



Pupils in Lower Secondary Schools in Central Vietnam Improve their Empathy towards Local People and Perception of Traditional Craft Village Preservation through Project-based Learning

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In this presentation...

- Foundation of the study
- Study questions
- Study context
- Research instruments
- Findings
- Why?
- Conclusion



Foundation of the study: Life skills

Critical thinking

problem solving

Decision making

information gathering

Interpersonal

teamwork

Empathy

Communication

self-evaluation

conflict management

Coping and self management

stress management

coping with emotions

(WHO, 1997)

Foundation of the study

Context of life skills education in Vietnam

- 1980: Campaign “Friendly schools, active students”
 - Focus on innovation in pedagogy
 - Focus on teaching life skills
- 2010: Guidelines on teacher professional development on teaching life skills
- Problems in teaching life skills
 - how to integrate in curriculum?
 - how to teach?
 - more theory than practice experience

Does teaching life skills need an innovative pedagogy?



Study context

UNESCO funded learning project “**Study on the traditional craft villages in Quang Nam province, Vietnam**”

- 30 students in Nguyen Du and Chu Van An LSS
- study on 3 traditional craft villages
- analyze information
- write reports
- paint pictures



Study questions

1. Does the learning project “study on the traditional craft villages” help the students develop the empathy towards the local people?
2. Does the learning project “study on the traditional craft villages” increase the perception of preserving the traditional craft villages?

Research instruments

First survey and follow up survey:

- Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) (Davis, 1980): a list of 28 questions
 - perspective taking (PT)
 - empathic concern (EC)
 - personal distress (PD)
 - fantasy (F)

This study use 3 PT and 1 PD

- Open questions
- Interview



Empathy of students towards local people

- IRI questions

Instruments	Nguyen Du LSS (Group1) Mean	Chu Van An LSS (Group2) Mean
IRI first survey	3	3.9
IRI follow up survey	3.3	3.7

Dependent t-test:

Nguyen Du LSS: $0.166 > 0.01$;

Chu Van An LSS: $0.162 > 0.01$

Findings: Assumptions

- There is a difference in empathy level of the students in the two schools.



- Living conditions and family background of students in the two schools influence their empathy level.



Findings: Assumptions

- The difference on IRI result before and after the learning project is not significant.



- The intervention (the learning project) is not significant;
- The IRI survey is not an ideal research instruments;
- The limited number of selected IRI questions cannot reflect the empathy;
- Improving empathy is a process.

Findings:

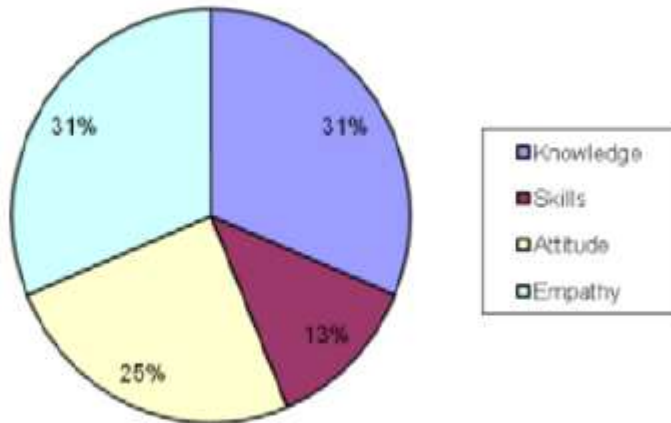
Insights about the learning project

- Open questions: Insights about the learning project
- Answers are categorized into 4 aspects:
 - Knowledge
 - Skills
 - Attitude/Feelings
 - Empathy

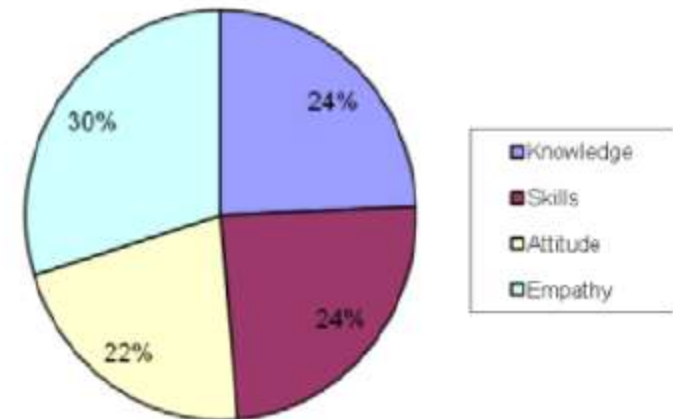


Findings: Insights about the learning project

Nguyen Du LSS



Chu Van An LSS



Findings: Thoughts

- **Perspective Taking**

*“The picture of the labor people **touched my heart**. I thought to myself that I **had been very indifferent**. I often eat noodle but never pictured how **tough and difficult** the noodles are made. Sometimes when I didn’t finish my noodle, I threw the leftover away. Now I feel this action was like **to stampede on the labor of the working people**. (Group1, Student 1).*

*“I think kneading dough is the most difficult step in making noodle. If my parents make noodles, I will **help them knead dough**” (Group 2, Student 2).*

- **Empathic concern**

*“Since I have participated in the project, I have **felt very sorry** for the people who put so much effort and work to make a mat. However, the labor is not satisfactorily compensated. (a mat is only 45,000 VND)” (Group 2, Student 3).*

*“I am aware that I should **love the surrounding people, grateful for the people** who make the things because they put a lot of time, effort and sweat to make this.” (Group 2, Student 2);*

*“Through these memories, I **love more the noodle making and respect the noodle**”. (Group 1, Student 2)”*

Perception on preserving the traditional craft villages

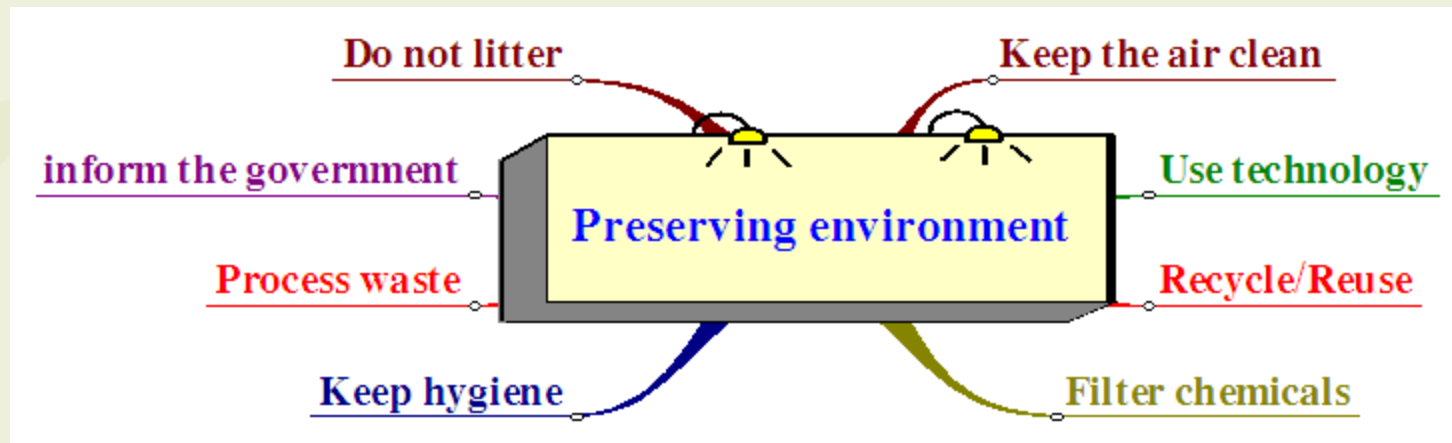
Instruments	Nguyen Du LSS	Chu Van An LSS
	Mean	Mean
First survey	1.0	2.4
Follow up survey	1.9	2.3



Findings 2:

Measures of preserving the environment

Instruments	Nguyen Du LSS Mean	Chu Van An LSS Mean
First survey	1.0	2.0
Follow up survey	1.6	2.4



Why?

- PBL provides the environment for students
- interact
- experience
- reflect
- grow up



Conclusion

- **IRI may not be an ideal instrument to examine the empathy in this case.**
 - ➔ Chapin Social Insight Test (Chapin) and the Rating Scale (Dymond) could be an option
- **Before the study, the empathy of students of Nguyen Du LSS is higher than in Chu Van An LSS.**
 - ➔ Living condition influence the empathy of students

Conclusion

- **Empathy of the students are perceived as important reflection as the other aspects (Knowledge, Skills, Attitude)**
- **The students are more highly aware of preserving the traditional craft villages and the environment.**



PBL positively influences not only knowledge, skills and attitudes of students, but also the empathy and self-awareness.

NEED TO HAVE FURTHER RESEARCH

- “society is a number of people held together because they are working along **common lines, in a common spirit, and with reference to common aims.** The common needs and aims demand a growing **interchange of thought and growing unity of sympathetic feeling”**
(Dewey, 2010)



John Dewey



THANK YOU