

THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

TRIEU THI THUY LOAN

**CULTURAL MISTAKES MADE BY STUDENTS FROM
A HIGH SCHOOL IN KIM XUYEN - TUYEN QUANG:
REALITIES AND OPINIONS**

**(Những lỗi thuộc về văn hóa của học sinh THPT
ở Kim Xuyên - Tuyên Quang: thực tế và ý kiến)**

M.A THESIS

Field: English Linguistics

Code: 8220201

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(APPLICATION ORIENTATION)**

Field: English Linguistics

Code: 8220201

Instructor: Dr. Nguyen Trong Du

Thai Nguyen, 2019

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby certify my authority of the study project report entitled *“Cultural mistakes made by students from a high school in Kim Xuyen – Tuyen Quang: realities and opinions”* is the result of my own research for the Degree of Master in English Language. Except where the reference is indicated, no other person’s work has been used without due acknowledgement in the text of the thesis.

Approved by
SUPERVISOR

Thai Nguyen, 2019
Researcher’s signature

Dr. Nguyen Trong Du

Trieu Thi Thuy Loan

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I also wish to give my heartfelt thanks to my family members, my closed friends who I have never enough words to express my great gratitude for their encouragement and inspiration.

Eventually, the study has been completed to the best of my knowledge; however, mistakes and shortcomings are unavoidable. Therefore, I look forward to receiving comments and suggestions from readers for the perfection of the course work.

ABSTRACT

In recently years, it is important for English teachers to integrate culture so as to raise the awareness of their students about the differences between cultures when they want to use English to communicate with foreigners. In this study, the researcher aimed to find out some of the so-called cultural mistakes made by students in a high school in Kim Xuyen. It mainly explores the mistakes related to greetings, addressing the interlocutors, or responding to those acts. In order to achieve the objectives, the researcher uses both quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect the data: Questionnaires and Interviews. The participants were five teachers and 150 students in different classes at Kim Xuyen High School. The results show that most students and even teachers speak English in a very Vietnamese way, which is claimed by an American teacher to be a type of cultural mistakes. However, the results also reveal that those mistakes may not be avoidable because English is spoken within the context of Vietnamese culture. This study is a modest contribution for teachers who wish to improve their attitudes towards the mistakes of students.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FIG:	Focus interviews group
EL:	English language
Ss:	Students

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale:

Vietnam has been on the way of strong development and increased integration in all respects including the comprehensive and profound reform in education, especially in language teaching and learning. The active participation of Vietnam in regional and international associations and the recent adoption of market economy have stimulated the importance of English as an international language in the country (Le & Barnard, 2009). English language has attracted significant consideration from wide range of Vietnamese communities. Vietnamese government has stimulated a huge project of language teaching and learning called the National Foreign Language Projects with impressive determination to improve the English education in the nation wide scale till 2025.

However, the practice of teaching and learning English in mountainous areas is facing with lots of difficulties. I am teaching English at a high school in Kim Xuyen - Tuyen Quang where seventy - five percent of the students are ethnic minorities and have low living standard, and I recognize that they often make a number of mistakes, especially ones related to the appropriate use of language items real-life conversations. From my observation, most of those mistakes are caused by the impact of Vietnamese culture.

Learning a language is learning a new culture. In order to communicate successfully, learning the language aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, listening, or speaking is not enough; it is important to learn the cultural factors of that language. Sometimes, learners speak English with correct pronunciation but they are still misunderstood or the conversation between them and native speakers is not smooth because they use inappropriate language in specific contexts.

The research is based on some situations within the particular area of language education for communicating across culture. Language and culture are inseparable and culture is influential on all levels of communication, from forming the context for communication to the culture content embedded in linguistic units (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1999, 2000). Dan Hauer has made a series of videos showing the fact that