teaching and learning. Teachers are described as those who provide students with teaching content that covers the knowledge that is necessary for students to acquire (J. F. Lee & VanPatten, 2003). The teaching content in a language course is described as the language input that is selected by teachers in order to meet the learning outcome of developing students' ability to use studied language effectively in any communicative situation. In this regard, the students' learning outcomes refer to language output. When input is selected, teachers have to take into account the issues regarding teaching methods and the design of the classroom activities. Furthermore, in order to perform well in language courses, teachers and students need the support in terms of teaching and learning conditions, such as teaching and learning facilities, outside classroom activities, etc. These domains contribute to the efficacy of the teaching process; therefore I decided to include them in my model. I suggest that the teaching cycle start with the defined teaching goal and selected teaching pedagogy, continue with the pre-determined teaching content, the teaching activities and teaching supports, and close with the students' learning outcomes.

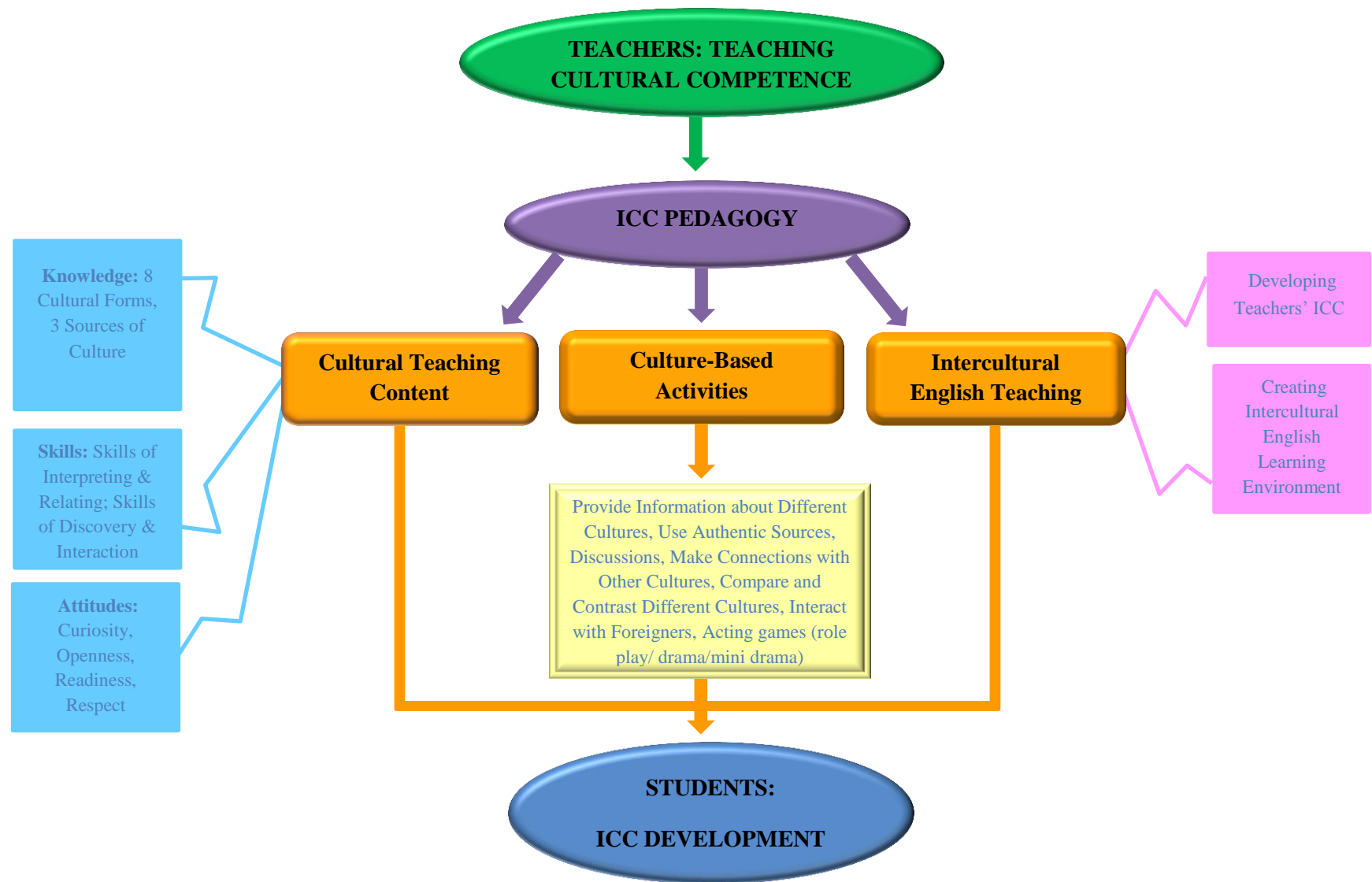


Figure 6.1: Teaching Model for Vietnamese EFL Teachers to Develop Students' ICC

This section describes each component of my teaching model. The foremost component that is used as a guideline for teachers in their classrooms is comprised of the teaching goals. In the context of EFL teaching and learning in Vietnam, teachers must be aware of the common goal for EFL education as noted in Decision No1400/QĐ-TTg (cited in Section 2.4.2.1), namely that international communication is required for the development of ICC among young Vietnamese citizens. It is important for Vietnamese EFL teachers to clearly define the teaching goal for each individual lesson as well as the EFL program. Since my study focuses on teachers' cultural practices, the determined teaching aim centres on the teaching of cultural competence. Teachers should take into consideration this aim and organise their English language classrooms so that students engage in a variety of culture-based activities.

Second, because teachers' cultural teaching practices are driven by the goal of training students to become intercultural speakers, they are required to select a relevant teaching approach so as to develop students' ICC. The implementation of an ICC pedagogy enables teachers to cultivate intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes among students, which is necessary to prepare students for a life in a multicultural community. Therefore, teachers must be consistent with ICC pedagogy throughout the language course.

Third, in light of an ICC pedagogy, teachers should take into consideration such issues as teaching content, teaching methods and other aspects that support their English intercultural teaching. The language input ought to be selected by teachers before the teaching process. As the teaching aim requires that teachers address culture in their EFL lessons, the teaching content includes cultural input instead of linguistic input for the teaching of grammar, vocabulary or four language skills. There are three areas of cultural input to cultivate in students: (1) *knowledge*, which covers Byram's eight forms and reflects three sources of culture, including target culture, international target culture and students' local culture; (2) *skills*, which comprises the first skill set of interpreting and relating, and the second skill set of discovery and interaction; (3) *attitudes*, which includes curiosity, openness, readiness and respect. Once teachers determine the cultural content for EFL lessons, they have to design the activities for students to practise. A number of activities can be utilised in order to promote three areas of cultural input. For example, teachers can simply provide students with a cultural understanding of diverse countries through giving lectures or offering them reading materials related to cultural aspects. They can also guide students in comparing different cultures or analysing cultural incidents. Last but not least, teachers must allow them to: (1) develop their own ICC, so that they understand this kind of competence and the importance of teaching cultural competence for language students; (2) create an intercultural English learning environment,

which requires changes in relation to teaching conditions, learning assessment and language teacher professional development.

Fourth, teachers need to be aware of the cultural output for each EFL lesson as well as the linguistic output. As students develop their learning progress throughout the language course, it is important for teachers to take account into the cultural and linguistic output required for the whole course. My model suggests that EFL teachers develop students' cultural competence by implementing an ICC pedagogy and selecting appropriate cultural content/input and culture-based techniques for their teaching practices. Once teachers make the teaching content clear, they then need to organise classroom activities in order to help students attain the best learning outcomes. The learning outcomes or outputs of learning from an ICC perspective reflect students' level of achievement of language proficiency and their abilities to participate successfully in communicative activities (J. C. Richards, 2013). In this sense, EFL teaching aims to develop students' learning progress in terms of performance, competencies and skills. It is necessary to assess what students are able to do as the result of a period of instruction, therefore the final factor in my teaching model emphasises students' learning outcomes that work toward the development of ICC.

In summary, teachers play important roles in the process of teaching and learning ICC in Vietnamese EFL classes. As can be seen in Figure 6.1, teachers select teaching content, decide on teaching techniques and make the most of support from the university and the MOET in order to obtain the intended outputs of learning – the development of ICC among students.

6.4 Implications of the Study

The implications of the study will relate to three categories, including: implications for EFL teachers, implications for EFL textbook authors/providers and implications for English language education policy makers.

6.4.1 Implications for EFL Teachers

The findings of my study indicate that in the Vietnamese EFL classroom context, teachers' teaching practices limit students' development of ICC. Although the teachers interviewed were aware of the importance of culture in EFL teaching, they addressed culture to a limited extent through the implementation of some teacher-centred activities. They focused on providing cultural information rather than the intercultural skills necessary for students to have successful communication across cultures. It can be concluded that teachers themselves appear to be a hindrance to the achievement of cultural competence in Vietnamese EFL classes. However,

Vietnamese EFL teachers are now required to teach ICC for the purpose of preparing students to become communicatively and intercultural competent English language users (Prime Minister, 2008c). In this sense, teachers are expected to change their roles to become ICC teachers in order to accomplish their professional task from an ICC perspective. Sercu (2006) proposes that the requirements for ICC teachers include knowledge, skills and attitudes. With regard to the first requirement, teachers need to acquire both linguistic and cultural knowledge. This is because if teachers develop their understanding about different cultures, they will raise the awareness of teaching cultural competence and will be able to organise their lessons such that they include cultural input alongside linguistic input. In other words, when teachers are familiar with foreign cultures they can make clear the cultural aims of their teaching practices and integrate culture with language teaching for the purpose of developing students' ICC. In terms of the second requirement, it is recommended that teachers develop their skills of addressing culture in their EFL teaching practices. The term "basis skills" refers to the ability to use various culture-based techniques that give students opportunities to show their learning involvement and promote the acquisition of each ICC dimension; to select appropriate teaching content that supports students' intercultural learning; and to adapt teaching materials that enable students to obtain intercultural competence and allow teachers to achieve the aims of ICC teaching (Sercu, 2006). Finally, the attitudes that are necessary for teachers include the readiness and commitment to train students to become intercultural English speakers. These requirements for EFL teachers aim to improve the current situation of EFL teaching and learning in general and in Vietnam in particular.

The findings of my study show that the teachers relied on their textbooks when they infused cultural knowledge into their EFL pedagogies. However, these textbooks are of little relevance to promoting students' ICC. It is suggested that teachers should consider the cultural content for their teaching practices to make sure their students can fully develop cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes. First, it is important for them to make use of the set textbooks by providing in detail each and every aspect of culture that appears therein. As noted in Section 5.2, the cultural information in Vietnamese EFL textbooks is not clearly disclosed, so it is difficult for teachers to identify it for their teaching practices. The cultural information in these textbooks is brief and outdated, and hinders teachers from enacting such cultural content thoroughly. However, Vietnamese EFL teachers are supposed to develop their cultural knowledge, so that they themselves can define cultural forms embedded in their textbooks and address culture with language elements. Second, teachers are advised to provide supplementary cultural information in their EFL lessons. The findings from the teachers' interviews indicate that Vietnamese EFL teachers are allowed to use supplementary materials that can better their teaching and support

EFL goals. Some suggestions for teachers include: (1) the add-on cultural input needs to be similar to the cultural information provided in the set textbooks; (2) the add-on cultural input needs to be updated to avoid student misunderstanding or confusion when dealing with it; (3) the add-on cultural input needs to offer students opportunities to experience learning through various student-focused activities, such as discovering different cultures, comparing and contrasting different cultures, make connections with the students' local culture, etc.

The findings of my study reveal that teachers had strong inclination for the teaching of linguistic knowledge rather than cultural knowledge. They sometimes provided their students with cultural information; however such cultural practices aimed at supporting students in learning linguistic elements. The classroom activities for the teaching of culture were not varied and limited students' participation, which did not enable students to take initiative in their intercultural English learning. It seems that the use of traditional teaching methods only allows students to develop their English competence grammatically and linguistically. It would be better for EFL teachers to realise the importance of promoting students' cultural competence and make a shift from traditional methods to an ICC pedagogy. The process of teaching in light of the ICC pedagogy requires teachers to set an intercultural English learning context with the aim of providing students with opportunities to demonstrate their intercultural learning as a part of their language development. In EFL lessons, teachers should use various culture-based activities to help students practise 'using language', 'making linguistic connections' and 'moving between cultures', as suggested in Australian language syllabi (Board of Studies NSW, 2003). Through these activities, their students can develop four languages skills, make comparisons between the studied language and students' mother tongue, and obtain an understanding of different cultures. As a consequence, they can practise learning English linguistically and interculturally. Further, it is suggested that teachers involve students in various learner-centred practices so that they can promote their students' intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes rather than merely develop their cultural understanding as with teacher-centred methods. The teaching and learning of the English language, therefore, allows teachers to make visible a new kind of student learning in which they learn how to become intercultural English speakers.

6.4.2 Implications for EFL Textbook Writers/Providers

Learning and teaching materials are important factors that need to be considered in EFL education. In the Vietnamese tertiary EFL classroom context, the set textbooks used by teachers and students are globally published EFL textbooks. As textbooks provide the major content for EFL courses (Tomlinson, 1998), teachers rely on them as guides for classroom activities. In this

sense, well-written textbooks can help EFL teachers and students enhance the teaching and learning process. The findings of my study indicate that EFL textbooks used by Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers and students mostly cover information of English speaking countries, but are limited with regard to international target culture and students' local culture. More specifically, in one of these two EFL textbooks there is no mention at all of Vietnamese students' local culture. It would be better if EFL textbooks presented more information about the students' cultural background. In case of Vietnamese EFL classes, the textbook designers need to provide students with more opportunities to learn about Vietnamese culture, so that they can enhance their language learning.

Another implication relates to the inclusion of diverse cultures instead of the cultures of some dominant English speaking countries, such as England, the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. It is suggested that the textbook authors/providers should consider international and intercultural issues when designing textbooks for EFL students. As English is used as *lingua franca* in the contemporary society, it is important for EFL textbook designers to help EFL learners communicate successfully with English users from different countries. Cultural values/conventions vary across countries; therefore, the modes of communication in English speaking cultures may not be in harmony with those in other cultures. As a result, English learners cannot use English speaking cultures as references for any intercultural interactions.

The acknowledgment of learners' needs in developing EFL textbooks also contributes to the achievement of teaching goals (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2013). The findings of my study indicate that Vietnamese EFL students show interest and motivation when teachers present cultural topics that are familiar to them. When textbooks offer unfamiliar cultural topics, students lose their motivation and teachers simply provide students with brief and superficial information. This means that students' degree of familiarity with textbook content influences their acquisition of cultural knowledge. However, learning a new foreign language requires students to learn about a new culture and how not to be alien in that culture. In lessons, they have to incorporate cultural information about the target language background to which they are unaccustomed. It would be better for them if EFL textbook writers made connections between culturally unfamiliar and familiar features. In EFL textbooks, the textbook designers can give students opportunities to compare between cultures as a technique of cross-cultural comprehension. They can also make links between cultures through the investigation of any particular cultural aspect from the perspectives of different countries.

The EFL textbooks, which are used globally by teachers and students of different countries to teach English as a lingua franca, should be written by a team of the following people: native English-speaking textbook writers (as chief authors); native English-speaking teachers or linguists (as consultants for language and cultural components, and classroom activities); non-English speakers, including those who have the same cultural backgrounds as the students of English language and those who have overseas experience and are aware of the use of English in intercultural interactions (as consultants for the inclusion of students' local culture and non-English speaking cultures). Having these people as authors of EFL textbooks may help produce more relevant materials for teachers and students as well as enable them to achieve the goal of teaching and learning English in multicultural contexts.

6.4.3 Implications for English Language Education Policy Makers

The following implications have been developed for English language education policy makers:

In order to support EFL teachers in their intercultural English teaching, the policy makers at both the university level and national level need to provide their teachers with opportunities to improve their professional qualifications and capacities, as well as their pedagogical knowledge and skills. This will raise the awareness of EFL teachers in their teaching of ICC as well as develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to act as ICC teachers in EFL classes. In order to make this support possible, educational authorities and policy makers should send EFL teachers to national or international professional development programs that are related to the teaching and learning of English language in the globalised world and will introduce teachers to the teaching goals, practical techniques and teaching materials, etc. Further, they need to make sure all teachers are informed about these programs so that they will not miss opportunities to update their knowledge and teaching methods.

The educational authorities and policy makers need to consider the issues regarding the obstacles faced by EFL teachers so that they can improve their EFL teaching. In my study, the participants mentioned large EFL classes, time constraints, a lack of teaching facilities and heavy teaching loads to be the factors that affected the integration of culture into their EFL lessons. It is important to surmount these obstacles and help teachers work towards the development of students' ICC.

The process of teaching and learning English in the Vietnamese context focuses on examinations. Students are used to taking tests and teachers' assessments of students' English proficiency are based on their performance in these tests. As discussed by the participants, these

English tests are in written form and include questions that assess students' grammatical competence rather than cultural competence. In light of the ICC pedagogy, the teaching of English language requires teachers to assess students' linguistic and cultural competence (Skopinskaja, 2009). It is necessary for educational authorities and policy makers to be aware of the need to provide teachers with instructions about teaching and learning assessment from an ICC perspective. These issues may help teachers change their ways of teaching and assess students' learning outcomes to meet the aim of developing students' ICC.

At the tertiary level there is no common curriculum for the teaching of English language. The Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers in my study used *Lifelines Elementary* and *Lifelines Pre-Intermediate* as their set textbooks. They were allowed to use supplementary materials and could adapt their textbooks to meet their students' level and needs. However, in the field of EFL, the development of materials is not "English teachers' business ... , and can only be undertaken by materials writers who are educated and trained in it" (Isik, 2011, p. 262). Maybe the best solution is for policy makers to make decisions regarding English curriculum and EFL teaching materials. If it is necessary to make changes to EFL textbooks, they must be done by those who are specialised in this field. Alternatively, the policy makers can provide teachers with professional training regarding the development of materials, so that the teachers themselves can develop EFL materials for their English classrooms.

6.5 Conclusions

6.5.1 Summary of the Study and Key Points

My study began with a concern about the quality of EFL teaching and learning in Vietnamese context. Vietnamese EFL instruction emphasises the teaching of four basic skills and grammatical structures for the development of linguistic competence, rather than the teaching of cultural competence that supports students avoiding cultural misunderstandings in communication with people from different communities by finding a third place between cultures (L. Nguyen, 2014; T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007). Furthermore, almost all Vietnamese teachers are used to traditional teaching methods that limit them to providing students with opportunities to develop their English competencies communicatively and interculturally. As a result, students face difficulties in becoming intercultural English speakers – the ideal model for proficient English users in the globalised society (Aguilar, 2008; Byram, 1997). As such, EFL teachers in the Vietnamese context should take into consideration the cultural aspects of EFL teaching and learning, and make a shift from outdated teaching methods to an ICC pedagogy. The idea that ICC should be a core component of EFL instruction and the fact that Vietnamese

EFL education does not meet the needs of training young Vietnamese people to be highly skilled and competent English-speakers have driven me to conduct this study that is aimed to better the teaching and learning of English language in my country.

Chapter One presented a brief history of EFL education in Vietnam and the context of EFL in tertiary Vietnamese education. The aims, the research questions and the significance of the study were also introduced in this chapter and were used as a framework for reviewing the literature critically and relevantly in Chapter Two. There were three aspects of the literature review including: (1) scholarly understandings about the key concepts of the study, such as culture, cultural knowledge and cultural competence; (2) an overview of the teaching of culture in EFL instruction in which the implementation of ICC pedagogy should be the best choice for teachers in contemporary society; (3) studies on the concept of culture in EFL education regarding the presentation of cultural forms in teaching materials and the teaching methodology used by EFL teachers.

Following the review of theoretical studies, Chapter Three explained the methodological approach relevant to the study. First, a qualitative approach was taken in this study, because it helped to collect in-depth, rich data, provided participants with opportunities to engage more deeply with these ideas and filled a theoretical gap in relation to the teaching of culture by Vietnamese EFL teachers and fitting the current methodological approach in worldwide language education. Second, accounts of how to design the study were demonstrated. In my study, a case study as a form of qualitative research was adopted and conducted in two phases: Phase 1 (Document Collection and Analysis) and Phase 2 (Teachers' Interview, Classroom Observation and Field notes). Third, the research procedure was described as providing detailed information about the selection of data for Phase 1 and selection of research site and participants for Phase 2. Fourth, the instrumentation was demonstrated and the issues of triangulation were attended to. Five strategies for data collection were employed including document analysis, one-on-one interviews, individual interviews for member checking, classroom observations and field notes. Finally, the procedure of data analysis was provided in order to help the readers to track and verify the process of the present study.

The data from two phases were analysed and the findings were presented separately. Chapter Four reported the cultural content presented in two sets of Vietnamese EFL textbooks while Chapter Five demonstrated the ways and the extent to which Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers practiced their culture teaching. It was clear from the findings that the currently used textbooks in Vietnamese EFL classes contain shortcomings in relation to cultural content for the teaching of cultural competence. The findings showed that the presentation of culture in two textbooks is

versatile, which provides a broad view of foreign cultures. However, the distribution of references to different categories is unbalanced. Among eight cultural aspects, the most emphasis is given to the category of “Social identity and social groups”, “Social interaction”, “Belief and behaviour”, “Socialisation and life-cycle”, and “National geography”, while the cultural information about “National history” is restricted. The same unequal distributions of references to “big C” and little c” cultures were investigated in the textbooks. Data analysis also revealed unequal status of cultural references with much focus on English speaking countries. As a result, the unfair treatment of cultural categories and the limited content of culture on non-English speaking countries may hinder Vietnamese students from developing their ICC.

With regard to the findings from teachers’ interviews and classroom observations, it was concluded that they held a basic understanding of culture and the teaching of cultural competence. They were aware of the important role of culture in teaching EFL and the necessity to address culture in their lessons along with the teaching of linguistic knowledge. However, almost all of them conceptualised the teaching of cultural competence as the provision of cultural knowledge but did not develop strategies to perform appropriately in communication across cultures. Thus, their teaching practices focused on the introduction of cultural knowledge rather than on helping students with intercultural skills for the preparation of international contacts in a multicultural contemporary world. In EFL classes, they spent little time dealing with cultural forms and rarely engaged students in culture-based activities, even when the textbooks contained cultural information. The findings from the textbook analysis showed that although the set textbooks cover Byram’s eight cultural forms, their cultural content limits students’ intercultural learning. In the interviews, teachers reported that they taught from the textbooks and often integrated culture into their EFL. These findings, then, were triangulated with the data from classroom observations. It was worth noting that teachers rarely addressed culture in their EFL. More importantly, when they had opportunities to integrate cultural knowledge found in the textbooks, this was limited to some extent. For example, they explained the meaning of culturally new vocabulary items or briefly provided students with cultural information. They directly compared English and Vietnamese cultures rather than asking students to make comparisons. There was only teacher who organised her students to discuss how people behave differently in other countries, but not why people perform in such diverse ways. Their teaching approach was not developed within an intercultural frame, resulting in limited opportunities for students to learn English language from ICC perspective.

The findings from Chapter Four and Chapter Five revealed two significant gaps which influenced the achievement of ICC in Vietnamese EFL classes. The first gap was found to be

between the cultural content in Vietnamese tertiary EFL textbooks and the conceptualisations of cultural competence towards an ICC perspective. The second gap related to the conflict between Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers' cultural teaching practices and the development of students' ICC.

There were five issues regarding to the first gap set. First, the fact that Vietnamese EFL textbooks only contain cultural information regarding two dominant English speaking countries even though the outside world is comprised of a variety of English and non-English speaking countries; this was incompatible with the need for an acknowledgement of the multicultural reality of our contemporary society. Second, the textbooks mismatch the necessity of understanding and experiencing other cultures. The development of cultural competence in the light of ICC requires that language learners engage with the societies of different countries to enable cultural discovery, however the textbooks overlook these opportunities. Third, the textbooks contain few references to Vietnamese culture and this does not accord with the need to strengthen students' own identity. Fourth, the cultural information focusing on any particular countries is insufficient for the understanding of their cultural backgrounds. Fifth, the textbooks have been designed in five sections for the teaching of linguistics, which can influence teachers' teaching methods to the extent that they might ignore the integration of culture in their teaching practices. These five shortcomings that were found in the two sets of Vietnamese EFL textbooks such that it can be stated that they do not meet the need to teach students knowledge, skills and attitudes according to the definition of the ICC concept.

The second gap was investigated according to the teachers' teaching practices and revealed five main issues limit the development of students' ICC. First, teachers privileged the teaching of linguistic knowledge rather than cultural knowledge. They helped students to understand English grammar well, pronounce English words properly and drilled them in English speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The teaching practices regarding culture were not afforded much importance. Teachers spent little time on cultural content and treated any particular cultural aspect superficially, which was described as the second issue of teachers' cultural teaching approach. Further, due to the insufficient cultural content of the textbooks, the teachers could not provide students with information for intercultural education. The fourth issue was the restricted utilisation of culture-based techniques. The last issue related to the fact that teachers lack support from the university and the MOET for their intercultural English teaching. It was clear that the objective of EFL teaching and learning aiming to develop ICC among students was barely achieved by Vietnamese teachers, mainly because of their teaching approach.

In relation to the two key findings of the study, Chapter Six proposes some recommendations for textbooks writers, teachers and educational leaders in the context of EFL teaching and learning in order to enhance the instruction of the English language. A model for achieving ICC in Vietnamese EFL classes is suggested and it describes recommendations for the teaching of cultural competence. The first suggestion relates to content for cultural teaching. The three key elements for cultural teaching content are knowledge, skills and attitudes. In the light of ICC pedagogy, knowledge should be passed on to EFL students by covering Byram's eight cultural forms and three sources of cultures, including target culture, international target culture and students' local culture. The skills that should be promoted in students included two sets: the skills of interpreting and relating, and the skills of discovery and interaction. The four requisite attitudes include curiosity, openness, readiness and respect. Second, some teaching techniques are offered that are especially suitable for the Vietnamese EFL context. The recommendations for teachers and students when employing any particular culture-based activity are described, with the aim to make the best use of the activities. Third, some recommendations are made that are associated with how to support intercultural English learning for students' development of ICC. Two main issues should be taken into consideration regarding teachers' self-development of ICC and the intercultural English learning environment for EFL students. Only if EFL teachers possess ICC, should they be acknowledged as being ready for the teaching of cultural competence. In addition, the teaching and learning of foreign languages should be conducted both in the classroom context and outside classrooms. Within EFL classes, teachers play an important role in cultivating intercultural knowledge and skills for students, whereas the outside-classroom context is the learning location for students to experience themselves in communication with foreign people and independently develop their ICC. In order to enhance teaching and learning from an ICC perspective, an intercultural English education should be provided for teachers and students. This issue requires the involvement of educational leaders to: improve the teaching and learning conditions, upgrade the assessment rubric and give teachers and students opportunities to approach intercultural contacts. On the basis of the critical literature review, and its key findings and the recommendations, a teaching model that guides EFL teachers through the process of teaching cultural competence choosing to implement ICC pedagogy was developed.

In summary, this study has uncovered the cultural teaching content and methods developed and performed by Vietnamese tertiary teachers in EFL classes. The shortcomings of the textbook content in terms of culture, and the characteristics of teachers' cultural teaching practices influence the achievement of ICC in these EFL classes. It has been argued that, considering the issues related to cultural input, teaching methods and supporting factors, the process of teaching

and learning for the development of cultural competence should be conducted. As such, the cultural output or students' learning outcomes from a language course could be maximised. The relationships between teachers and students, teaching content, teaching methods and supporting factors were so strong that they contributed to defining the learning outcomes in students. When cultural competence became the requisite element alongside linguistic competence, the selection of ICC pedagogy as the guidance mechanism for a language course enabled Vietnamese EFL teachers to achieve these teaching goals for English language education.

6.5.2 Limitations of the Study

The following limitations are acknowledged for the study:

This was a case study conducted upon a small group of teachers. Therefore, the findings may not be applicable to many case studies from other contexts. As well, the generalisability of this research should be taken into consideration. This point will become my intention for future studies, to design a multiple case study or a national internet survey questionnaire in order to achieve a fuller understanding of the research problem and the ways in which Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers integrate cultural content in their teaching.

The set of textbooks analysed is not used in some Vietnamese universities. Hence, the culture presentation in these English teaching texts may be different to texts used elsewhere.

All the interviews with participants were conducted in the Vietnamese language. It was much easier to collect data in the participants' own language for the purpose of extracting in-depth information as well as richer insight. However, by so doing I had to spend more time designing the questions in two languages, and then translating the interviews from Vietnamese into English before making any analysis. Additionally, despite having a NAATI person to check all translated documents, unavoidable translation inaccuracies may have occurred.

Despite the above limitations, the present study has made some important contributions to the understanding of cultural content presented in official teaching materials and teaching practices, for the purpose of integrating cultural content into EFL lessons. The study utilised a qualitative case study approach and was designed in two phases using a large amount of data, including textbooks, interviews, classroom observations and field notes, which helped to provide enough information to address the three research questions. It has been noted that this qualitative case study fills the gap in the literature in relation to the teaching of culture by teachers in a Vietnamese educational context, and fits the current trend in qualitative research in language teaching.

6.5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

In acknowledging the limitations of the present study, some suggestions for further research are offered that will allow a more detailed insight into Vietnamese EFL classroom context and teachers' teaching practices. These further research areas are as follows.

My study adopted a case study approach taking one case-study university as the exemplar. Further research, such as multiple-case study or cross-case study investigations, should be conducted in different geographical areas as well as other various institutional contexts so that the research findings will be generalisable outside these bounded contexts.

Longitudinal studies should be designed in order to generate an in-depth and multi-faceted understanding of complex issues in real-life contexts. The researchers can collect the data over a long time period. Such long time periods will enable them to collect the necessary data, because they will be able to go much further than a cross-sectional snapshot of a process. This is more important when the phenomenon of interest is complicated and changeable, so the flexible length of data collection permits researchers to resume the process or gather additional evidence for the conducted study. Furthermore, if the study takes place over a span of time, it can help to develop a long term relationship between the researcher and the participants, and give the researcher a vivid sense of experiencing the case as well. In short, longitudinal study is a useful method as it allows researchers to gain thick description of events via the analysis of them and also provides a chronological narrative of events relevant to the phenomenon of interest.

There are four main sources of data in my study including: textbooks, interviews, classroom observations and field notes, and one group of teacher participants. Further studies should involve more sources of data and more groups of subject respondents. For example, researchers could collect data information from students, educational leaders or some other groups of people who more or less influence the teachers' teaching practices. Different kinds of instruments may be included, such as surveys, individual interviews, group interviews, diaries, etc. in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of interest from different aspects in its natural setting.

Such further studies into teachers' teaching practices for the development of ICC among students would be significant for foreign language education generally, and in Vietnam in particular. The more EFL teachers consider the significant role of culture in foreign language instruction, the more options they will have to blend the teaching of culture into their everyday lessons for the achievement of common teaching goals in the world of globalisation.

6.5.4 Conclusions

This chapter concludes my investigation into the world of Vietnamese tertiary EFL teachers regarding the teaching of cultural competence. Researching this subject enriched my understanding about the cultural content presented in EFL teaching materials, and teachers' teaching of intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes in EFL lessons. Also, it inspired me to shift from the traditional teaching method to the ICC approach in order to best achieve the common teaching objectives. I used to be an EFL teacher who watched my students having difficulties in using English interculturally in communicative situations with foreign people. I understood that culture played an important role in the process of communication across cultures, and that conducting research about teachers' teaching of cultural competence was necessary at all times. Furthermore, the findings from this research helped to instigate a significant change in the Vietnamese EFL teachers themselves, because they had opportunities to discover and experience new things to broaden their knowledge of English speaking and international cultures. They could also improve their EFL teaching, especially the teaching of culture, so as to develop students' ICC. In turn, it may enhance the efficacy of the EFL teaching and learning process at their educational institution. These benefits from this research remind me of a quote in Bissex's and Bullock's (1987) book titled *Seeing for Ourselves: Case-study Research by Teachers of Writing*: "Doing classroom research changes teachers and the teaching profession from the inside out, from the bottom up, through changes in teachers themselves. And therein lies the power" (p. 27). This quote corresponds to my situation as an EFL teacher, which could be also the situation for foreign language teachers teaching at Vietnamese classrooms. I acknowledge that my investigation was time-consuming and challenging, however I have learned a lot from my supervisors, my participants, my friends and other researchers. It is worth noting that my dream of conducting this research was achieved, and it disclosed the significant need of Vietnamese EFL teachers in particular, and foreign language teachers in general, for teaching strategies that are appropriate for the development of ICC among language students in order achieve common academic teaching goals.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Interview Guide (for Interviews 1)

English version

Date _____ Teacher ID _____

PRE-INTERVIEW

- ❖ Introduce yourself
- ❖ Discuss the purpose of the study
- ❖ Provide structure of the interview
- ❖ Be happy and make the participant feel comfortable and confident

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW

I. Personal Information

1. When and where were you trained as a teacher of English?
2. What is your highest academic degree? (Bachelor degree, Master degree, Doctorate Degree)
3. How many years have you been teaching English totally and how many years have you been teaching in this school?
4. How many classes are you teaching this year?
5. How many hours of class do you teach a week?
6. What is the average number of students in your class?

II. Teachers' Perception of Language and Culture Teaching

7. Why did you decide to become an EFL teacher?
8. What are your main goals for your students when teaching English?
9. What is your understanding of 'culture'?
10. What do you understand by 'culture teaching' in a foreign language teaching context?

11. How important do you think culture is in English language teaching? Why do you think that?
12. How much importance do you attach to teaching cultural competence compared to teaching grammar, vocabulary and the four skills? Why?

III. EFL Teaching Materials

13. Could you please name the main textbook you are currently using for your EFL classrooms?
14. Does the currently used textbook contain information (for example texts, pictures) about cultural aspects? Please tell me, in what ways the forms of cultural aspects included in the textbook?
15. Do the cultural contents of the currently used textbook meet your expectations? If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?
16. In your opinion do you think the currently used textbook offer enough material for teaching cultural aspects? If not, what do you think should be included?
17. Are you free to use additional materials you think useful for cultural teaching in your class? Are you using these materials in your English course?
18. Could you tell me the reasons why you use additional materials together with textbooks?
19. If you indicated that together with textbook you also use the additional materials, please tell me what other teaching materials/sources do you use for culture teaching?

CLOSING QUESTION

20. Can you think of anything about culture in English language teaching materials that has not come up here?

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

- ❖ Thank participants for their cooperation
- ❖ Tell participants that they would receive a copy of the interview transcript after 4 weeks

Vietnamese version

Hướng dẫn Phỏng Vấn (Dành cho Phỏng Vấn 1)

Ngày_____ Mã số Giảng viên_____

TRƯỚC KHI PHỎNG VẤN

- ❖ Giới thiệu bản thân
- ❖ Bàn luận về mục đích của đề tài nghiên cứu
- ❖ Cung cấp cấu trúc của buổi phỏng vấn
- ❖ Có thái độ vui vẻ và tạo cho người được phỏng vấn cảm thấy thoải mái và tự tin

CÁC CÂU HỎI MẪU DÙNG TRONG BUỔI PHỎNG VẤN

I. Thông Tin Cá Nhân

1. Thầy/cô hãy cho biết thầy/cô được đào tạo trở thành giáo viên Tiếng Anh ở đâu và từ khi nào?
2. Thầy/cô có thể cho biết bằng cấp cao nhất của mình là gì? (Bằng Đại học, Bằng Thạc sỹ, Bằng Tiến sỹ)
3. Thầy/cô đã dạy học Tiếng Anh được bao nhiêu năm tất cả và thầy/cô đã công tác ở trường này được bao nhiêu năm?
4. Thầy/cô dạy bao nhiêu lớp học trong năm học này?
5. Với mỗi lớp học thầy/cô dạy bao nhiêu tiết một tuần?
6. Số lượng sinh viên trung bình trong mỗi lớp học của thầy/cô là bao nhiêu?

II. Quan Điểm của Giáo Viên về Ngôn Ngữ và Dạy Học Văn Hóa

7. Tại sao thầy/cô quyết định trở thành giáo viên giảng dạy Tiếng Anh?
8. Thầy/cô có thể cho biết khi dạy Tiếng Anh mục tiêu chủ yếu thầy/cô dành cho sinh viên là gì?
9. Thầy/cô hiểu thế nào về ‘văn hóa’?
10. Thầy/cô hiểu thế nào về ‘dạy văn hóa’ trong dạy học ngoại ngữ?
11. Theo thầy/cô văn hóa có tầm quan trọng như thế nào trong dạy học Tiếng Anh? Tại sao thầy/cô có quan điểm như vậy?

12. Theo thầy/cô dạy văn hóa có tầm quan trọng như thế nào khi so sánh với dạy ngữ pháp, từ vựng và bốn kỹ năng? Tại sao?

III. Tài Liệu Giảng Dạy Tiếng Anh

13. Thầy/cô có thể kể tên loại sách giáo khoa thầy/cô đang dùng trong các lớp học Tiếng Anh hiện nay?
14. Theo thầy/cô loại sách giáo khoa đang dùng có bao hàm các thông tin (ví dụ như các bài khóa, tranh ảnh) về các vấn đề văn hóa không? Thầy/cô hãy vui lòng cho biết, các yếu tố văn hóa được thể hiện trong sách giáo khoa bằng cách nào?
15. Theo thầy/cô nội dung của sách giáo khoa đang dùng xét về phương diện nội dung văn hóa có đáp ứng được sự mong đợi của thầy/cô không? Nếu có, bằng cách nào? Nếu không, tại sao?
16. Theo thầy/cô sách giáo khoa đang dùng có cung cấp đầy đủ tài liệu cho việc dạy học các yếu tố văn hóa không? Nếu không, theo thầy/cô sách giáo khoa cần phải bao hàm những loại tài liệu gì?
17. Thầy/cô có được tự mình sử dụng tài liệu bổ trợ mà thầy/cô cho là cần thiết cho việc dạy văn hóa trong lớp không? Thầy/cô có đang sử dụng loại tài liệu như thế này trong các lớp học Tiếng Anh của mình không?
18. Thầy/cô có thể cho biết lý do tại sao thầy/cô sử dụng các tài liệu bổ trợ đồng thời với sách giáo khoa không?
19. Nếu thầy/cô khẳng định rằng đồng thời với việc dùng sách giáo khoa thầy/cô có sử dụng tài liệu bổ trợ, xin vui lòng cho biết loại tài liệu bổ trợ/nguồn tài liệu bổ trợ nào thầy/cô sử dụng cho việc dạy văn hóa?

CÂU HỎI KHÉP LẠI VẤN ĐỀ

20. Thầy/cô có thể bổ sung bất cứ điều gì liên quan đến yếu tố văn hóa trong các tài liệu Tiếng Anh mà chưa được đề cập ở trên đây?

KẾT THÚC BUỔI PHỎNG VẤN

- ❖ Cảm ơn người được phỏng vấn vì sự cộng tác của họ.
- ❖ Thông báo cho người được phỏng vấn biết họ sẽ nhận bản sao nội dung ghi âm cuộc phỏng vấn này sau bốn tuần.

APPENDIX B - Interview Guide (for Interviews 2)

English version

Date _____ **Teacher ID** _____

PRE-INTERVIEW

- ❖ Greet the participant
- ❖ Discuss the purpose of the second interview
- ❖ Provide structure of the interview
- ❖ Be happy and make the participant feel comfortable and confident

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW

OPENING QUESTION

1. In our previous interview we talked about the role of culture and cultural aspects in English teaching materials. So now could you please tell me what do you think of culture teaching in foreign language teaching?

I. Methods of Teaching Culture Towards an ICC Perspective

2. What elements of culture, if any do you incorporate in your EFL teaching?
3. In what ways do you incorporate these elements in your EFL teaching? Could you please give me some examples?
4. How did your students respond in these examples?
5. How often do you enact cultural content into your EFL teaching practice? And how extensively do you deal with particular cultural aspects?
6. Could you please tell me which aspects of culture you consider the most important in teaching a foreign language? Why?

III. Activities to Support Intercultural English Teaching

7. What opportunities, if any, do you personally have to obtain ‘abroad contact’ with foreign communities?

8. How often do you engage with aspects of foreign culture when you are not at school?
Could you please provide some examples about your situation (for example television, Internet)?
9. What are the international activities or programs at your university that support English language teaching and learning of culture?
10. What do you think the university could do to increase chances of intercultural contact?
11. If you could get all the support you want (from your school, the Ministry of Education and Training) in terms of English language teaching, what would you like to have?

CLOSING QUESTION

12. Can you think of anything about culture elements and teaching methods in your English teaching practice that has not come up here?

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

- ❖ Thank participants for their cooperation
- ❖ Tell participants that they would receive a copy of the interview transcript after 4 weeks

Vietnamese version

Hướng dẫn Phỏng Vấn (Dành cho Phỏng Vấn 2)

Ngày_____ Mã số Giảng viên_____

TRƯỚC KHI PHỎNG VẤN

- ❖ Giới thiệu bản thân
- ❖ Bàn luận về mục đích của đề tài nghiên cứu
- ❖ Cung cấp cấu trúc của buổi phỏng vấn
- ❖ Có thái độ vui vẻ và tạo cho người được phỏng vấn cảm thấy thoải mái và tự tin

CÁC CÂU HỎI MẪU DÙNG TRONG BUỔI PHÒNG VẤN

CÂU HỎI MỞ ĐẦU

1. Trong buổi phỏng vấn lần trước chúng ta bàn luận về vai trò của văn hóa và các yếu tố văn hóa thể hiện trong các tài liệu dạy học Tiếng Anh. Vì vậy, thầy/cô vui lòng cho biết những suy nghĩ của mình về dạy học văn hóa trong dạy học ngoại ngữ?

I. Phương Pháp Dạy Văn Hóa Nhìn từ Góc Độ Năng Lực Giao Tiếp Liên Văn Hóa

2. Trong quá trình dạy học Tiếng Anh, thầy/cô thường giới thiệu cho học sinh những vấn đề văn hóa nào, nếu có?
3. Thầy/cô thường giới thiệu những yếu tố văn hóa này trong quá trình dạy học Tiếng Anh của mình theo cách nào? Thầy/cô vui lòng đưa ra một số ví dụ cụ thể?
4. Sinh viên trong lớp của thầy/cô có phản ứng như thế nào với các ví dụ về các yếu tố văn hóa này?
5. Thầy/cô thường truyền đạt nội dung văn hóa trong quá trình dạy học Tiếng Anh của mình ở mức độ thường xuyên như thế nào? Và đối với từng yếu tố văn hóa cụ thể thầy/cô thường đề cập ở mức độ bao quát/sâu sắc như thế nào?
6. Thầy/cô có thể vui lòng cho biết yếu tố văn hóa nào thầy/cô cho là quan trọng nhất trong quá trình dạy học ngoại ngữ? Tại sao?

III. Các Hoạt động Hỗ Trợ Dạy Học Tiếng Anh Liên Văn Hóa

7. Thầy/cô có thể cho biết, cơ hội giao lưu nào, nếu có, bản thân thầy/cô đã từng trải qua để tiếp xúc với các cộng đồng ở nước ngoài?
8. Ngoài thời gian ở trường học, thầy/cô tiếp xúc với các yếu tố văn hóa của nền văn hóa ngoại quốc ở mức độ thường xuyên như thế nào? Thầy/cô vui lòng cho biết một vài ví dụ cụ thể trong trường hợp của thầy/cô (ví dụ như xem vô tuyến, xem mạng internet)?
9. Trường đại học của thầy/cô có những hoạt động hay chương trình quốc tế nào hỗ trợ cho công tác giảng dạy và học tập văn hóa?
10. Theo thầy/cô trường đại học có thể làm gì để nâng cao khả năng và cơ hội cho các hoạt động giao lưu liên văn hóa?

11. Nếu thầy/cô có thể nhận được tất cả mọi sự hỗ trợ muốn có (từ nhà trường, từ Bộ Giáo dục và Đào tạo) liên quan đến dạy học Tiếng Anh, thầy/cô muốn có những gì?

CÂU HỎI KHÉP LẠI VẤN ĐỀ

12. Thầy/cô có thể bổ sung bất cứ điều gì liên quan đến yếu tố văn hóa và phương pháp dạy học của thầy/cô mà chưa được đề cập ở trên đây?

KẾT THÚC BUỔI PHỎNG VẤN

- ❖ Cảm ơn người được phỏng vấn vì sự cộng tác của họ.
- ❖ Thông báo cho người được phỏng vấn biết họ sẽ nhận bản sao nội dung ghi âm cuộc phỏng vấn này sau bốn tuần.

APPENDIX C - Member Check Protocol (for Interviews 3)

English version

PRE-MEMBER CHECK

- ❖ Greet the participant
- ❖ Discuss the purpose of the interview
- ❖ Provide structure of the interview
- ❖ Be happy and make the participant feel comfortable and confident

GUIDES FOR MEMBER CHECK

Discuss with the participants about the transcripts of their interviews with the purposes of:

- reviewing the participants' statements for accuracy
- affirming the accuracy and completeness of the transcripts that reflect the participants' views, feelings, and experiences.

CLOSING QUESTION

1. Is there anything else you would like to add or share about your experience as a teacher of English that you feel is important for me to understand better your English language teaching?

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

- ❖ Thank participants for their cooperation

Vietnamese version

TRƯỚC KHI PHỎNG VẤN

- ❖ Giới thiệu bản thân
- ❖ Bàn luận về mục đích của đề tài nghiên cứu
- ❖ Cung cấp cấu trúc của buổi phỏng vấn
- ❖ Có thái độ vui vẻ và tạo cho người được phỏng vấn cảm thấy thoải mái và tự tin

HƯỚNG DẪN NỘI DUNG BUỔI PHỎNG VẤN

Thảo luận với người được phỏng vấn về bản đánh máy nội dung của các cuộc phỏng vấn trước đó nhằm mục đích:

- xem lại những chỉnh sửa của người được phỏng vấn về độ chính xác của thông tin.
- khẳng định tính chính xác và sự hoàn thiện của các bản đánh máy nội dung ghi âm đảm bảo phản ánh rõ quan điểm, cảm nhận và kinh nghiệm của người được phỏng vấn.

CÂU HỎI KHÉP LẠI VẤN ĐỀ

1. Thầy/cô có thể bổ sung hay chia sẻ bất cứ điều gì liên quan kinh nghiệm dạy học của mình với tư cách là giáo viên Tiếng Anh mà Thầy/cô nghĩ là quan trọng để tôi có thể hiểu rõ hơn công việc dạy học Tiếng Anh của Thầy/cô?

KẾT THÚC BUỔI PHỎNG VẤN

- ❖ Cảm ơn người được phỏng vấn vì sự cộng tác của họ.

APPENDIX D - Classroom Observation Tool

Teacher ID:..... Class observed:.....
Date:..... Time:.....
Setting:..... Unit:.....

BEFORE THE LESSON: Preparation

- ❖ Introduce yourself
- ❖ Give informal demonstration for the classroom observation
- ❖ Ask if teachers and students have any questions
- ❖ Test audio recording equipment
- ❖ Be happy and make the teachers and students feel comfortable and confident

DURING THE LESSON: Lesson flow

Describe the activities that happened during the 45-minute lesson. Use the follow template to record the flow of EFL lesson. Activities by teacher and students will be recorded every 5 minutes.

Time		Activities/Descriptions	Comments
1	10am → 10.05am (for example)		
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

AFTER THE LESSON: Follow up

- ❖ Thanks teacher and students for their contribution
- ❖ Review your notes from the lesson flow template and write your field notes.
- ❖ Describe the activities that happened during the lesson and the amount of time for each activity using lesson flow template, field notes and recordings. Fill in the following Classroom Observation Checklist as soon as possible after the lesson.

Observed classification		Cultural forms/ Descriptions	Culture free/ Descriptions	Time	Comments
1. Class organisation	Reviewing the content of the previous lesson				
	Giving an overview of the lesson				
	Summarizing content of the lesson				
	Giving students homework and directing students preparation for next class				
2. Content development	<i>Introducing new items</i>				
	<i>Teacher focus</i> + Using examples to clarify points				
	+ Making definitions for new terms/concepts				
	+ Making clarified explanations/demonstrations for major/difficult points				
	<i>Student focus</i> + Observing & taking notes				
	+ Practices				
	<i>Teacher-Student interaction</i> + Teacher questions/responds				
	+ Students responds/questions				
3. Activities and techniques for teaching	create an authentic classroom environment (posters, displays, bulletin boards, maps and realia)				
	providing information (activities relating to culture teaching such as: culture capsules, culture clusters and culture quizzes)				
	problem solving (activities relating to culture teaching)				

	such as: case studies, culture assimilators and cultoons)				
	behavioural and affective aspects (dialogues, simulation, situational exercises, role play, drama and mini drama)				
	cognitive approaches (lectures, readings, discussions and student research)				
	the role of literature and humanities (reading novels, magazines, newspapers, history books)				
	real-life exposure to the target language (activities relating to culture teaching such as: invite people from other cultures to the classrooms)				
	making use of community resources (activities relating to culture teaching such as: resources in English-speaking countries on Internet)				
4. EFL teaching materials	Use of textbook				
	Use of supplementary teaching materials (list in detail)				
5. Other comments					

APPENDIX E - A Priori Classification of Data

Research questions	Sources of data	Byram's checklist of cultural content	Elaboration/Examples
(1) Given that cultural competence is an important factor in EFL education, to what extent is cultural knowledge embedded in official curriculum/teaching materials?	(1) Textbooks	Form 1: Social identity and social groups	<i>Social class</i> : The group of members of a society with the same social, economic or educational status (for example upper class, middle class, lower class, working class, scholar class, business class/merchants). <i>Regional identity</i> : The distinct characteristic representing a group of people (for example, villagers, mining workers, the use of language and dialect (English, French, Vietnamese), the location within a country (London, Sydney, New York). <i>Ethnic minority</i> : Small community that has different national or cultural traditions from the majority of the population (for example, Australian Aboriginal minority, Aussiedler, Karelia minority). <i>Occupational identity</i> : The distinct kind of jobs employed by people (for example, teachers, workers, businessmen, reporters).
	(2) Interviews	Groups within the nation-state which are the basis for other than national identity, including social class, regional identity, ethnic minority, and which demonstrate the complexity of individuals' social identities and of a national society.	
	(3) Classroom observations		
	(4) Field notes	Form 2: Social interaction	<i>Greetings</i> : The way to welcome others by giving a word or a sign in meeting (for example, Hello, How are you, How are you going, Good morning). <i>Modes of addressing</i> : The use of names or names with titles to address people, such as John (first name), John Adamson (full name), Mr/Dr Adamson (title and surname). <i>Degrees of formality</i> : The specific level of manner/action performed in communication (for example, formal, informal). <i>Situations of interactions</i> : The condition or position in which the interactions take place (for example, two students have a conversation at the university) <i>Use of slang</i> : The use of informal language characterising for a particular group of people (for example, No worries! Good on ya!)
		Form 3: Belief and behaviour	<i>Moral belief</i> : The belief in principles of doing the right or wrong things or standards of socially acceptable behaviour and character in daily activities (for example, the way to treat the elder or the youth, how to have appropriate behaviour in a party). <i>Religious belief</i> : The belief in a supernatural power that control human

(2) Given that cultural content has many forms (Byram, 1993a), which forms are the most evident in tertiary Vietnamese EFL classrooms?		moral and religious beliefs which are embodied within them; second, routines of behaviour taken from daily life which are not seen as significant markers of the identity of the group.	destiny (for example, the belief for Christian religion, going to church). Daily routines: The habit of doing the same things everyday (for example, getting up early, leaving home at 7am). Dining etiquette: The eating habits or polite manner (for example, kinds of food such as rice, bread, sandwich; the use of fork and knife; the use of chopsticks) Sports: The distinct kinds of activities requiring physical exertion, skill and competition (for example, football, basketball, tennis) Recreation: The activities that help people to refresh especially renew health and spirits (for example, listening to music, watching television). Shopping: The act of searching or purchasing commodities from shops (for example, buying souvenirs, buying food and drink).
	Form 4: Social and political institutions	Institutions of the state which characterise the state and its citizens and which constitute a framework for ordinary, routine life within the nation and sub-national groups; provision for health care, for law and order, for social security, for local government, etc.	State institutions: The organisations founded by the Government for a specific purpose (for example, Parliament Office, banks, transportation service). Health care centres: The servicing places for preserving mental and physical health or treating illness (for example, hospital, health club). Law and order: Legal document issued by the Government (for example, Britain’s laws: What you can do when you are 18 years old). Organisations: The groups of people working together for a specific purpose (for example, a business organisation) Voting and elections: The act of choosing someone for a political position.
	Form 5: Socialization and life-cycle	Institutions of socialisation – families, schools, employment – and the ceremonies which mark passage through stages of social life; presentation of divergent practices in different social groups as well as national auto-stereotypes	Schools and education: The institutions for educating children (for example, Jesmond Public School, Lambton High School, the University of Newcastle) Families: The groups of people having blood or marriage relationship living together as social units (for example, a family with parents and two children) Employment: The state of giving work to someone or the occupation for which someone is paid (for example, a bicycle factory offer a lot of jobs for local people). Ceremonies: The formal activity performed to celebrate a particular event which marks significant moment in the life-cycle (for example, engagement, wedding, birthday, graduation, etc.).

(3) In what ways and to what extent do tertiary Vietnamese teachers infuse cultural knowledge into EFL pedagogy?		of expectations and interpretations.	Life-cycle: The series of changes in the life of a person (for example, being born, pass away, age).
		Form 6: National history Periods and events, historical and contemporary in the constitution of the nation and its identity – both actually significant and, not necessarily identical, perceived as such by its members.	Historical periods and events represent national identity: The set of circumstances happened in the past referring to the development of a country (for example, Timeline of Australian history, A history of England and Wales. Contemporary periods and events represent national identity: The set of circumstances happened at the present time referring to the development of a country (for example, Modern liberalism in the United States).
		Form 7: National geography Geographical factors within the national boundaries which are significant in members' perceptions of their country; other factors which are information (known but not significant to members) essential to outsiders in intercultural communication.	Geographic factors: The features related to the area and population of the country, the distribution of population, the distribution of industrial area or agricultural area, the capital city, the climate, etc. Countries: The nation with its own government, occupying a particular territory (for example, the USA, England, Australia) States: The territory occupied by one political community under one government within a country (for example, New South Wales is a state of Australia, Florida is a state of the USA). Cities: The large towns of a country (for example, London, Paris, New York). Counties: The regions created by territorial division for the purpose of local government (for example, Kent in England) Districts: The areas of a town (for example, Hollywood in the USA) National parks: The large public area in a town used for recreations (for example, the Luna park in Sydney of Australia, the Yellowstone National Park in the USA) Neighbouring countries and boundaries: The countries which are next to each other or share the boundaries (for example, Peru and Bolivia, Italy and France) Maps: The diagrammatic representation of an area of the earth (for example, map of England, map of Vietnam) Climate: The weather of a particular location over a period of time (for example, summer in Vietnam is very hot, winter in Europe is very cold and snowy)

		<p>Form 8: Stereotypes and national identity</p> <p>For example, German and English notions of what is “typically” German and English national identity; the origins of these notions – historical and contemporary – and comparisons among them; symbols of national stereotypes and their meanings, e.g., famous people or monuments and people.</p>	<p>National cultural heritage: The valued historic products that are created by members in a country and were passed down from previous generation (for example, historic monuments, literary works, art works).</p> <p>Famous monuments: The significant sites that are preserved as public properties (for example, the Opera House in Australia, the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum in Vietnam)</p> <p>Literary works: The pieces of imaginative or creative writing (for example, Hamlet – the tragedy written by Shakespeare, Gone with the wind – the novel written by Margaret Mitchell)</p> <p>Artworks: The collection of illustrations, photographs or other non-textual material prepared for inclusion in a publication (for example paintings, photos, music, sculpture, films).</p> <p>Famous people: The widely known people (for example, Bill Clinton – the former President of the USA, Celine Dion – the singer).</p> <p>Flags: The rectangular cloths with distinctive design representing the countries (for example, the flag of Australia: a blue ensign defaced with the Commonwealth Star in the lowest hoist quarter and the five stars of the Southern Cross in the fly half; the flag of Vietnam: a yellow star centred on a red field)</p> <p>National buildings: The structures that are owned and maintained for public by the national government (for example, the National bank, the theatre)</p> <p>National stereotypes: The typical characteristics that describe people of any particular country (for example, some positive stereotypes of American include Generosity, optimism, hardworking, volunteerism, materialism, overconsumption, racism and obesity).</p> <p>Common symbols present the country: The visible things that by association present the country (for example, the cup with a map of Australia or the Opera House)</p>
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Notes: The elaborations of cultural themes are made based on Concise Oxford English Dictionary, Twelfth Edition, Edited by Angus Stevenson and Maurice Waite, 2011.

APPENDIX F – The Interview Transcription Template

Interview Transcription	
Teacher ID:.....	Location:.....
Date:.....	Time:.....
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"><div style="margin-right: 10px;">← 2 inches</div><div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: yellow; padding: 2px 5px; flex-grow: 1;">PRE-INTERVIEW</div></div>	
Researcher (R): <div style="text-align: center; font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">(Leave a line break to distinguish clearly between R's comments and T's comments)</div> Teacher (T):	
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"><div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: yellow; padding: 2px 5px; flex-grow: 1;">INTERVIEW QUESTIONS</div><div style="margin-left: 10px;">2 inches →</div></div>	
1. Heading for session 1 R: <div style="text-align: center; font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">(Leave a line break to distinguish clearly between R's comments and T's comments)</div> T: <div style="text-align: center; font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">(Leave a line break to distinguish clearly between two sessions)</div> 1. Heading for session 2 R: <div style="text-align: center; font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">(Leave a line break to distinguish clearly between R's comments and T's comments)</div> T:	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: yellow; padding: 2px 5px;">CLOSING QUESTION</div> R: <div style="text-align: center; font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">(Leave a line break to distinguish clearly between R's comments and T's comments)</div> T:	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: yellow; padding: 2px 5px;">CONCLUDING STATEMENT</div> R: <div style="text-align: center; font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">(Leave a line break to distinguish clearly between R's comments and T's comments)</div> T:	

APPENDIX G – Sample of Codes for “Modes of Addressing” Subcategory

Units/Textbooks	Lifelines Elementary
Unit 1	<i>First name:</i> Enrique (4), Lyn (3), Banu (2), Fernando, Telma, Sarah, Michael, Gabor (3), Paolo (2), Keiko (2) <i>Full name:</i> Mandy Wallis <i>With title:</i> Mrs Clark
Unit 2	<i>First name:</i> Candy, Suresh, Glenda, Ken (2), Melanie (6), Barry (3), Jason (3), Maria (3) <i>Full name:</i> Water Burgen, Meena Kuhmar, Tim Caldwell <i>With title:</i> Ms Watson, Mr and Mrs Smith
Extension Units 1 & 2	<i>First name:</i> Martina (3) <i>Full name:</i> Martina Echevarria, Paul Barton <i>Surname:</i> Echevarria
Unit 3	<i>First name:</i> Claire (3), Andrew (4), Pilar, Vera, Donatella, Ellen, Peter, Ian, Ben, Tracy, Frank, Maureen, Adam, Bobby, Anna, Ulrike, Millie
Unit 4	<i>First name:</i> Alan (6), Sarah (2), Tony (2), Jenny (5), Stephen, Mark, Sylvia (2) <i>Nickname:</i> Jen <i>Fullname:</i> Alan Wells, Tony Cooke, Sarah Ballard, Jenny Mills <i>Surname:</i> Ballard, Cooke
Extension Units 3 & 4	<i>With title:</i> Mr Smith, Tom Smith, Doctor Walls (2)
Unit 5	<i>First name:</i> Shakespeare, Hamlet, Betty, Phil, Roy, Joan
Unit 6	<i>First name:</i> Bob (3), Monika, Sandy, Peter, Monika (7) <i>Full name:</i> Bob Wilkins
Extension Units 5 & 6	<i>First name:</i> Saul (3) <i>Full name:</i> Saul Robbins
Unit 7	<i>First name:</i> Clint (2), Johnson (2) <i>With title:</i> Madam (2), Mrs Gonzelez, Mrs Wilson
Unit 8	<i>First name:</i> Mitch (3), Peter, Maria, Zach, Hanna, Fawzia, Samir, Laura (2), David (2), Pete, Rosy, Ben (2), Karen, Josh, Mark, Paula, Conny, Ian, Juliet, Romeo <i>Full name:</i> Stuart Stone, Maria Jarvis <i>Surname:</i> McGee <i>With title:</i> Mr and Mrs Williams, Mrs Vinney, Mr Ferreira, Mr DWall
Extension Units 7 & 8	
Unit 9	<i>First name:</i> Sheena (3), Adam (5), Madelaine (5), Eileen (3), Alexei (2), Luke (9), Fran (6) <i>With title:</i> Eileen Halliday, Luke Mansen
Unit 10	<i>First name:</i> Matt, Kelly (2) <i>Full name:</i> Kumiko Tsuchida <i>With title:</i> Mr and Mrs J Halstead, Mrs Tsuchida (3)
Extension Units 9 & 10	<i>First name:</i> Julia, William, Penny, David
Unit 11	<i>First name:</i> Tim, Zach, Suzanne, Bella, Cindy, Paul, Michael (3), Penny (3), Adam (2), Paulette (2), Winston (2), Tamara (8), Barbara (2), Judy, Zoe <i>Full name:</i> Tamara Adams, Stacey Thomas, Zoe Carson <i>With title:</i> Uncle George
Unit 12	<i>First name:</i> Anna (6), Zara <i>Full name:</i> Anna Clarke, David E. Jacobs

Extension Units 11 & 12	<i>First name:</i> Maria, Pedro, Anne, Sanjit
Unit 13	<i>First name:</i> Max (3), Ellen (2), Jeff (2), Sarah, Stuart, Kate (2), Tiger (5), Eldrick, Kutida, Earl, Robin, Jack, Judy, Harriet, Melinda <i>Full name:</i> Kate Mahoney, Ryan Sweet, Jack Dee, Tiger Woods (4), Elrick Woods, Bin Clinton, Jeff Bins <i>Surname:</i> Watsons <i>With title:</i> Mr and Mrs Patel
Unit 14	<i>First name:</i> Mark (5), Lousie (6), Peter (2), Mandy <i>Full name:</i> Mandy Poole (2), Russell Dean (2)
Extension Units 13 & 14	
Total	327

Notes: The number in parentheses shows the number of references, where the number is greater than 1.

APPENDIX H – Sample of Codes for “Recreations” Subcategory

Units/Textbooks	Lifelines Elementary
Unit 1	
Unit 2	Being on holiday Meeting family members Having a party Have a talk/chat with friends
Extension Units 1 & 2	
Unit 3	Have a talk/chat with friends
Unit 4	Playing the guitar Playing the piano Singing Playing musical instrument Playing the saxophone Going on holiday Watching television Having a swim Gambling Meeting friends Going into a pub
Extension Units 3 & 4	
Unit 5	Meeting friends Eating out Singing opera Cooking Listening to music Going to a restaurant Going to the pub Going out and having a drink
Unit 6	Visiting museum Going to the cinema Going to a café Going to a club Going out Watching television
Extension Units 5 & 6	Going for a drink Travelling
Unit 7	Going on holiday
Unit 8	Going to a concert Going to the theatre Going to the cinema Watching television Going on holiday Going to a party Going to aerobics class Going to a football match Having lunch with family members Going to a music festival Being away for the weekend
Extension Units 7 & 8	
Unit 9	Having a chat with friends

	Going to the park
Unit 10	Going on a tour Going on holiday Travelling
Extension Units 9 & 10	Having a holiday
Unit 11	Watching television Having a party Visiting friends Buying clothes at the shop (3)
Unit 12	Going to health farm Watching television
Extension Units 11 & 12	
Unit 13	Going out for a meal Going bowling Meeting for lunch Going away at the weekend Going out Watching film at the cinema
Unit 14	Watching television: watching Lucky Break show every breakfast time Being a volunteer for Earthwatch program
Extension Units 13 & 14	
Total	66

Notes: The number in parentheses shows the number of references, where the number is greater than 1.

APPENDIX I – Sample of Codes for “Sports” Subcategory

Units/Textbooks	Lifelines Elementary
Unit 1	
Unit 2	
Extension Units 1 & 2	
Unit 3	
Unit 4	Football (2) Tennis (2) Swimming (4) Golf (2) Rugby (2) Basketball Riding a bicycle Skiing Dancing Running Riding a horse
Extension Units 3 & 4	
Unit 5	Skiing Snowboarding Swimming Golf Tennis Dancing
Unit 6	Skiing (3)
Extension Units 5 & 6	Tennis
Unit 7	
Unit 8	
Extension Units 7 & 8	
Unit 9	
Unit 10	
Extension Units 9 & 10	
Unit 11	Football
Unit 12	Running Jogging
Extension Units 11 & 12	
Unit 13	Golf (2) Baseball
Unit 14	Horse riding (3) Car racing (4) Helicopter rides (4) Scuba-diving (3) Hang-gliding (3) Climbing a mountain Playing rugby Football
Extension Units 13 & 14	
Total	54

Notes: The number in parentheses shows the number of references, where the number is greater than 1.