

APPLYING HO CHI MINH'S BEHAVIORAL STYLE TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FACULTY, THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Ho Chi Minh is an outstanding cultural figure who embodies the quintessence of both national and global cultures and represents the quintessential character of the Vietnamese people. One of the most fundamental aspects of Ho Chi Minh's culture—profoundly distinctive and deeply personal—is his culture of conduct and behavior. Ho Chi Minh's behavioral culture was shaped throughout his lifelong dedication to the Vietnamese revolution, reflecting his courage, intelligence, and noble personality. This is also what the Vietnamese people deeply admire and strive to learn from—his style and ethics—especially the younger generation, including students of the International Faculty, Thai Nguyen University.

Keyword: *Ho Chi Minh's ideology; cultural conduct; communication skills; students; Thai Nguyen University*

1. INTRODUCTION

Ho Chi Minh left a profound impression on everyone who had the opportunity to meet him. His great personality and remarkable life created exemplary standards of behavior, not only representing the essence of Vietnamese cultural conduct but also enriching the values of human interaction in the modern era. The common characteristic that forms the consistency of Ho Chi Minh's behavioral culture lies in his sincerity, simplicity, and naturalness — the reflection of a great, lucid, and courageous soul.

Applying Ho Chi Minh's communication and behavioral style to cultivate and build a cultural code of conduct for today's young generation in general, and for students of the International Faculty – Thai Nguyen University in particular, is of great significance. Following his example, every student must constantly strive for self-improvement: reflecting on oneself, overcoming personal shortcomings in study and life, prioritizing collective interests, and practicing the principle of “words must go hand in hand with actions.” At the same time, students should continuously cultivate their morality and maintain a simple and pure lifestyle to perfect themselves and contribute to building a united, harmonious community.

2. RESEARCH CONTENT

2.1. Related Concepts

Behavior refers to the expression of attitudes and actions appropriate to circumstances involving oneself and others [5]. Style is also understood as an attribute inseparable from one's identity. According to Marxism, “In reality, the essence of man is the ensemble of social relations.” For Ho Chi Minh, to accurately evaluate a person, one must not only consider what they say or write but, more importantly, how they act — in relation not to one individual but to many, across diverse contexts and over time. Broadly defined, style refers to a person's manner, etiquette, demeanor, ethics, and habitual conduct — characteristics that manifest in all aspects of life such as labor, study, daily living, and social interaction. Together, these elements form the unique values and distinctive identity of each individual or community.

Culture, in its broadest sense, is understood as “the sum of material and spiritual values created by humanity throughout history” [6]. In a narrower sense, culture is regarded as “the spiritual life of human beings” [6]. In daily usage, it also implies one's level of education or refinement. Ho Chi Minh defined culture as follows:

“For the purpose of survival as well as life itself,

humankind has created and invented language, script, ethics, laws, science, religion, literature, art, and tools for daily living such as clothing, food, shelter, and methods of use. All these creations and inventions constitute culture. Culture is the totality of ways of living, along with their expressions, that humans create to meet the needs of life and existence” [2].

Ho Chi Minh’s definition of culture bears significant similarity to contemporary understandings, yet it transcends the subjectivity and narrowness of certain viewpoints that confine culture solely to the spiritual domain.

Communication is the process of transmitting information, opinions, and meaning among individuals, groups, or organizations. It is the means by which we exchange and interact to share knowledge, achieve mutual understanding, build relationships, and accomplish common goals. Communication skills refer to the ability to use spoken language or body language to express thoughts, viewpoints, and emotions clearly and persuasively, while simultaneously promoting two-way interaction [6].

2.2. The Basic Content of Ho Chi Minh’s Behavioral Style

Ho Chi Minh’s style of conduct has left an indelible mark on generations of patriotic Vietnamese people and admirers around the world. It embodies the enduring moral and cultural values of the Vietnamese nation. His manner of behavior is that of a great cultural figure, expressed primarily through sincerity, respect for others, humility, tolerance, and intellectual refinement. Specifically:

First, Ho Chi Minh possessed boundless love for the people. His compassion was broad and universal—directed toward all humanity, especially those who suffered under exploitation and oppression.

Second, his intelligence, wisdom, and sharp mind were evident throughout his life. Ho Chi Minh constantly observed and analyzed reality, enriching his knowledge, generalizing it into theory, and applying theory to guide practice—testing and refining it through experience. His thinking was independent, self-reliant, and creative, characterized by a keen critical spirit and lucid judgment in assessing people, events, and circumstances.

Third, his patriotism and revolutionary enthusiasm were expressed most clearly in his ideals. Ho Chi Minh’s ultimate ideal was peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress.

Ho Chi Minh’s style of behavior thus represents a harmonious unity between intellect, morality, and humanity—a reflection of his profound love for the nation and for humankind.

2.3. Ho Chi Minh’s Conduct in Communication

The art of conduct and communication is expressed not only through words but also through one’s demeanor, gestures, and attitudes toward others, as well as toward oneself in relation to others. Ho Chi Minh’s behavioral style embodies simplicity and sincerity; humility combined with warmth and friendliness; and at the same time, dignity, firmness, and flexibility — a harmonious balance between rationality and emotion. Specifically:

First, Modesty, Politeness, and Courtesy

Throughout his revolutionary life and career, Ho Chi Minh always demonstrated modesty and respect toward others. He never placed himself above anyone else and consistently showed genuine concern for those around him. During the revolution and resistance wars, he lived in harmony with soldiers and ordinary people—sharing their hardships, eating and working alongside them.

Whenever he met the masses, he treated them warmly and humbly, as if they were his own family members — like an uncle, father, or elder brother — erasing the distance between a leader and the people.

In daily life, Ho Chi Minh was remarkably simple. He worked in a small, stilt house furnished only with basic items; he wore plain khaki clothes, simple sandals made from rubber tires, and used modest personal belongings. Everything surrounding him reflected simplicity yet radiated dignity and cultural refinement. He taught that in all interactions, modesty is an essential moral quality — the more cultured a person is, the more modest one should be.

Second, Warmth, Sincerity, and Naturalness

Whenever people met Ho Chi Minh, all barriers—social, cultural, or even religious—seemed to dissolve under the warmth of his sincerity and

care.

Those who interacted with him could immediately feel the genuineness that emanated from his heart. This was a striking feature of his behavioral culture — the hallmark of a truly great humanist.

His warm smile and friendly demeanor erased distinctions between ranks, positions, or social classes. In his presence, everyone—subordinates, colleagues, or ordinary citizens—felt a sense of equality and respect among free and democratic human beings.

Third, Initiative, Adaptability, and Flexibility

Ho Chi Minh's conduct was characterized by a harmonious combination of intellect and emotion, of flexibility guided by principles. He always viewed issues in their entirety, without being rigid about minor details. In many real-life situations, his flexible approach touched the hearts and transformed the characters of those around him—helping misguided individuals correct themselves and become useful citizens devoted to the revolutionary cause.

In 1946, before leaving for France, he reminded the revolutionary veteran Huynh Thuc Khang, who was then Acting President of the country: "I must be away for a time to fulfill the mission entrusted by the people. At home, there will be many difficulties. I hope you and our comrades will use the 'unchangeable' to deal with the 'ever-changing'."

This statement vividly illustrates Ho Chi Minh's wise and adaptable outlook on leadership and life.

Fourth, Respect and Compassion for All People

Ho Chi Minh is renowned worldwide as a leader of profound humanitarianism. Every action, gesture, and manner of conduct he displayed stemmed from a deep love for human beings. His respect and affection were not confined to any particular class, social group, or nationality. From the elderly, youth, children, and women to frontline soldiers, he extended his affection and care to all. Moreover, he deeply empathized with those who were suffering—people oppressed and exploited across the world.

In Party-building and cadre training, Ho Chi Minh's communicative style also reflected a

distinctly humanistic spirit. In his view, self-criticism and criticism must be honest, constructive, and directed toward common goals and interests, rather than driven by personal motives, factionalism, or the desire to demean or overthrow others. Particularly for Party leaders and managers at all levels, he emphasized that authority must never be used to distance or dominate the people. These principles earned him profound trust and admiration from the masses because his behavior was both virtuous and exceptionally rare.

A fundamental lesson from Ho Chi Minh is that although he stood at the pinnacle of power for 24 years, he never treated subordinates, staff members, or the people as if they were beneath him. On the contrary, he treated them as comrades, friends, and fellow servants of the nation—civil servants devoted to the service of the people and the Fatherland.

From him, we learn a timeless lesson: true authority comes not from power, but from moral integrity and service to others.

2.4. Proposed Solutions to Improve Communication Skills among Students of the International Faculty, Thai Nguyen University, According to Ho Chi Minh's Behavioral Style

- Characteristics of the International School, Thai Nguyen University (TNU)

The International School (formerly the School of International Education) – Thai Nguyen University was established under Decision No. 487/QĐ-ĐHTN dated June 16, 2011, by the President of the University. It is an academic institution directly affiliated with Thai Nguyen University, tasked with providing undergraduate and postgraduate education in the fields of foreign languages, economics, management, finance, and natural resources-environment management.

The establishment of the International School concretizes the policy of the Communist Party and the State, as well as directives from the Ministry of Education and Training, regarding the promotion of international cooperation in education. Its mission is to contribute to the rapid development of a highly qualified workforce with strong foreign language competencies to meet the demands of international integration and socio-economic development.

This institution serves as an essential foundation for comprehensive development in both scale and quality. It fosters specialization in training programs across economic sciences, management, social sciences, life sciences, and resource–environmental management taught in English. The School aims to evolve into an International University by 2030 and strives to become a reputable center for education, scientific research, and technology transfer in the region and globally. Its student recruitment is not limited to Vietnamese nationals; it also attracts candidates from other countries within the region and worldwide.

- Current Situation of Communication and Behavioral Practices among Students of the International School – TNU

In the context of rapid scientific and technological development and the widespread use of social media platforms, Vietnamese youth in general—and students of the International School in particular—have many advantages in accessing global languages and cultures. Given its academic structure, which involves both Vietnamese and international students studying foreign languages, cultures, and other disciplines, students at the International School are frequently exposed to diverse and advanced cultural environments.

One of the greatest strengths of these students is their dynamism, adaptability, passion for learning, and creativity. They are often pioneers in volunteer campaigns and social activities. They demonstrate a positive political attitude, comply with the policies and laws of the Party and the State, follow the regulations of the School, and exhibit strong patriotism.

However, alongside these strengths, a segment of students at the International School – TNU still exhibit several limitations in communication and behavior. These include lack of confidence in public speaking, insufficient social awareness, and poor soft skills.

Specifically:

- Many graduates are assessed by employers as lacking soft skills; 37% fail to secure suitable employment, primarily due to insufficient skills.
- A human resources officer from Newwing Company shared: *“I am quite dissatisfied*

when I see many interns or new graduates, although academically trained, do not take the initiative to greet or smile at their colleagues.”

This highlights that even when students possess solid professional knowledge, poor communication skills can significantly reduce their competitiveness in the job market, affirming the critical role of communication in personal and professional success.

From classroom observation, we have found that many students do not greet others—even senior lecturers—and frequently use incomplete sentences lacking subjects. Very few students express gratitude or proactively establish and maintain respectful relationships with their lecturers.

Moreover, shyness, hesitation, and reluctance to speak are common issues. During lectures, students often engage in side conversations; yet when assigned to discussions or group work, only a small number actively participate. The rest remain silent due to fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence, or anxiety about speaking in front of others. When asked to present or share opinions, many appear confused, stammer, or struggle to articulate their ideas clearly.

This lack of self-confidence leads to anxiety about speaking incorrectly or giving wrong answers. Consequently, students often avoid conversations—turning communication avoidance into a “collective behavioral pattern” that exacerbates timidity and reduces confidence. Additionally, some students lack emotional control, causing unintended harm to others during communication and diminishing their own personal image.

- Applying Ho Chi Minh’s Behavioral Style to Enhance Communication Skills among Students of the International School – TNU

In response to the aforementioned realities concerning students’ communication skills, the International School has implemented various educational and awareness-raising activities. These include: studying and disseminating the “Resolutions of Party Congresses at all levels and Youth Actions”; promoting the campaign “Studying and Following Ho Chi Minh’s Thought, Morality, and Style”; and organizing contests such as “Talented Student”, “Excellent Presentation

Skills”, alongside numerous extracurricular activities aimed at improving communication and behavioral competencies.

From September 10 to September 20, 2023, the authors conducted a survey collecting 285 student responses regarding participation in socio-political activities and their understanding of Ho Chi Minh’s cultural style. The findings indicated that the market economy and current context of international integration have significantly influenced students’ perceptions, thoughts, and lifestyles. Furthermore, a small proportion of students exhibited limited self-awareness, passivity, reluctance to engage in social or political activities, avoidance of communication, and even violations of school regulations and the law.

Specifically:

- Only 90 out of 285 students (31.5%) had read and thoroughly understood Decision No. 706/QĐ-ĐHTN dated April 18, 2018, issued by Thai Nguyen University on the “Code of Conduct for Officials, Lecturers, Staff, and Students at the International School – TNU.”
- 125 students (43.9%) had only minimal understanding, hearing about it from others;
- 70 students (24.6%) had never learned about it.

These figures reveal the need for stronger dissemination and stricter implementation of institutional regulations in the future.

Regarding the application of Ho Chi Minh’s behavioral style, student opinions converged on the notion that appropriate, timely measures are essential when addressing and advising peers or family members. They emphasized that feedback or correction should be expressed gently and tactfully, using sincere emotions and considerate language to inspire awareness, encourage reflection, and support behavioral improvement.

Survey results show that students at the International School – TNU possess a certain understanding of Ho Chi Minh’s communicative style. Most demonstrate the ability to combine “softness” and “firmness”, employ flexible and appropriate responses, and maintain sincerity and respect in interpersonal relations, while prioritizing long-term harmony.

Moreover, students show awareness of the importance of relationships, paying attention to their own attitudes and emotions toward others, as well as reciprocal feelings from others.

According to the survey, 280 out of 285 students (98.2%) expressed a desire to be approachable, loved, and trusted by others; only 5 students (0.8%) were content with being appreciated by just a few individuals; and no student indicated indifference to how others feel about them.

The principle of “knowing oneself and knowing others” motivates students to cultivate, refine, and develop communication skills. Survey responses reveal that students possess foundational knowledge of communicative ethics and have acquired certain interpersonal abilities, including:

- Respect for communication partners;
- Ability to manage situations and express thoughts, emotions, and attitudes appropriately;
- Awareness of others’ roles and dignity, even in disagreement;
- Empathy by placing oneself in another’s position;
- Giving compliments in appropriate contexts;
- Maintaining a friendly smile and engaging verbal style;
- Remembering essential details while avoiding unnecessary criticism;
- Active listening and acknowledgement of mutual care in social interactions.

Nonetheless, no student has mastered all these skills. Each individual only embodies certain aspects. As a result, 283 out of 285 students (99.3%) believed that education on Ho Chi Minh’s behavioral culture is necessary for students of the International School – TNU in the current context; only 2 students (0.7%) disagreed.

Through Political Science and Ho Chi Minh Thought courses, 99.1% of surveyed students acknowledged that Ho Chi Minh’s personality and communicative culture significantly influence their moral development. His example teaches sincere affection, empathy, humility, tolerance, and forgiveness. Accordingly, the essential

qualities required in student communication today include: living with ideals and determination, being honest, humble, and polite, and maintaining flexibility, tactfulness, and mutual understanding in communication.

Students also recognized the importance of cultivating communication skills inspired by Ho Chi Minh's behavioral style and expressed their aspiration to apply these values in academic and daily life to refine themselves and become the best versions of who they can be.

3. PROPOSED SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS BASED ON HO CHI MINH'S BEHAVIORAL STYLE

Based on the current situation, we propose several solutions to enhance communication skills among students at the International School by adopting Ho Chi Minh's behavioral principles:

First, it is essential to strengthen the promotion of school cultural values associated with the movement of "Studying and Following Ho Chi Minh's Thought, Morality, and Style." This effort will raise students' awareness of cultural behavior, helping them understand their roles and responsibilities, thereby encouraging them to modify their attitudes and adopt disciplined, respectful, and culturally appropriate conduct in communication, learning, and daily life.

Second, each student must cultivate both moral character and intellectual competence, studying and following Ho Chi Minh's ethical example in association with the school's cultural environment and assigned responsibilities. Practicing Ho Chi Minh's behavioral culture fosters positive relationships—among students, between students and lecturers, and between individuals and the collective—thereby promoting harmony, cooperation, and a healthy academic climate.

Third, the International School should develop and enforce clear, feasible regulations on behavioral culture. Detailed guidelines should be issued, requiring students to commit to compliance. Additionally, regular communication, reminders, and educational activities must be implemented to sustain awareness. It is equally important to enhance monitoring and assessment mechanisms, while also collecting feedback from lecturers, staff, and students to make timely adjustments for better implementation.

Fourth, the role and responsibility of students in self-study and self-discipline following Ho Chi Minh's behavioral style should be emphasized. Exemplary lecturers and student role models are particularly important in inspiring and guiding peers to practice ethical communication.

Fifth, the School should organize meaningful platforms and activities aimed at developing communication and behavioral skills. These may include competitions such as "Studying and Following Ho Chi Minh's Moral Example," "Excellent Student Presentation Skills," as well as forums, seminars, and experiential learning programs. At the end of the academic year, outstanding students who demonstrate good academic performance, exemplary behavior, and effective application of Ho Chi Minh's communicative style should be objectively evaluated and commended.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

In the context of globalization and digital transformation, university students are required not only to possess professional knowledge but also to demonstrate intercultural communication competence—the ability to adapt, collaborate, and convey ideas effectively in diverse cultural and multinational environments.

Ho Chi Minh's behavioral style, grounded in the principles of "*respect, empathy, tolerance, and humanity*," serves as an ethical compass guiding students toward civilized, proactive, and human-centered conduct in digital communication spaces.

This approach provides contemporary Vietnamese higher education with new orientations, including:

- **Developing a digital campus culture:** promoting responsible, ethical, and humane communication behaviors in virtual environments and on social media platforms.
- **Educating global citizenship competencies:** encouraging students to "*think globally – act locally*," respect cultural differences, and engage in intercultural communication with openness and empathy.
- **Shaping the identity of students in the digital age:** fostering political integrity, compassion, flexibility, and confidence to

integrate into the international community while preserving Vietnamese cultural identity.

5. CONCLUSION

Ho Chi Minh's culture of communication represents a radiant symbol of Vietnamese national identity. It is not only a model and standard of ethical conduct and interpersonal behavior but also a priceless spiritual legacy for cadres, Party members, and the people to study and emulate. This cultural value system holds profound significance for the development of Vietnamese culture and people in the contemporary revolutionary period.

Ho Chi Minh's behavioral style has been, is, and will remain a benchmark for cultivating collective norms and leadership ethics within Party organizations. It plays an essential role in nurturing the character of cadres and Party members, particularly in fostering the moral and intellectual growth of younger generations, including students of the International School.

Studying and applying Ho Chi Minh's cultural style of conduct is a long-term, continuous process that requires persistent effort and self-discipline from students and young people. Only through such consistent practice can the emulation of Ho Chi Minh's morality and behavior achieve tangible results, contributing to the formation of a student identity defined by "*pure soul – enlightened mind – great aspiration.*"

For students of the International School – Thai Nguyen University, the study and application of Ho Chi Minh's behavioral style embody a harmonious integration of "*culture – intellect – ethics – international integration.*" This approach enables students to:

- Develop civilized communication skills, with the ability to listen, empathize, and share;
- Strengthen critical thinking and intercultural adaptability;
- Build a firm ethical foundation and personal integrity, becoming global citizens imbued with Vietnamese cultural identity.

Therefore, it is essential to incorporate "*Studying and Applying Ho Chi Minh's Behavioral Style*" as a compulsory component of soft-skill training and global citizenship education in higher education

institutions—particularly in international academic programs.

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