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**A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF RESPONSES TO
IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION BY
VIETNAMESE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS**

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to provide an insight into aspects of Vietnamese classroom interaction and teaching practices which are identified as fundamental by language teachers. It examines the responses, among Vietnamese high school teachers, to in-service teacher education using elements of the reflective model to inform the longitudinal research design. The subjects for the study are 15 teachers nominated for an in-service course at the Binh Dinh Department of Education. The focus of this research, the primary data, comprises diaries and questionnaires collected before, during, and after the in-service programme over a period of seven months. Supplementary information, secondary and peripheral data, used to interpret and inform the analysis of primary sources, comprises observation notes, audio diary entries, teacher belief questionnaires and student questionnaires.

Content analysis reveals that teachers are concerned primarily with student response in class, that is, the displays of emotion in relation to the lesson, and student language performance. Performance is conceptualised as accurate reproduction of prescribed texts. In addition, the teachers' reflections foreground the primacy of the teacher-student relationship and the collective orientation of classroom activity. In a culture that does not emphasise trial and adaptation teachers also show a correspondingly low tolerance of ambiguity and a rejection of anything judged to be ad hoc. "Tried and true" methods are preferred. Confidence is cited as a major reason for not attempting new techniques in the classroom pointing to a need for a mentoring relationship between teacher educators and teachers in future in-service programmes. There is a higher than expected rate of reflectivity in diary entries though this is confined chiefly to evaluations of directly observable student behaviour. There are few attempts to probe reasons for performances that fail to meet teacher expectations. The study concludes with a model of the reflective teacher educator process.

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