

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
THE VIETNAM INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

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**LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION  
FOR ETHNIC MINORITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS  
IN NORTHERN MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS OF VIETNAM**

*Major:* THEORY AND HISTORY OF EDUCATION

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# INTRODUCTION

## 1. Reason for choosing the project

1.1. In modern society, it is necessary for people to equip not only knowledge, health, working skills but also moral, aesthetic, humanistic values and particular life skills.

1.2. Through life skills education, elementary school pupils will be equipped knowledge and skills for practicing responsibility for themselves, their family and community; improved ability behave in various situations, etc.

1.3. The development of ethnic minority elementary school pupils is impacted by factors such as living environment, economic situation, habits and customs, etc. It is possible to assert that it is essential to educate life skills for the pupils to cope with challenge and risks in the life.

1.4. There is no detailed instruction document mentioning specific characteristics in life skills education for elementary school pupils in different regions, especially for ethnic minority elementary school pupils

1.5. Field survey result on life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils in Northern Mountainous regions shows that life skills education for pupils were not taken interest by teachers; the education was only to cope with the survey, irregularly and discontinuously thus the education brought not effective result.

1.6. Nature and Society, and Science subjects are considered as appropriate subjects in life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils. The life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils in Northern Mountainous regions of Vietnam, however, is not taken interest and the life skills education is not really effectively.

Therefore, we choose the project: “*Life skills education for ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions of Vietnam (through Nature and Society, and Science subjects)*”.

## **2. Purpose**

The project is to suggest solutions in the life skills education for ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions through teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects to stimulate the pupils in initiative learning, improvement of life skills and education quality of life skills through these subjects.

## **3. Objects and subject research**

- *Object research:* Life skills education for elementary school pupils.

- *Subject research:* Relation of factors in the life skills education for ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions of Vietnam through teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects.

## **4. Scientific hypothesis**

If the suggestion of education measures of life skills for ethnic minority elementary pupils through teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects in compliance with principles of education of life skills, in accordance with characteristics of the subjects and cultural natures of ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions is approved, these measures will positively impact on teaching the subjects and results on the life skills education for pupils.

## **5. Research tasks**

The project focuses on studying on theoretical basis of life skills education for elementary pupils; surveying and analyzing actual status of the life skills education and the process of life skills education for ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions. Thence, we will propose basic education measures of life skills for the pupils through teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects; conduct pedagogical experiments to test scientific hypothesis of the dissertation.

## **6. Research scope**

- About research content: We focus on researching ethnic minority elementary pupils, the life skills education for the pupils through teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects.

- About research regions: The project survey teachers in 6 provinces: Yen Bai, Thai Nguyen, Ha Giang, Tuyen Quang, Lang Son, Hoa Binh and conduct pedagogical experiments in 03 elementary schools.

### **7. Research method**

Research methods such as document research; field research (observation; survey by questionnaires; interview; specialist; and pedagogical experiments); and mathematical statistical method in education are applied during the research.

### **8. Defended theoretical points**

- Life skills education for elementary pupils in general and for ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions in particular is essential.

- Elementary pupils' Life skills are only formed and practiced through reaction activities and experiences of specific issues related to their daily life.

- Life skills education through teaching Nature and Society, and Science Subjects is appropriate and highly efficient in practicing life skills for ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions by exploiting contents and applying teaching methods.

### **9. New aspects of the dissertation**

- Assessing some factors in living conditions impacting on the life skills and actual education situation of life skills for ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions in Vietnam.

- Suggesting access to the life skills education with new ideas by combining both methods: Exploiting subject contents to the life skills education inherent in specific contexts of ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions in Vietnam, and applying efficient teaching methods in the education.

- Designing two education measures of life skills for ethnic minority elementary pupils in Northern mountainous regions through teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects with both above assess methods.

## CONTENTS

### **Chapter 1: SCIENTIFIC BASIS ON LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION FOR ETHNIC MINORITY ELEMENTARY PUPILS IN NORTHERN MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS THROUGH TEACHING NATURE AND SOCIETY, AND SCIENCE SUBJECTS**

#### **1.1. Overall research history**

##### **1.1.1. Research on life skills and life skills education**

###### *1.1.1.1. In foreign countries*

In the end of the 1960s, the term “Life skills” was mentioned by some practicing psychologists, and then applied researches brought the life skills education into schools such as: In U.S, Gilbert Botvin has released a highly efficient program on life skills education for teenagers who are from 07<sup>th</sup> grade to 09<sup>th</sup> grade (In 1979); In Latin America, a seminar on health education through life skills education in schools was organized (Costa Rica- 1996).... In Asia, programs on life skills education were developed widely by financing of international organizations, especially UNICEF, UNESCO and UNFPA.

In Southeast Asia, education programs related to life skills were held main in the last years of the Twentieth century. The life skills education is considered as a efficient tools in developing ability to choose a healthy lifestyles and to optimization physics, culture and psychology for the youth.

###### *1.1.1.2. In Vietnam*

The term “life skills” has mentioned in Vietnam since 1995 – 1996 through projects of UNICEF. Concept of life skills were clarified and completed in the seminar on “*Education quality and life skills*” combined by UNESCO with the Vietnam Institute of Educational Science in 2003. In 2003 – 2004, the Vietnam Institute of Educational Science collaborated with UNESCO in organization of the research on “*Life skills education in Vietnam*”. Some there were research details and projects related to life skills education in secondary schools and high schools in 2005. In school year 2010 – 2011, Ministry of Education and Training promulgated the official document No. 453/2010/KH-BGDĐT on strengthening the life skills education in every education grade, and the Ministry allowed to publish

documents on life skills education through teaching subjects in elementary schools, secondary schools and high schools.

Apart from researches related to life skills education in general education in Vietnam, some programs, projects and other research documents regarding life skills education in continuing education. Centers for life skills education are established and organized widely.

### **1.1.2. Research on life skills education through teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects**

The life skills education is implemented through subjects in elementary schools of many countries in the world, of which Nature and Society, and Science subjects are selected in the education of life skills. For example, the life skills education is conducted by teaching subjects such as “Research on Society and Environment” (Australia); “Science” (Newzealand); “Social research” (Korean) and “Research on Society and Science” (America).

In Vietnam, researches on life skills education for elementary pupils were not conducted much, of which there are few researches on life skills education for elementary pupils through teaching Nature and Society, and Science Subjects. Up to now, three typical projects on the life skills education for elementary pupils through teaching Nature and Society, and Science Subjects have been: (1) “*Education of healthy lifestyle and life skills education in teaching Nature – Society in Elementary schools*” (Project on training elementary teachers in 2007); (2) “*Integrating life skills education for elementary pupils through Scientific subjects and extracurricular activities*” (Luc Thi Nga – 2009); “*Life skills education through subjects in Elementary schools*” (Ministry of Education and Training – 2010); other projects also mentioned about some general points related to life skills education in elementary schools such as “*Life skills education in Vietnam*” (UNESCO, Hanoi, 2006); “*Materials on life skills education for children with difficult conditions*” (UNESCO, Hanoi, 2006).

#### **\* General assessment and comments:**

##### *In the world:*

- Life skills and life skills education have been taken interest by many researchers as well as social organizers.

- In Education field, life skills have been studied on widely in the world. Life skills education have been conducted by accessing specific issues in many countries all over the world; many subjects research are also various.

- Science subject is chose to access the life skills education in many countries through designing subject and applying effective teaching methods which emphasize interaction, practice and settlement of problems of pupils along with reality; that method brought much success and efficiency.

#### In Vietnam:

Life skills and life skills education have studied on and are being performed in every province nation widely. In general, theoretical basics on life skills, life skills education have formed clearly, however, some issues were not clarified such as:

- Research on each group, each type of life skills to clarify nature, specific characteristics of each type and group of life skills, basic methods to form and practice each group of life skills.

- Education contents and measures of life skills for various education subjects such as pupils in rural areas, in urban areas, in mountainous areas, and ethnic minority pupils, etc.

The assessing and learning about theoretical and actual issues related to life skills and research on life skills education in the world and in Vietnam showed that the research on and learning about life skills education for ethnic minority elementary pupils and basic measures to educate life skills for the pupils through teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects still remain many problems. If these problems are resettled, theoretical and actual issues will be clarified partially.

### **1.2. Life skills and education of life skills**

#### **1.2.1. Life skills**

##### *1.2.1.1. Conception of skill and life skills*

*Skill is subject's ability to do something basing on his/her knowledge, experience to obtain result according to specific criterion, in accordance with doing purpose and condition.*

*Life skills are individuals' abilities to master themselves, to behave to around environment and cope with situations and to effectively settle cases and issues in their life basing on their knowledge, attitude and values.*



### *1.2.1.2. Classification of life skills*

There are many classifications of life skills due to many ways to access and various conceptions of life skills. The life skills not completely separate, there is a closely relation among them to supplement together. In this project, we will mention about the way to classify life skills due to general life skills and life skills inherent in context of ethnic minority elementary pupils.

### **1.2.2. Education of life skills**

#### *1.2.2.1. Education conception of life skills*

*Life skills education is equipping learners with knowledge, attitude, and value, and facilitate for them to practice, experience in reality that helps them to master themselves, to effectively behave, to cope with and effectively settle cases and problems in their life.*

*Life skills education through teaching subjects in schools is organization of teaching activities to learners not only to acquire knowledge and form skills by subjects, but also to practice specific life skills.*

#### *1.2.2.2. Essence and characteristics of life skills education*

a. Life skills education is education with specific purpose, contents, plan and measure: Purpose of life skills education is to help pupils to live successfully and effectively when taking part in daily activities. Thus, life skills education is a long-term and complex process with various contents. Hence, it is needed for life skills education to make plan and contents for different subjects, and then give some specific measures.

b. Life skills education must based on living value education: Life skills education and living value education closely connect together, living value education will make foundation and orient to express attitude and behavior of each individual. It rules over subject's activities, subject's decision in resettlement of problems in daily life. Thence, it is necessary for life skills education to conduct in parallel with living value education, it also abide by principles of living value education.

c. Life skills education is highly complex: Life skills education is not unchanged. Purpose, content and method of life skills education will be changed depending on each space, time, subject and situation.

d. Life skills education is inherence in experience and applying effective teaching methods: Life skills education must provide pupils with

chance to experience and apply acquired knowledge to resettle specific problems in their life. Applying positive teaching methods and techniques not only stimulates pupils' interest, helps the pupils to prove self-study ability, but also facilitate pupils to "learn about study methods", hence, their life skills will be practiced and improved.

#### *1.2.2.3. Principles of education of life skills*

Basing on essences, characteristics of life skills education, through contents of some relevant psychology theories and contents of some projects related to education of life skills, some general and basic principles of life skills education are synthesized as following: (1) ensuring interaction of pupils; (2) Ensuring pupils' experience; (3) Ensuring the schedule; (4) Ensuring to establish and change behavior.

#### *1.2.2.4. Education ways of life skills in elementary schools*

Life skills education in elementary schools is performed by two basic ways: (1) through teaching appropriate subjects; (2) through extracurricular activities.

### **1.3. Teaching Nature and Society, Science and Life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils**

#### **1.3.1. Generalization of Nature and Society, Science subjects**

Nature and Society, Science subjects are to equip pupils with basic knowledge of: body, the way to keep hygiene and prevent from common disease, and accidents; some simple things and phenomenon in nature and in society; metabolism, reproduction of plants and animals; characteristics and application of some substances and materials and power resources in production and in daily life.

#### **1.3.2. Life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils through teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects**

Contents of subjects is friendly with, around living environment, in compliance with natures of ethnic minority elementary pupils facilitates pupils to practice skills such as observation, discussion, assessment, querying, putting a question and expression of their knowledge of things and phenomenon, etc. Hence, teaching Nature and Society, and Science subjects to develop life skills for pupils is completely suitable and can be performed by two ways: exploiting contents of subject and applying it in collaboration with positive teaching methods and measures.

## **1.4. Characteristics of living environment, psychology and study of ethnic minority elementary school pupils in Northern mountainous regions**

### **1.4.1. Characteristics of natural conditions**

Ethnic minority people often live in mountainous areas, midland with severe weather conditions in winter, difficult traffic conditions with heavy rain and floods. Natural conditions not only impact on living, culture, economic and society, but also strongly impact on study and communication of ethnic minority pupils.

### **1.4.2. Cultural and social characteristics**

Northern mountainous regions are residence of many ethnic minorities and a large number of elementary school is ethnic minority group. Living of ethnic minorities in northern mountainous regions is very difficult due to harsh living conditions along with agriculture. However, pupils live in diversified cultural environment with specific lifestyle, customs and habits.

### **1.4.3. Characteristics of communication and psychology**

Ethnic minority elementary school pupils use two languages: mother tongue and Vietnamese, of which mother tongue is used more popular. Pupils' ability to use Vietnamese exist many shortcomings and difficulties.

Sensation, perception of ethnic minority elementary school pupils bring uniqueness inherence in trees, animals, things, phenomenon in nature, however, bring emotional, superficial characteristics; their attention state is unstable when communicating because they are afraid of thinking, brainstorming; their ability to intentionally memorize is slowly formed; they are lack of ability to vividly image.

### **1.4.4. Conditions and quality of study**

Because daily life is still difficult, often deals with hunger and cold, demand and motivation to study in classroom of ethnic minority elementary school pupils is not high. In addition, low socio-economic conditions and difficult study and living conditions in school; quite high dropout and repetition; little and weak local staff and manager team and so on leads to study quality of ethnic minority pupils in this region is generally low.

### **\* General Comments:**

Ethnic minority elementary school pupils have specific characteristics of living conditions, psychology, communication, study and so on. Therefore, during the education of life skills, besides to complying to the general characteristics and principles of education of life skills, life skills education process for ethnic minority elementary school pupils must ensure *the specific principles*, originating from the unique characteristics of the object such as: (1) life skills education must be lively, attractive and create opportunities for many pupils to participate in the education order to stimulate interest in the study in classroom, (2) life skills education must come from the reality and be linked to the reality based on learner's relationships, being suitable for daily life, study, cultural environment and daily communication of pupils, (3) ethnic minority elementary school pupils are often emotional, honest, so in education of life skills, educator must be close, often encourages and creates fair and respectful study environment to establish friendly relationships for pupils.

## **1.5. Real situation of life skills and life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils in northern mountainous region of Vietnam**

### **1.5.1. Survey real situation**

Surveying the real situation aims at collecting, finding information in order to evaluate accurately the ethnic minority elementary school pupils' real situation of life skills in northern mountainous region and accessing the implementation of life skills education at elementary schools in this region.

The survey was conducted for a number of administrators, teachers, and pupils in 6 provinces through questionnaires combined with observations and in-depth interviews. The survey content revolves around understanding the perception and evaluation of teachers on life skills, role of life skills groups for ethnic minority elementary school pupils; Accessing documentation, training programs and implementation of education of life skills.

### **1.5.2. Results of the survey**

Currently, ethnic minority elementary school pupils' life skills in northern mountainous region is only below average. Pupils are often open, proactive to communicate with their familiars but not proactive and timid in communication with strangers; initially, they are conscious to work in group

when teachers request, but they are still passive to raise opinions in group activities although they know listen and respect others' opinions; their ability to express body language is limited; their ability to resolve conflicts and to say no is at a low level.

In addition, the pupils were aware of their own relationship in their family, but they have not defined their own role to society; their reorganization and assessment on physical and mental changes of themselves are not clear; they have not yet evaluated goals and defined goals for themselves.

For problem-solving skill, pupils initially accept to solve problems but they are still reluctant and obligatory to solve problem, not confident in themselves when making way to solve problem; can offer one suggestion to solve problem but they don't know to analyze the reasons for offering such suggestions without the assistance of teachers or others.

For teacher: The implementation of life skills education has many difficulties and performance is reached only below average. Most teachers had right perception of the necessity of implementing life skills education for pupils, initially accessed to related documents and programs but this access was not regular, continuous and not deeply, not closely to appropriate application for objects in the region. Many teachers also chose to educate life skills through social and scientific subjects; however, implementation result is only achieved at below average. The teachers' implementation has also a lot of difficulties because they have not yet understood well the content and approaches to present life skills education into subjects.

*Chapter 2*  
**MEASURES TO EDUCATE LIFE SKILLS FOR ETHNIC  
MINORITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN NORTHER  
MOUNTAINOUS REGION OF VIETNAM THROUGH NATURAL  
AND SOCIAL, SCIENCE SUBJECTS**

Based on the combination of two approaches: exploitation of content subjects to educate specific life skills which have their own characteristics and institutions, use of positive teaching methods and techniques to educate common life skills under the direction of enhancing interaction and experience, at the same time life skills education through class subjects and out-door activities, we would like to propose measures to educate life skills for ethnic minority elementary school pupils through teaching Natural and Social, Science subjects. Namely:

**2.1. Exploitation subject content and selection of appropriate lessons to educate life skills for ethnic minority elementary school pupils**

**2.1.1. Exploitation of content of life skills education**

***2.1.1.1. Group of life skills on context which have specific characteristics of ethnic minority elementary school pupils***

Natural and Social, Science subjects are the subjects which create favorable conditions for ethnic minority elementary school pupils to practice life skills relating to issues of hygiene, disease prevention and life safety, necessary life skills necessary for ethnic minority elementary school pupils. Concrete contents are as follows:

\* Life skills associated with hygiene issues: Skills to be self-aware and make decision to solve issues of personal care and hygiene, Skills to communicate, express opinions, propagandize health education sanitation in the community; Skills to make decision and select actions, works to clean and protect living environment.

\* Life skills associated with disease prevention: Skills to be self-aware and evaluate the prevention of common diseases of themselves, their families and the community in which they live; skills to be self-aware, analyze the causes, symptoms of common diseases; Skills to make decision to prevent some common disease in the community.

\* Life skills associated with life safety: Skills to deny addictive substance use (alcohol, beer and pipe tobacco, tobacco and so on); Skills to select the actions to ensure safety at home, at school and on the way to school.

#### **2.1.1.2. Group of general life skills**

Due to the difficulty in using common language, shy and lack confidence in communicating, ethnic minority elementary school pupils have limitations in communication skills and other life skills. The survey results show that: the majority of pupils' life skills are only average, in which a number of skills are weak. Therefore, in life skills education, it is necessary to pay attention and train the following life skills:

\* Skill to be confident, active to present and raising problems: be proactive, confident, ardent to speak, contribute opinions in the activities of Natural and Social, Science subjects, have capacity to use appropriate body language to state their point of views, to present problems in a convincing way.

\* Skills to negotiate and manage conflicts: present their view point, restrain their negative emotions to have positive words.

\* Cooperate and teamwork skills: being active, serious, ready to implement and complete study tasks.

\* Communication skills with strangers: being active to greet, open, friendly in the communication to build up the close relationship. However, pupils must keep sustainable attitude, self-control in order to protect themselves to risks which may occur when communicating with this object.

\* Skills to express their opinions to raise their own opinions, to agree or disagree with specific situations.

\* Skills to define their value: determining the important role of themselves when participating in study activities in subjects, so, they are gradually aware of their role in activities of living, daily communication.

\* Skills to be aware of their body: recognizing the evolution and changes their body in term of psychophysiology; identify and assess properly abnormalities when being sick, tired; determine their value to be able to be self-employed.

\* Skills to orientate, review their own behavior: self contact, evaluate their own activities in academic life, living, daily communication relating to lesson content of the subject.

\* Skills to face the issue in a positive way: control their negative emotions, being ready and determined to face and solve problems.

\* Skills to identify and analyze problems: identifying, reviewing, and evaluating their problems, analyzing problems in close relationships to their own to offer resolutions.

\* Skills to seek the help of others: sharing, presenting problems in progress, listening to the opinions of trusted persons to find out or confirm the accuracy of measures to solve problems.

\* Skills to make decision for solving problems: believing in their review and selection to make decisions for some specific issues.

### **2.1.2. Selecting the appropriate lessons in Natural and Social, Science subjects to educate life skills**

The lessons which are appropriate with the implementation of life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils must satisfy three basic conditions as follow: (1) Lesson content must be appropriate with features of lifestyle, study of ethnic minority elementary school pupils, (2) Lesson content must help pupils improve their specific life skills, (3) Lesson content must suit the construction of situation , use of methods and forms to organize teaching positively to develop the general life skills.

For example: teachers can choose lesson 5 "Pulmonary tuberculosis" in the subject: Nature and Society in 3rd grade to perform life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils because: (1) Pulmonary tuberculosis is the disease which ethnic minority inhabitants caught easily it because they have not yet known the way to care, make personal hygiene to prevent, and not go to facilities; (2) This is a lesson that integrates health education content; it involves communication skill, skill to make decision and to select appropriate measures to prevent pulmonary tuberculosis for pupils and those around them; (3) Teachers can completely design situations, study activities associated with the daily life of ethnic minority elementary school pupils to educate communication skill, solving-problem skill for pupils.

Based on this, we have selected 65 lessons of Natural and Social, Science subjects which are able perform life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils.



## **2.2. Using methods and organizational forms of positive teaching to educate life skills**

From determined content of education of life skills, and practical demands and role of using positive teaching approach to educate life skills, we propose measures to educating life skills for ethnic minority elementary school pupils in northern mountainous region in the direction of using combined form of teaching in classroom and outside classroom through some active teaching methods in natural and Social, Science subjects. This measure aims to facilitate student to interact and experience, overcoming the shy in communication, creating motivation, stimulating demand for study in the classroom; exploiting and using teaching media and equipment which are simple and suitable to practical conditions but get high effectiveness. The active teaching methods and forms proposed include: Method to study situations (through water puppetry shows); Observation-combining-group-discussion method; methods to play role; methods to organize study games (speaking contest with topic); Training method.

### **2.2.1. Using the situation study method (through puppetry show)**

*Significance:* When transferring the lessons into situation stories, the issues of daily life are expressed through the puppetry characters which are associated with lifestyle, relationships, culture of ethnic minority elementary school pupils, lesson content will attract pupils' attention and therefore, pupils can easily understand and apply the lessons learned to daily life issues.

*Ways to implement:*

Step 1: Preparation: Building images of character; building situations (situation content and discussion after situation); preparing puppets; Combining the display of situation by puppets with plan lesson. For example: For the lesson: "Pulmonary tuberculosis" (Nature and Society, 3rd grade), teachers can organize for pupils to study situation by puppet show which revolves the story of Pao with symptoms of pulmonary tuberculosis. His father moved him to see a doctor and the conversation between Pao and the doctor helped Pao understand well the causes, effects and treatment of this disease. The discussion after the situation includes: *Which disease did Pao catch? What were the symptoms when Pao caught the disease? What did Pao's family do? What is the cause of the disease? Can this disease be*

*cured? By which way this disease can be infected from person to person?*  
Teacher prepares at least 3 puppets made from material or cover for 3 characters: Pao, Pao's father and the doctor.

Step 2: Description of the situation through puppets and organize study the situation. For example: For the lesson: "Pulmonary tuberculosis" (Nature and Society, 3rd grade), teachers can combine the organization of puppet show to describe the situation and organize discussion according to prepared contents.

Step 3: Review and evaluation after situation study

*Some notes:* Situations to build the story must have plot, the story must be close, linked to pupils' daily life. The preparation of puppets should be simple but have special characteristics to attract pupils. When organizing situation study: teachers should combine group discussions, role play, playing drama, painting and so on.

### **2.2.2. Using observation combining group discussion in classroom**

*Significance:* Use a combination of observation and group discussion method will contribute to improve and train communication skills, cooperative learning ability and teamwork, develop pupils' thinking.

*Way to implement:*

Step 1: Preparation: Determining goals and selecting observation objects; planning for pupils to make observation and group discussions; preparing handout to study/work (if necessary). For example: For the lesson: "Pulmonary tuberculosis" (Nature and Society, 3rd grade), after organizing for pupils study situation by puppet show, teachers can organize for pupils observe and discuss in group about pictures 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 in text book page13 to help: "Pupils know and speak their decision about which they should to do and not do to prevent pulmonary tuberculosis in some specific situations". Teacher can organize for pupils to observe in pairs; report results by using fiches which are stickled on board to compare, comment and learn lesson.

Step 2: Organizing for pupils to observe and make group discussion: Dividing the group and arranging seats for groups; assigning tasks for observation and discussion; Groups implement tasks of discussion; Managing

and supporting groups to work. For example: For organizing for pupils to observe 6 pictures in the lesson "Pulmonary tuberculosis", teachers can divide the class into groups of 2 pupils/1 picture and split the class into six regions, each region will exploit and clarify the content of each picture: *What is the content of this picture? To prevent pulmonary tuberculosis, will you follow or not follow the actions in the picture? Why?*

Step 3: Working in all class. For example: After the groups discuss 6 pictures, teacher demand groups to present discussion results by sticking discussion fiches on the board. Teacher appoints 6 pupils to go to board to read the group working results, compare those results and make comments before class so that all class evaluates and draws conclusions.

*Some notes:* Method of group discussions and observation methods can be used in the combination at many moments such as starting of the lesson to help pupils form new knowledge or after organizing for pupils participate in situation study activities. Objective of observation and group discussion methods should be determined in a particular and obvious way.

### **2.2.3. Organizing game of role play in progress of lessons**

*Significance:* Organizing for pupils to play roles to handle specific situations, creating opportunities for pupils to practice and experience their knowledge, understanding and skills in a safe environment before taking into real situations. It also contributes to the formation and training of communication skills, cooperative working skills, critical thinking f, negotiation skills, decision making skills and problem-solving skills for pupils.

*Way to implement:*

Step 1: Preparation: Identifying objectives and selecting content to play role; designing the situations to play, building study fiche (if necessary). For example: When teaching the lesson: *Practice saying "no" to addictive substances* (Science, 5<sup>th</sup> grade), teacher can choose goal "Pupils respect the right to refuse use of addictive substances of others; receiving, analyzing problems and making decision to deny the use of addictive substances". Teacher can spend about 18-20 minutes on playing-role activities in according to situation in which Pao's cousin invited him to drink alcohol in celebration of new house and Pao refused.

Step 2: Analyzing role-play situation: teacher divides the class into small groups and set role-play situations; organizing for pupils to discuss, analyze the situation to play. For example : For the lesson: *Practice saying "no" to addictive substances*, teacher assigned seating position for groups, divides pupils into groups of 6 pupils, distributed the fiches to note situation to play and organized for pupils analyze situation to play role. For each situation, teacher raised questions: *Where did the situation happen? Which characters are in the situation? Which issues are solved?*

Step 3: Organize for pupils to play their roles in a small group. Example: Lesson: *Practice say "No" with addictive substances*, teacher introduces groups of pupils to play roles in small groups before presenting before the class. Time of discussion and playing roles in small groups (6 minutes).

Step 4: Whole class activity organization. Example: Lesson: *Practice say "No" with addictive substances*, after playing roles in small groups, the teacher appoints about 4 groups to present before the class, other groups watch and give the conclusion.

*Some notes:* Playing role method should be used at the end of lesson. Name of characters in situations should be suitable with names of ethnic groups of students. Situations must exploit and build up on basis of daily life of ethnic minority elementary school pupils and is presented by simple and detailed words about characteristics, location, time and so on. Each group should be not over crowded (about 4-6 pupils) to facilitate the students are playing.

#### **2.2.4. Speaking test under the topic**

*Significance:* Organization for pupils to test speaking, presentation, show the opinion themselves or of group relating to contents of the lesson will contribute to improve communication skills. Form of competition will create excitement, stimulate to emulate pupils to reach high achievement, enhance the interactivity among opinion, ideas of pupils, will create good environment for pupils to practice negotiation, cooperation skills, good listeners, restrain negative feelings to show your opinion in a positive way.

*Implementation:*

Step 1: Prepare: Define objectives and content selection to organize the test; Build up regulations for the test. For example: When teaching the

lesson: *Practice saying "No" to Addictive substances* (Science 5), teachers can organize the speaking test according to theme "*Say no to addictive substances*". The class will be divided into three teams, each team will learn and free present on 1 topic: Wine, beer, cigarettes and water pipe tobacco, opium, addictive substances. Three teams will be named: young Bamboo, Red Star, and Ban Flower and tested in 20 minutes.

Step 2: Organize the Contest: Guiding competitions; dividing teams; Organize group works and the whole class. For example: The lesson: *Practice saying "No" to addictive substances*, teachers need to tell the class: objectives, contents, forms and rules of the contest, the jury selection, the evaluation targets and reward for the winner, giving suggestions by a number of questions: *what do you know about this addictive substances? Can you describe it? What are effects to health? Have you ever heard or seen someone using addictive substances before? If your relatives are using addictive substances, then what will you talk to them?* ... Then teachers will divide teams according to expected scale in preparation step; name and place positions for the teams, the sitting position for the jury. These teams discuss according to suggestion and assign the presenter. The team takes turn to present, the judge starts work.

Step 3: Comment and evaluation of the result. Example: The lesson: *Practice saying "No" to addictive substances*, after the contest ended, the judge will commend, and select the winner according to the criteria set out. The teacher will conclude the competition and emphasize the harm of addictive substances and propagate not to use Substance in the community.

*Some notes:* To create good conditions for speaking Contest, teachers should organize the contest many times in many different lessons in the group work. Content of the contest no need to be long, and teachers can organize the contest according to the topic or the separate lesson in the review lesson.

### **2.3. Using the training method after studying**

*Significance:* The organization of continuous activities for students to practice, train practical actions, associated with knowledge, life skills formulated in the in class is necessary for consolidation, training maintenance, skills practice in reality. This activity also improves a relationship among families, schools and communities where primary school students and ethnic minorities are living.

*Way to implement:*

Step 1: Preparation: Identify objectives and content selection for training, plan for training activities of students, building training notes (if needed). For example: the lesson: *Practice saying "no" to addictive substances*, teachers can prepare for students to practice after school called *"I'm a propagator"* in order to propagate people not to use substance. Teachers prepare handouts and requests students to work individually in 1 week, at home, in the village where they are living.

Step 2: Assigning tasks (can include training notes) and students will implement. For example: To assign tasks for students after the lesson: *Practice saying "no" to addictive substances*, teachers deliver training notes to students and guide students how to perform and record in the handouts; students conduct and record, ask for parents' signatures.

Step 3: Evaluate workout results: teachers collect training products; students tell the job they have done before class, teachers can discuss and talk to students during a break of the relevant issues. For example: After 1 week of training performance: *Practice saying "no" to addictive substances*, teachers can collect notes and past around the classroom to exhibit students' results. Teachers give comment and evaluation.

*Some notes:* Organization of training lesson for student can be conducted even in a class or on extracurricular time. The organizational form of training lesson should be diversified and created specific products.

## *Chapter 3*

### **TESTING AND EVALUATING THE RESEARCH RESULTS**

#### **3.1. Testing the feasibility of the education measures by the professional methods**

##### **3.1.1. Purpose of testing**

To determine the feasibility of measures developed as a basis for the selection and adjustment of the proposed measures to conduct the pedagogical practice.

##### **3.1.2. Experts**

Experts researching the scientific education; Principals, Vice-Principals and Elementary school teachers with many pupils of Ethnic Minority (over 100 experts)

##### **3.1.3. The methods and techniques to conduct**

Testing on the feasibility of the proposed measures carried out through two basic methods: 1. *Testing & Teaching* the lessons as the proposed measures with 6 classes of 3 different schools in 3 provinces. 2. *Using the referendum* to the teachers, the administrators in the primary schools with a lot of pupils of ethnic minority, scientist researching in education.

##### **3.1.4. Testing results**

###### *3.1.4.1. Through the referendum by vote*

The evaluation results represent that all measures are feasible and successfully implemented. The majority of those polled has agreed to the measures created, in which the comments on the encouraging rate that is higher than different levels (from 66% to 79%).

###### *3.1.4.2. Through observation, direct interview, testing & teaching*

The design and organization of Life skills education through the lessons of Natural & Social subjects and Science subject as the proposed measures are appropriate and can be implemented. These measures have facilitated the pupils to participate into the activities, which has, therefore, the certain effects to the student's excitement and learning motivation without disturbing the teaching process. Moreover, it has no affect on the implementation of lesson objectives and the teachers can fully implement the education of life skills.

## **3.2. Empirical pedagogy**

### **3.2.1. Overview of the empirical process**

#### *3.2.1.1. Empirical purpose*

- Verifying the feasibility and effectiveness of the content and the measures for the elementary school pupils of ethnic minority in the Northern mountainous areas through teaching the proposed Nature & Society subjects and Science subject.

- Confirming the positive impact of these measures to life skills education and teaching Nature & Society and Science for the elementary school pupils of ethnic minority in the Northern mountainous areas.

#### *3.2.1.2. The empirical object and scale*

The empirical object is the elementary school pupils of ethnic minority in 3 primary schools: Nguyen Thi Minh Khai (Luc Yen District-Yen Bai); Hoa Binh (Loc Binh- Lang Son); Tan Long (Dong Hy District-Thai Nguyen).

#### *3.2.1.3. Empirical content*

Six lesson plans of Natural & Social Subject of grade 3 and 9 lesson plans of Science Subject of grade 5.

#### *3.2.1.4. Criteria and assessment tool*

The empirical results are considered in two aspects: 1. the study results of Natural & Social Subject and Science subject, 2. the performance of the student's life skills groups. The assessment tools include: multiple-choice test of Natural & Social Subject and Science subject scored crossover by the teachers as the 10-point scale, the votes for teacher's evaluation and self-assessment of pupils; the situation exercises with the scoring criteria, scale created to determine the extent of implementation of life skills groups can encourage the pupils to answer and give the solutions to determine the extent of implementation of life skills groups. At the same time the author's thesis also concerns with the observation and research of the pupil's products from their activities, referendum etc. for the quantitative evaluation and quantitative of the effects of empirical measures to each living skill groups with the elementary school pupils of ethnic minority.

### **3.2.2. Analysis of empirical results**

*3.2.2.1. Subject to the study result of Natural & Social Subject and Science subject*

Results of pre-empirical test of the experimental group and the control group has represented that the pupils of both groups have their learning



capability in the Natural & Social Subject and Science subject were equal at average-weak level. T-Test depends on whether two groups of class 3 and class 5 all have  $p > 0,05$ , which said that the difference in the scores of tests between the two groups was not significant. The different happened largely by accident.

After experimental science, results of experimental group had increased a level reaching well and control group is not change. Perform the T- test independent with the scores of the two groups obtained  $p < 0.00001$ . Calculate the size of the standard mean value (SMD) to measure levels of influence we have  $SMD > 1$ . It is confirmed that the measures used in the experiment have a huge impact in learning, comprehension of scientific knowledge of ethnic minority elementary school pupils after learning Nature and Society, Sciences. It contributes to the increase the score and learning capacity of pupils.

#### *3.2.2.2. On the level of implementing the group of life skills of pupils*

Before experiment, the implementing level of group of life skills, control group and experimental group were similar. Group of life skills is also reached the level of average weak. This level reflects the true state of group of life skills of ethnic minority elementary school pupils in general which has been analyzed in Chapter 1 of the thesis.

Before experiment, due to the impact of the proposed measures, the reached score and level on life skills of experimental group was higher than that of control group (in which experimental group at 5 grade class increased more than 3 grade class). Life skills education of experimental group and control group took place in the same conditions of time, the operating conditions and conducted through the teaching of subjects of Nature and Society, Sciences. The only difference is the impact measures. Therefore, it can confirm the effectiveness and feasibility of the proposed measures.

The results of observation and evaluation before and after experiment affirmed that: The use of life skills education content and method for ethnic minority elementary school pupils through teaching the subjects: Nature and Society, Sciences according to the proposal of topic is not only created a positive effect in the implementation of life skills education but also increase learning outcomes of subjects for ethnic minority elementary school pupils.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Conclusion**

1.1. Four educational targets of 21st century given by UNESCO have confirmed the role of education of life skills.

1.2. The life skills of ethnic minority elementary school pupils currently reach the average and weak level; the implementation of life skills education of teacher is still more difficult and rated at average weak level.

1.3. The analysis of the potentials of subjects, living environment characteristics, studying, living and communication of ethnic minority elementary school pupils; the analysis of assessing the results situation of life skills education allows author of thesis to select the approach of general life skills education and particular life skills education with specific characteristics for ethnic minority elementary school pupils.

1.4. Two groups of measures are proposed in the thesis include: exploit the content and select the lesson consistent with education of life skills; use methods, the form of positively teaching and learning to help pupils search for knowledge, enhance life skills.

1.5. The result of survey testing process and pedagogical experiment conducting in two school years of 2010- 2011 and 2011- 2012 confirmed the feasibility and the practical effectiveness of measures groups, confirmed the correctness of the scientific hypothesis that the subject was initially set.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1. Ministry of Education and Training should soon provide regulations on life skills education program to pupils of all levels of education, including primary. Also, it needs to identify the target and have specific guidelines for the implementation of life skills education for pupils in different regions.

2.2. Teachers need to change the way of teaching from focusing on writing, reading and calculating only which currently popular in primary schools of Northern Mountains to teaching skills.

2.3. Teachers can be used to coordinate measures proposed by author in new lesson or the review of ending of each topic of subjects.

2.4. Teachers and school should have the activities to connect with pupil's family, village elders heads and hamlet chiefs, local government in all of activities to educate life skills.

**LIST OF SCIENCE WORKS RELATED TO THESIS  
HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED**

1. Nguyen Thi Thu Hang (2009), *Some issues on life skills education for elementary school pupils*, Journal of Education, no. 204.
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5. Nguyen Thi Thu Hang (2012), *The status of life skills of ethnic minority elementary school pupils in the Northern Mountain area*, Science and Technology Magazine - Thai Nguyen University, vol. 98, no. 10.
6. Nguyen Thi Thu Hang (2013), *Life skills education for ethnic minority elementary school pupils through situations*, Journal of Education, no. 302, period 2.
7. Nguyen Thi Thu Hang (2009), *The syllabus "Education of living healthy and living skills on teaching Nature and Society in primary"*.
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