


Ensuring Intercultural Diversity Through the VNC104 Student Exchange Program

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Abstract: Target 4.7 in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) aims to ensure that education is equally accessible to all genders who are taught to appreciate human rights and cultural diversity as global citizens. Understanding and sympathy for intercultural differences become important in higher education. With a focus on the foundations and dimensions of Vietnamese culture, the course VNC104 (Vietnamese Culture) allows lecturers to meet Target 4 in SDG4 in some ways. Advancing students' understanding and sympathy for intercultural diversity requires lecturers to involve them in activities that are socially constructed. It is argued in this paper that socially constructed knowledge can be absorbed through the body and mind. Bodily engagement, environment, task integration, and use of objects play a vital role in this process. The world is not simply understood by the working mechanism in our brains. Nevertheless, it must be felt and sensed. In this paper, the authors combine embodiment with Bloom's taxonomy to increase students' cognitive development through the connection between the mind and body. The combination of these theories has the potential to link social constructivism to students' bodily engagement in the world through cognitive processes. It also develops an innovative approach to establishing an organic rapport with students of diverse backgrounds and ensuring education quality for global citizenship.

Keywords: intercultural diversity, Vietnamese culture, Bloom's taxonomy, global citizenship, embodied cognition

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Introduction

Bloom's taxonomy is widely applied in education. Bloom and his associates came up with six levels of thinking that are arranged from a low-order to a high-order sequence. Nonetheless, recent research has pointed out that Bloom's taxonomy is flawed. This taxonomy's hierarchical structure has been critiqued for being excessively rigid and failing to adequately capture the complexity of learning (Krathwohl, 2002). It is crucial to modify the

taxonomy to fit local circumstances. In addition, Nguyen and Phung (2018) contended that Bloom's taxonomy falls short in meeting the demands of 21st-century learners, who tend to require a more varied collection of abilities and competencies is typically covered by the framework. They criticized Bloom's taxonomy for its exclusive concentration on cognitive functions and its omission of significant non-cognitive areas including social and emotional development, cultural competency, and digital literacy. Nguyen and Phung (2021) were in incongruence with Bloom's taxonomy by stating that students may not always go through the hierarchical levels of cognition. They may use a certain level of cognition for a particular task and then another for either the next sequence of the same task or for another task.

This article is not intended to criticize Bloom's taxonomy. Instead, the authors of this article would like to specify the process of the integrated model. The authors argue that we are perceivers, and at the same time, we are being perceived, allowing our knowledge to evolve and develop. This argument is based on the integration of embodiment into Bloom's taxonomy. The incorporated model is illustrated in a Vietnamese culture course at a private university in Vietnam. This course is only the first testing phase of this model, which only presents the implementation and initial student feedback. More empirical research is needed to test the validity of this model.

The introduction of this original model is important in higher education. The authors acknowledge that many other theoretical frameworks or Bloom's taxonomy itself perform a fundamental role in the design of instructional activities. However, we believe that our body is the vehicle for us to enter the world. What the teacher teaches is what the teacher thinks is right. Yet, it is the students with their bodies and minds that enable them to enter what the teacher teaches. Perception, therefore, is a combination of the mind and body.

The article is structured in several sections. The first section discusses education as a means for sustainable development. Increasing students' understanding of intercultural diversity is essential for global citizenship, and this is outlined in the second section. The Vietnamese Culture course (internal code VNC104) is introduced in the section that follows to illustrate the expected course outcomes that include students' understanding of cultural diversity. Bloom's taxonomy and embodiment are introduced later to facilitate the argument about the nexus of the body and the mind. The rest of the paper shows the authors' experiences in conducting the VNC104 course by using the integrated model between Bloom's taxonomy and embodied learning and teaching approaches.

Education for sustainable development

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2015) developed Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) with 10 targets that promote education for all so that everyone can achieve an education that can be suited for their global citizenship. Target 4.7 in SDG4 emphasizes that every learner is able to learn the knowledge and skills for them to develop sustainably. These sets of knowledge and skills allow them to lead a healthy lifestyle, respect human rights and gender equality, and value the culture of peace. They

should also learn how to appreciate cultural diversity as cultural understanding and sympathy can significantly contribute to sustainable development for society and individuals. It is the ability to live together with others peacefully and sustainably. UNESCO also proposes three means to implement these targets one of which is to create effective learning environments with adequate facilities for learning. The authors of this paper further argue that such effective learning environments should allow for an understanding and appreciation of culture diversity to happen.

An effective learning environment should encompass spaces for students to learn how to understand and value intercultural diversity (see Murray, 2016). It is sometimes considered an added value to lessons that do not necessarily cover cultural issues. In culture courses, of course, this value should be highlighted through foreign student exchange programs, overseas learning experiences, or a course per se. What matters to education for sustainable development is students' ability to comprehend similarities, differences, and meanings of culture rituals and practices among cultures. Respect for those differences, as such, can be maintained (Guo & Jamal, 2007). The authors of this paper keep arguing further that respect for differences among multiple cultures is important, but it is similarly important to understand, appreciate, and even embed in these cultural differences. The meaning of this cultural embeddedness is not to change oneself, but to enable one to act like one of the cultural groups with proper understanding and appreciation of the similarities and differences. We are our culture. We don't simply have a culture in us. This is the primary argument we would like to formulate in this section so that we can advance an understanding of education as a means for sustainable growth. Only when students are able to culturally act like others (as such a culture is embedded in them). This is why intercultural diversity and understanding of this issue matters.

The body as the means to appreciate intercultural diversity

O'Reilly, Williams, and Barsade (1998) described diversity as a characteristic of being multiple, different and possibly similar at the same time, and divergent. This feature is reflected and embedded in us, our actions and behavior, thoughts, objects that we use, and even instructional activities. Human beings are never the same. Cultures are never the same either. As a result, interactions that happen across cultures may result in intercultural diversity.

From several perspectives, culture is defined differently from diverse perspectives. Leininger (1995) described cultures as transmitted values, beliefs, and customs that guide thinking, decisions, and actions in patterned ways. According to Pauwels et al. (1997), culture is an integral component of how individuals interact socially and live in groups. Culture is shared by members of a social group and is transmitted among various generations. In other words, culture is the preservation and dissemination of knowledge about a nation's past and accomplishments (Papademetre & Scarino, 2000, p. 33). It is vital to understand that cultures evolve when living conditions alter due to two dynamic components of culture including knowledge and behavior. The interaction of one culture with those of other groups, and the nature and applications of a language are the other two variables that contribute to the dynamism of cultures.

According to Brick (1991), learning a language encompasses acquiring a culture, and vice versa. Hence, understanding cultures is of paramount significance in the teaching and learning processes. Corbett (2003) stated that the intercultural approach is suggested for culture education since it facilitates learners to be diplomatic and are able to view different cultures from a perspective of informed comprehension. In the same vein, English language learners are characterized as intercultural speakers who love learning about and establishing relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds, while not having received formal training for that reason (Soler & Jorda, 2007). Similarly, Baker (2012) stated that people become more conscious of the multi-voiced nature of cultural categorization as a result of the diversity and complexity of many local and national cultural groupings.

From these points, the authors of this paper argue that culture is reflected in how we live our lives in accordance with norms that others follow. We do as what others do. Therefore, our body becomes the means for us to enter a culture.

Vietnamese culture course (VNC104): A move towards intercultural diversity within the understanding of one culture

Intercultural education has won immense popularity in the process of teaching and learning English. Thus, an English course named Vietnamese Culture (VNC104), which is integrated with intercultural topics, is offered to English-majored students at a private university. This course is designed to give students a thorough comprehension of the roots, dimensions, origins, and characteristics of Vietnamese culture. It focuses on how Vietnamese culture is connected to the lives of Vietnamese citizens in the digital age as well as the numerous cultural components that are found in social structures namely belief systems, literature, arts, and customs. By taking this course, students are able to comprehend the foundations and dimensions of Vietnamese culture. Additionally, learners are capable of explaining Vietnam's history and the change of Vietnamese culture over the different historical periods. Besides, they can analyze cultural phenomena. Also, this course helps students evaluate cultural differences from a cultural perspective, aesthetic creation, and thriving for success in the globalization context. Furthermore, those who get involved in this course tend to develop essential skills in building or constructing a typical product reflecting cultural aspects. Last but not least, students can have a professional attitude, critical thinking, and teamwork.

Embodied cognition is applied in the lesson about cuisine. The lecturer taught students how to use their sensory perceptions to understand their embeddedness in the world by using objects and their relations to the surrounding environment, colors, sounds, flavors, and tastes. The lecturer chaired group discussions that generated new knowledge. Meanwhile, students used their bodies as the vehicle to make sense of the world by participating in team-building activities that nurtured their team working spirit, collaboration, and discipline. These activities were aimed to bring about fun and excitement in learning.

When the mind learns: Bloom's taxonomy

Bloom's taxonomy was revised by Krathwohl in 2002. Three overlapping categories of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes (KSA) are included in Bloom's taxonomy: cognitive, psychomotor, and emotional. The taxonomy reflects various types of intellectual skills and abilities qualitatively. It is divided into low-order thinking and high-order thinking. At the low-order level, remembering is the broad and fundamental cognitive aspect that allows learners to begin their cognitive processes at a higher level. Understanding is the next level that implies one's capability to comprehend and utilize the information when receiving the information. The next level is applying. It requires students to demonstrate their ability to use newly learned skills to address problems. Aviles (1999) said that applying allows information to be used in new circumstances. At the high-order thinking level, analysis is supposed to divide a whole into its component pieces and detect relationships between them, whereas synthesis brings the component parts to create a pattern or structure that did not exist before. According to Aviles (1999), the prior levels of understanding, application, analysis, and application of information will be required for a task that includes synthesis. Bloom's taxonomy also entails making decisions about the worth of a subject.

The development and activation of the mind allows them to remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create knowledge for application and use in real life. In other words, Bloom's taxonomy speaks about the mind that puts down the stepping stone for students to learn. However, students are supposed to learn through their cognitive mechanism, which can be developed through teaching approaches, lesson contents, and their interactions with others in the classroom (see Metlevskiene, 2011; Murray, 2016; Nguyen, 2010; Nguyen & Phung, 2021). The engagement of the whole body and mind in the lesson and learning spaces with others ignites their cognition. In this sense, the body plays an equally important role in learning.

When the body acts to learn: Embodied learning

According to Metlevskiene (2011) and Dall'Alba and Barnacle (2015), curricula and courses that focus on what and how students learn theoretical knowledge and skills without relating them to specific contexts in real life can cause trouble to students when they later enter professional environments. This problem is caused by several reasons. First, what students learn from textbooks that have been published before they actually enter the working environment. The world keeps changing. A very good textbook can depict time ahead with changes, but most remain theoretical and fundamental and are unable to provide descriptions and instructions on exact situations for students to deal with (Nguyen & Thach, 2022). Decontextualized knowledge cannot be easily absorbed or become useful for students' future careers. Second, what students learn should be embodied as it is their own knowledge for use. The way they can absorb the knowledge which is embodied is through the embeddedness of their bodies in the world.

Their bodies allow them to cognitively perform functional roles in processing information, thus enabling their mental operations to be formed under the mutual exercise of neurological/mental/cognitive processes, body

reactions, and environments (Clark, 2008). In this sense, students can only learn and understand knowledge by embodying it in their embeddedness in a real environment. Third, we can always experience an extension of our bodies through the interconnection between our bodies and the world. As Heidegger (1962) pointed out in an example of pointing out our finger, we do not simply stop our action of the finger pointing at our fingertip but rather, it stretches to a particular action we mean with someone. Perception, action, and the body are interconnected in this sense. Fourth, Merleau-Ponty (1968) went on by discussing double belongingness when we are connected to other people and the world. When we touch something, he described, we perceive that our hand touches an object. The object is perceived by our perception of our hand touching, giving us some meanings about the object. As such, our perception, which is shaped and influenced by cultural norms, is connected to the world.

Our bodies allow us to embody our perception, forming specific relationships between us and the world and between us and our culture. Without the body, we couldn't have any place to perceive the world. We are our lived bodies that are already enmeshed in the world and cultural practices on the one hand, but that are able to interact and communicate with the world with our intentions on the other. As perceivers with lived bodies, we know the world, perceiving it as it is in our perception. At the same time, we know what we have known. We become the object of our perception as well. We can touch, see, feel, and perceive and at the same time, we are also touched, seen, felt, and perceived (Merleau-Ponty, 1968).

The discussion on embodied knowledge enables the authors to conclude that any lesson must not be decontextualized. It must be able to replicate real-life situations that abide by cultural norms as much as possible. Teaching activities must allow for students' embodied engagement in learning. Their senses of hearing, touching, sight, taste, and smell must be exercised through the use of diverse and interesting activities so that their perception can be increased and improved. There must be teaching aids that are referred to in the textbook and lesson that can encourage students to experience their learning through the extension of their bodies to these objects. As we are both perceivers and objects of our perceptions, there should be activities that motivate them to reflect on their learning processes with their friends. Interacting with others, therefore, becomes essential. Such issues as bodily engagement, task integration, use of objects and teaching aids, and a learning environment that accords with cultural practices are important in allowing for embodied learning to happen.

Then some questions arise. How do students perceive? What processes are involved in forming their perception of a lesson? Here, Bloom's taxonomy can be well combined with embodied learning.

Embodied cognitive processes in the culture course VNC104

Bloom et al. (2001) described the 6 levels of cognition that are divided into low-order and high-order thinking skills. When this taxonomy is integrated with embodied learning, we arrived at the following steps to facilitate embodied cognition. Preparation includes some cultural norms, lesson material, teaching aids that can create

chances for students to activate their senses and bodily movements, classroom environment, types of students, and their personal traits and levels of knowledge. Let's take an example from the lesson about Vietnamese cuisine in the Mekong Delta. Teaching aids should include ingredients for cooking particular dishes, spices, herbs, and utensils.

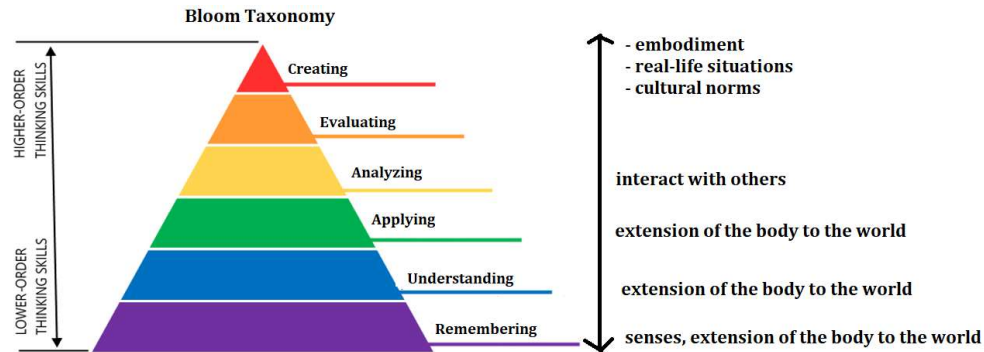


Figure 1: Embodied cognition

Implementation of the embodied cognitive framework

This proposed framework can be used in a traditional classroom in any subject. In this paper, the authors present an example that took place in a student exchange program on a Vietnamese culture course. This program offered students between two universities to share their knowledge about cultural issues. This program was designed to meet 5 program learning outcomes (PLO):

- PLO1: Show national pride,
- PLO2: Work in groups effectively
- PLO3: Demonstrate professional behaviors
- PLO4: Be mentally and physically strong
- PLO5: Understand cultural literacy

These PLOs were interpreted through the deployment of the lesson objectives (LOs) as follows:

- Introduce some beautiful parts of Vietnamese culture for students to be proud of the nation (PLO1, PLO5)
- Create conditions for students of the two universities to get to know each other, learn from and with each other, and construct knowledge (PLO2, PLO3, PLO5)
- Enable students to participate in an embodied social constructivist class, breaking the traditional classroom model (PLO2, PLO3, PLO5)
- Enhance students' communicative and team-working skills in an intercultural environment (PLO3, PLO4, PLO5)
- Develop students' and lecturers' professional knowledge and relationships (PLO4, PLO5s)
- Promote cooperation, friendship, and mutual understanding between the two universities (PLO5, PLO6)

The topic of the lesson was food and cuisine in the Mekong Delta. It was extracted from a chapter in the

textbook of the course on Vietnamese culture. There were three main parts of the program: welcoming, lesson, and teambuilding activities. The lesson plan is described below.

Lesson Plan: The Power Of The Senses

Lesson Objectives:

At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- use their prior knowledge to construct new knowledge of a specific theme relating to Vietnamese cuisine and typical traditional dishes, particularly in the Mekong Delta
- gain valuable experience of working with new people,
- develop their confidence in using their English to communicate with new people.

Table 1: The Lesson Plan

Time	Lesson details	Lecturer's activities	Students' activities	Embodied cognitive approach
9:30-9:40	Warm-up			
9:40–10:00	<p>Activity 1: Powerful senses (guess names of the food and spices)</p> <p>Instructions: One member of each team is asked to smell/taste/touch the food while their eyes are covered with a blindfold, then write the name of the ingredients that local people in the Mekong Delta often use in their daily dishes. The students write their answers in a sheet of paper. There are 10 turns for 10 different members.</p> <p>Points: 02 correct answers = 01 point</p> <p>List of food and ingredients:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fish sauce 2. curry powder 3. salted bean curd 4. palm sugar 5. salt 6. cooked rice 7. salted lime 8. coconut milk 9. vinegar 10. rice wine for cooking 11. chicken curry 12. lime leaves <p>At the end of the game, the lecturer provides students with more knowledge about the main types of spices and asks the students to explore the origins of these spices by looking up the information on the internet and in the textbook. Two groups will be chosen to present the information.</p>	<p>Give instructions</p> <p>Ask two teachers/students to come on stage to help with the demonstration</p> <p>Demonstrate the game</p> <p>Manage the game</p> <p>Check correct answers and give points</p> <p>Comment on their answers</p>	<p>Work in groups</p> <p>Nominate a person to name the food/spices</p> <p>Look up the information on the origin of the spices in the internet</p> <p>Select a person to present the information</p>	<p>Use of the senses</p>

10:00-10:15	<p>Activity 2: Powerful senses of sight and taste</p> <p>Step 1: (5 minutes) Instruction: Each group will be given pictures of different local vegetables, and are asked to write down their names in 90 seconds. The winner is the fastest with the correct answers.</p> <p>Points: 02 correct answers = 01 point List of the suggested vegetables (these are the local vegetables that the people often eat in their main dishes; their names are written in the Vietnamese language)</p> <p>Step 2: (5 minutes) For every type of the vegetables, students are asked to name one dish that contains the vegetable. The winner is the fastest with the correct answers.</p>	<p>Give instructions</p> <p>Ask 02 teachers/students to come on stage to help with the demonstration</p> <p>Demonstrate the game</p> <p>Manage the game</p> <p>Announce the winner</p> <p>Comment on their answers</p> <p>Make links to the next activity</p>	<p>Participate in the activity</p> <p>Respond to the pictures</p>	<p>Bodily movements, interactions with friends, use of the senses</p>
10:15–10:55	<p>Activity 3: Discussions and Presentations</p> <p>Step 1: 15 minutes Instructions: in teams, students will be given a basket of vegetables and are asked to think about a dish that contains/uses the vegetables given to present the dish (Suggestions: the origin of the vegetables, the cultural value of the dish, and the reason for having it)</p> <p>Step 2: 20 minutes Instructions: within 02 minutes, 02 members of each team will present the answer to the question, then each team will vote the answers that they like the most. (Cards to vote with be prepared beforehand.)</p> <p>Step 3: 5 minutes A conclusion on the gastronomical philosophies that underpin the cuisine in the Mekong Delta is provided by the lecturer</p>	<p>- Give instructions</p> <p>- Manage the activity</p> <p>- Go around and support all the teams</p> <p>- Give comments and conclusions</p>	<p>Students have to use a laptop and show slides/pictures</p>	<p>Verbal communication, interactions with friends, use of the senses</p>
10:55-11:00	<p>Wrap up, and take photos</p> <p>Questions and answers</p>	<p>Respond to the students' questions</p>	<p>Raise questions</p>	
Afternoon	Team-building activities			<p>Corporeal movement and teamwork</p>

Students' feedback on VNC104 (Vietnamese Culture)

At the end of the program, the 70 attendee students were given an online form to evaluate. The primary objective of the form was to let the lecturer and student exchange program organizers be reflected on the (in)effectiveness of their attempts to use the embodied cognition model. The result is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Students' Feedback on VNC104

No.	Questions	Students' evaluation
1	The match of the learning activities with your expectation	
	Very appropriate	57/70
	Appropriate	12/70
	Neutral	1/70
2	The effectiveness of organization and logistics	
	Very effective	60/70
	Effective	10/70
	Neutral	0/70
3	The usefulness of the program	
	Very useful	60/70
	Useful	10/70
	Neutral	0/70
4	Your overall satisfaction with the program	
	Very satisfied	55/70
	Satisfied	14/70
	Neutral	01/70
5	The interactions among the attendees	
	Very good	63/70
	Good	07/70
	Neutral	0/70
6	Aspects of the program you were interested in	
	The staff and lecturers were supportive, knowledgeable, and friendly.	16/70
	Team-building activities	18/70
	Interactions with the lecturers and friends	29/70
	New, useful, and interesting knowledge	50/70
	Teamwork	06/70
	The positive and friendly rapport with friends from the other university	21/70
	Knowledge about food in the region	22/70
	The interesting lesson taught by the lecturer	07/70
	Music show	20/70
	The diverse and interesting teaching activities	22/70
	Play and study at the same time	11/70
	The hospitality of the host	20/70
	Food at FPT University's canteen	03/70
	Impression with FPT University's state-of-the-art architecture and facilities	05/70
	Tea break	12/70
	The puzzle of culture	1/70
	Backdrops of the classroom	30/70
	The energy and enthusiasm of the lecturers and fellow friends	30/70
	Changing personal attitudes about styles of learning	15/70
7	Your expectation to join another program similar to this one in the future	70/70
	Topics you want to study (with open-ended questions)	10/70
	+ The local history	20/70
	+ Traditional clothes	10/70
	+ Vietnamese culture and custom	20/70
	+ Vietnamese people's psychology during wartime	5/70
	+ FPT University's organizational culture	12/70
	+ Tourism in the Mekong Delta	22/70

The majority of students thought the lesson's learning activities matched their expectations. Of 70 students, 57 believed it to be appropriate, and most stated their enjoyment of the course. Many students said the lesson was both valuable and effective in terms of the structure, logistics, and usefulness of the program. Question 6 explored the various aspects of embodied learning. The results of this question show that embodied cognition includes new knowledge that is formed by their encounters with others and teaching aids. It also entails the administration and logistic support and learning amenities that were arranged before and during the lesson. Bodily activities such as team-building games, music shows, and teamwork movements also add to the students' embodied cognition. Tangible objects such as classroom decorations, food and spices, Intangible objects (staff and friends' hospitality and the energetic atmosphere in the class) that stand as equipment for learning are also contributive to developing the students' embodied cognition.

An open-ended question in the evaluation form allowed them to express their thought over the lesson. Some stated that they felt that they were able to understand the philosophy of cuisine better. For example, a student said:

Learning is really fun. I was able to interact with my friends, and we used our senses to activate our learning. We smelled the spices, heard our friends' touches of the spices to guess what they were, and moved. It was never boring!

The way this student learned includes certain aspects of feelings and emotions. He further stated that his senses, bodily movements, and interactions with others and things enabled him to understand the philosophies of using the spices in a particular dish before he could remember the names of the spices in English. In this vein, his remembering appeared after his understanding. This is why Bloom's hierarchical levels of cognition does not always come in order. One's cognition is often enforced by the use of their embodied engagement in the verbal interactions and corporeal movements. Similarly, another student expressed:

I was amazed at how the lecturer taught us! She was very engaging. She asked us to work in groups. Working in groups is normal, and this is what we do almost every day. But here, our group had to be always active: running to pick up the right spices after one of us smelled them. We also had to quickly discussed the secret behind the spices that went accordingly with a dish. I think we could analyze the underpinning secrets of cooking in terms of the country's geographical features better than before!

Like the student referred to earlier in this section, he used some expressive words to show his positive feeling when participating in the class activities ("amazed", "engaging", and "better"). It can be concluded that students' cognition is a felt dimension that can contribute to their learning processes. This quote also shows that the students' interactions with others, bodily engagement, and use of their senses in the teaching activities allowed them to move to the level of analyzing after those of remembering and understanding. It is reasonable because sometimes, students come to class with their prior knowledge that can contribute to their ability to analyze, evaluate, or even create a certain piece of the lesson content (e.g. in this case, their knowledge of the spices and cooking techniques). What can further be improved is to allow them to use their prior knowledge to

develop other aspects of the lesson. These aspects can well be improved by encouraging them to use their embodied cognition to immerse themselves in exploring. Once they have been able to lead their own learning, they can develop their understanding of intercultural diversity. For instance, that student continued to say:

We interacted with other students coming from different classes and even from a different university. They told us very different things about food and cooking styles in their families. Now, I know that sausages can be made of beef. Lime leaves could be used to increase the flavor of chicken and even rats! That's funny!

His verbal communication with his friends in group work and use of his senses enabled him to further develop his prior knowledge, letting this student achieve one of the outcomes of the lesson. In addition, he began to understand that food in the same region can be different. His understanding initially dismantled his bias about “weird cooking styles” that he had observed before. Other students similarly expressed their intercultural diversity by interacting with others and joined bodily activities. Some said that they were able to “know that culture has its sub-culture”, “there is nothing wrong to eat rats”, or “tumeric can be used to whiten facial skin and add color to food at the same time”. Many of them expressed that such an understanding allowed them to realize that there are always differences in the way people interpret and experience culture. In other words, culture is inside them. This understanding can only be developed and nurtured when amenities for learning are provided adequately. These may include administrative work support, teaching aids, spaces for teamwork activities, and lecturers’ open attitudes towards making changes from traditional teaching methods into innovative approaches. A student told us:

We are grateful that it [the student exchange program] happened. We learned a lot indeed. Learning happens beyond the walls of the classroom. We were with our friends, playing and studying at the same time.

This student pointed out her excitement to try a new way of locating herself in a new ambience (“beyond the walls of the classroom”). Learning is, in this sense, experienced and initiated to happen in a geographical locale. The experience of being located in a geographical position is encountered through the students’ interactions with friends and bodily activities. Being in a place where learning happens does not mean that students are confined in a geographical place but rather, how such a space influences the negotiation of their sense-making of that place with others for learning purposes.

Intercultural diversity can be more easily learned when students understand that cultures always include differences that can be neither wrong nor inappropriate. Such an understanding can be formed when they have a chance to listen to others and participate in bodily activities that allow them to observe what is done. One student said:

I learned a lot from my friends’ stories about the way their families cooked food at home. My mother does something different but in the end, it is what we eat. It isn’t what other people think we have to eat. I mean my friends explained what they eat means to them. It’s more than the food itself.

Another student added:

Yeah, somehow it is about our understanding and sympathy. Cultures are always different, but understanding that cultures are different requires us to be sympathetic. We need to show our respect to the different ways of cooking and consuming food as they are tied to our own cultural practices and beliefs. We are all different!

This student showed her evaluation of cultural differences through her interactions with her friends through group work, which were intensified by her active engagement in the in-class and team-building bodily activities that included the use of her senses at the same time. Her understanding of and respect towards intercultural diversity were formed and developed by her sympathy for cultural differences. Therefore, the authors of this paper, at this early stage, can confirm that embodied cognitive teaching approaches can cultivate and enhance understanding of intercultural diversity.

Conclusion

This paper attempted to showcase the embodied cognitive teaching approach that combines Bloom's taxonomy with an embodiment viewpoint. This model was applied in a Vietnamese culture course at a private university in Vietnam through a student exchange program. This original model of embodied cognition emphasizes the importance of Bloom's taxonomy in teaching activities and methodologies on the one hand but highlights the significant intensification of embodied cognition when combined with this taxonomy on the other. The authors of this paper believed that we are our bodies, which enable us to interpret and experience the world to form new knowledge for ourselves. Without the body, we would become mere objects existing in the world to be filled with bunches of information provided by teachers. No active learning could be allowed to happen. In contrast, the body with its powerful senses, the exercise of physical and corporeal abilities, and the human nature of interacting with others encourage us to absorb and form new knowledge for ourselves.

Students' embodied cognition allows them to comprehend cultural differences and respect intercultural diversity which can later shape their global citizenship. In this sense, the qualities of global citizenship can be acquired through the six levels in Bloom's taxonomy that students do not always go from one to another in order. Their cognition, which is said to reside in their minds, can be developed and intensified by their active immersion in the world with others and objects. Their immersion in the world can be enacted by their corporeal engagement with other friends, lecturers, and teaching and learning facilities through verbal communication, uses of their senses, participation in bodily activities. Their engagement in the learning environment is always emotional. It is the felt dimension of embodied cognition. It is always geographically experienced when the meaning of spaces is made and negotiated through students' encounter with others in corporeal activities.

In a nutshell, students' bodies and minds allow them to construct new knowledge about intercultural diversity by themselves and for themselves.

Recommendations

Future research can be conducted by obtaining individual students and teachers' perspectives to examine the reliability and validity of this integrated model. Furthermore, future studies can be done in other areas to gain deep insights into the model's effectiveness.

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