ORGANIZING HISTORY LESSONS AT THE MUSEUM AND TRADITIONAL HOUSES TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' Capacities IN THAI NGUYEN PROVINCE HIGH SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Experiencing history through museum and traditional house lessons is a powerful way to enhance students’ education by providing real-life context to subject matter knowledge, culture, patriotism, and aesthetic appreciation. These lessons are particularly beneficial for high schools line near museums and traditional houses. By using analytical research methods, document synthesis, pedagogical experimentation, and mathematical-statistical methods, this article analyzes the concept of historical lessons at museums and traditional houses, as well as ways to organize these lessons effectively when teaching history. Ultimately, the article proposes measures to organize history lessons at museums and traditional houses in Thai Nguyen province. The results of this research show that organizing lessons at museums and traditional houses is crucial for teaching history effectively and that the various forms and measures of organizing these lessons have brought great success in the development of student capacity and the overall quality of subject teaching in high schools today.

KEYWORDS

Museum
Traditional house
History lesson
Lesson at the museum
Teaching at the museum

TỔ CHỨC BÀI HỌC LỊCH SỰ TẠI BẢO TÀNG, NHÀ TRUYỀN THỐNG PHÁT TRIỂN NĂNG LỰC CHO HỌC SINH TRƯỞNG TRUNG HỌC PHỔ THỌ THỊNH THÁI NGUYỄN

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Tóm tắt

Tổ chức bài học tại bảo tàng, nhà truyền thống là hình thức dạy học gần đại học với đời sống, có tác dụng nâng cao hiểu biết về kiến thức môn học, về văn hóa - giáo dục, lòng yêu quê hương, đất nước, ông thẩm mỹ cho học sinh. Bài học tại bảo tàng, nhà truyền thống chủ yếu được tiến hành cho các trường trung học phổ thông có khoảng cách địa lý gần với bảo tàng, nhà truyền thống. Thông qua việc sử dụng phương pháp nghiên cứu phân tích, tổng hợp các tài liệu, phương pháp thực nghiệm sự phàm, phương pháp thống kê toán học, bài viết phản tích quan niệm bài học lịch sử tại bảo tàng, nhà truyền thống, hình thức tổ chức bài học tại bảo tàng, nhà truyền thống trong dạy học lịch sử. Từ đó, bài viết tập trung đề xuất những biện pháp tổ chức bài học lịch sử tại bảo tàng, nhà truyền thống tỉnh Thái Nguyên. Kết quả nghiên cứu của bài viết cho thấy việc tổ chức bài học, nhà truyền thống có ý nghĩa quan trọng đối với dạy học lịch sử, các hình thức, biện pháp tổ chức bài học đã đem lại hiệu quả dạy học theo hướng phát triển năng lực học sinh, góp phần nâng cao chất lượng dạy học bộ môn ở trường phổ thông hiện nay.

Từ khóa

Bảo tàng
Nhà truyền thống
Bài học lịch sử
Bài học tại bảo tàng
Dạy học tại bảo tàng

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1. Introduction

Museums and traditional houses hold significant importance in teaching history at the secondary school level in the heritage system. They serve as repositories of cultural heritage, tourist attractions, and spaces for research and learning. The most important aspect is that these places preserve and display original documents and artefacts, which serve as tangible evidence of past events and invaluable resources for historical research and learning. Each museum and traditional house display various themes, but overall, they reflect the developmental stages of the nation's history or the traditions of a particular locality. Museums and traditional houses are crucial in helping us vividly imagine the past, serving as places where we can see authentic depictions of the labour, struggle, and sacrifices of previous generations in the nation-building and defence efforts.

Educators have been paying close attention to the use of museums and traditional houses as a means of teaching and learning. In his book "Learning in the Museum," George E. Hein presents a unique context for learning, that emphasizes a free and visitor-centered learning environment [1]. The use of museums as a platform for studying and learning is an area of research that is closely linked to modern educational philosophy and has been shown to enhance learners' abilities. In her book "The Educational Role of the Museum," Eilean Hooper-Greenhill focuses on the relationships between museums, exhibition spaces, and visitors [2]. She argues that museums are informal learning environments that naturally promote learning through curiosity, observation, and engagement. Additionally, some research works have addressed theoretical and practical issues related to using museums as educational resources, including defining what museums are, discussing why students are taken to museums, and outlining strategies for preparing and utilizing museums as educational resources [3], [4]. The authors of these works analyze various ways of using museums as educational resources, including working with exhibition spaces, artefacts, visual materials, and textual documents, as well as utilizing online and digital sources.

There have been some works that explore the use of museums and traditional houses in history education. For instance, Nguyen Thi Coi's book "Historical and Revolutionary Museums in Teaching History at Secondary Schools" talks about the role of these museums in history education and provides an overview of the exhibition contents of some historical and revolutionary museums [5]. The book also highlights the potential of using museums in history teaching. Another book, "Museum, Heritage Sites - Places of Inspiration for Teaching and Learning History to Secondary Students," by Nguyen Thi Kim Thanh and other authors, discusses the complementary relationship between imparting historical knowledge in schools and the new approach to teaching and learning history from museums and heritage sites. The authors focus on the "I Love History Club" case study, which creates an "intellectual playground" through creative learning and playing activities of students, such as "Becoming a Soldier," "Identifying Historical Figures," and "Historical Messages" [6]. In addition, several research articles [7] - [11] present different new approaches to utilizing museums, such as applying digital techniques and organizing experiential activities in history teaching.

The previous studies have provided us with additional insights to clarify theoretical issues regarding the use of museums and traditional houses in teaching history in secondary schools in general and Thai Nguyen Province High School in particular. Additionally, these research works have suggested various methods for organizing lessons at museums and traditional houses to enhance the effectiveness of history teaching.

2. Research methodology

The authors researched education and used various methods to write the article. We analyze and synthesize educational, psychological, and historical education literature. We also examine materials from local museums, traditional houses, and relevant historical documents. Furthermore, we study the curriculum and textbooks used in secondary schools. We propose
forms and methods for organizing museum and traditional house visits into subject teaching. The authors conduct experiments at a selected representative high school to verify pedagogical measures. We apply the pedagogical experimental method and design experimental lesson plans. We then process data, analyze the results, compare the advantages of using local museums and traditional houses, and draw observations, evaluations, and scientific conclusions.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Overview of History Lessons at Museums and Traditional Houses

A museum is an institution that specializes in collecting, preserving, displaying, and disseminating valuable artefacts related to natural history and social history. Its purpose is to serve the public's needs for research, education, and cultural enjoyment. A traditional house, on the other hand, is a place where artefacts reflecting the development history, achievements, and traditions of a locality, organization, or unit are preserved and displayed to propagate and educate traditions to future generations. Both museums and traditional houses serve several functions, including scientific research, cultural heritage preservation, scientific documentation, educational outreach, information dissemination, and cultural appreciation. They share similarities in their essence as cultural preservation institutions but differ mainly in scale and display intensity. In the field of cultural preservation, both museums and traditional houses offer significant advantages for history teaching due to their characteristics such as:

1. The scientific nature of the exhibition content in museums and traditional houses.
2. The systematic display of documents and artefacts in museums and traditional houses.
3. The visually vivid and engaging exhibition forms of museums and traditional houses.
4. The attractiveness of the documents, artefacts, artistic displays, and explanatory guidance in museums and traditional houses.

To make history lessons more engaging and inspiring for both students and teachers, it is important to use appropriate visual aids and a variety of teaching materials during lectures. In addition to the materials and visual channels available in textbooks, incorporating materials, images, and artefacts from museums and traditional houses into teaching are a crucial supplementary source. Museum and traditional house materials are valuable sources of knowledge that enrich and contextualize the content of textbook lessons. Using these materials helps to transform the dry facts and events in lessons into vivid, relatable past scenarios, enabling students to better understand and apply the knowledge gained in practical situations.

History lessons are not only conducted in the classroom but also organized on-site, including visits to museums and traditional houses. When conducting history lessons at museums and traditional houses, the exhibition materials become teaching aids, and the exhibition halls become classrooms. Bringing the classroom to museums and traditional houses allows both teachers and students to experience a real and engaging learning environment. Learning at museums and traditional houses involves utilizing a variety of resources available there, including exhibition materials, guidance from museum docents, and the museum's space itself. This teaching method can be implemented in secondary schools that are conveniently located near museums and traditional houses in the locality. Conducting lessons at museums and traditional houses allows teachers to introduce new knowledge about national or local history and engage students in practical learning activities. During these lessons, students learn in a new and exciting environment outside the classroom, surrounded by the captivating artefacts and materials found in museums and traditional houses.

3.2. The organization format of history lessons at museums and traditional houses in high schools in Thai Nguyen province

There are different ways to organize lessons at museums and traditional houses based on specific conditions and creative organization methods of teachers. Two such methods are:
1. Conducting classroom sessions at the museum or traditional house: In this method, the teacher conducts teaching similar to that in a classroom and then guides students to explore relevant artefacts. This is an easy method consisting of two stages - teaching new knowledge and observing artefacts, museum materials for practice, and reinforcement. The teacher can divide students into groups with tasks to explore reflective knowledge of museum artefacts under the guidance of a docent.

2. Conducting lessons in the exhibition hall of the museum or traditional house: In this method, the exhibition hall becomes the classroom, and the displayed artefacts become visual aids (Figure 1). Lessons can be carried out through different activities.

- Warm-up activity: The teacher establishes classroom order and emphasizes the rules that students must follow throughout the lesson. During the review section, the teacher can use artefacts from the museum or traditional house to guide students in answering review questions. When introducing new material, the teacher can provide an overview of the museum or traditional house based on the artefacts present, leading students into a problematic situation and presenting cognitive tasks.

- Organizing knowledge formation activities: the teacher can use classroom-style teaching and discussion for content that is not well-reflected through the displayed artefacts at the museum or traditional house. For content related to the artefacts of the museum or traditional house, the teacher can seamlessly combine guiding students to observe the museum or traditional house artefacts with discussions to clarify the key knowledge of the lesson. The teacher can set tasks, organize active learning activities such as historical investigation activities, and act as a guide to stimulate the process of exploration and discovery of knowledge by students. The teacher can also collaborate with the museum or traditional house guide to conduct the lesson, and the presentation content of the guide can be used as a learning resource or to summarize the basic knowledge of the lesson.

Figure 1. Organizing history lessons at the museum

+ At the end of a history lesson, teachers can use museum artefacts to create activities for students to practice and apply what they learned. This can also be used as an assessment tool to evaluate students’ comprehension of the subject. Students can report their results, and teachers can arrange experiential activities at the museum.

Teaching history at museums and traditional houses requires good organizational skills, expertise in the subject matter, thorough preparation, and coordination between history teachers and museum or traditional house guides.

Thai Nguyen is home to various museums and traditional houses, including national, regional, and provincial-level ones. In the context of history education in Vietnamese secondary schools, these museums and traditional houses in Thai Nguyen should be used effectively, for example, the Museum of Vietnamese Ethnic Cultures, the Armed Forces Museum (Viet Bac - Military Region I), the Thai Nguyen Museum, the Dinh Hoa - Thai Nguyen ATK Traditional House, the Iron and Steel Plant Traditional House, and the Youth Volunteers 915 Bac Thai Traditional House.
content displayed in these museums and traditional houses is closely related to the curriculum of history subjects in secondary schools. The Museum of Vietnamese Ethnic Cultures is well-suited for conducting history lessons on topics related to economic life (agricultural production, handicrafts, trade activities, etc.) and cultural life (festivals, beliefs, architecture, etc.), with an emphasis on Vietnamese ethnic communities. The Viet Bac Armed Forces Museum can be used to organize lessons on topics like the Wars of National Defense and Liberation, covering the historical period from 1930 to 1975. Therefore, with the local system of museums and traditional houses, Thai Nguyen has an advantage in conducting history lessons in real-life settings.

3.3. Methods to organize history lessons at Museums enhancing students' competencies in Thai Nguyen province

3.3.1. Organizing activities to trace historical evidence

Museums and traditional houses are places that hold valuable historical evidence. The evidence comes in various forms such as maps, models, artefacts, photographs, and paintings. Historians and learners can use these items to recreate historical events and phenomena. Teachers can organize activities for students to explore these items and discover more about the past. This helps students develop their ability to identify and recreate historical scenes. With guidance from teachers, students can actively observe and trace historical items in museum exhibitions, combining them with textbooks and learning materials to gain a better understanding of history.

To organize activities that involve tracing historical items to recreate events and phenomena in history lessons at museums and traditional houses, teachers should follow these steps: determining the content; dividing the class into groups and assigning tracing tasks; allowing groups to explore through observation, note-taking, and recording information about the artefacts; and guiding the content of the reports.

Teachers plan to help students explore historical traces by using museum and traditional house documents. The content that the teacher will focus on includes historical traces of key events, prominent figures, and historical processes. While tracing the historical event traces, the teacher will guide students to search for traces of primitive life through the exhibits at the Thai Nguyen Museum, traces of the Thai Nguyen uprising and the Bac Son uprising at the Viet Bac Armed Forces Museum. The teacher will also guide students to conduct activities linked to study sheets (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Tracing Historical Traces Worksheet**

To explore the historical traces of important revolutionary figures, teachers can use various methods. For example, they can examine Nguyen Ai Quoc's leadership activities in Viet Bac from 1941 to 1945, the Viet Minh during the August Revolution of 1945, and the residences of President Ho Chi Minh and the Party Central Committee in Viet Bac. These events can be
explored through artefacts displayed in the Viet Bac Armed Forces Museum and the ATK Dinh Hoa Traditional House. Another approach is to assign groups to trace the historical locations in the ATK Dinh Hoa Traditional House. Teachers can provide maps showing the distribution of historical sites in the Dinh Hoa safe area, and different student-groups can use these to locate the residences and workplaces of Uncle Ho, the Party Central Committee, the General Command, and other Central agencies. Teachers can also create worksheets to help students trace the historical events of these revolutionary figures.

3.3.2. Investigating activities to develop historical perception and critical thinking

Investigation refers to the process of seeking to understand and evaluate historical truth by assessing and analyzing events. Investigating history is an activity that students explore and interpret historical knowledge regarding an event from various evaluative perspectives. Guided by the teacher, students study historical evidence preserved and displayed in museums and use artefacts as a starting point, combining the content of textbooks to organize historical investigation activities. When engaging in historical investigation, students must draw on their understanding of historical context to construct a plausible scenario for past events. To test hypotheses, each student must search for and analyze relevant information to determine whether the hypothesis aligns with historical evidence. Historical investigation activities are a form of self-discovery learning, where students actively acquire knowledge, develop cognitive skills, and enhance historical understanding. Students absorb and process information from museums and traditional houses, then conclude to clarify learning issues.

The following are the steps to conduct historical investigation activities at museums and traditional houses:

1. Identify the research problem: Describe the historical event, figure, or phenomenon present in the textbooks. Determine what is already known, what is agreed upon, and what remains unclear or controversial.

2. Construct a scenario or hypothesis to explain the problem. Based on the understanding of the context, students develop a hypothetical scenario suitable for the lesson content.

3. Search for and analyze evidence to determine whether the students' hypothetical scenario has a solid foundation, is persuasive and reflects the students' correct understanding.

4. Discuss and evaluate the results of the investigation.

Analyzing evidence through museum artefacts and traditional house displays to affirm the hypothesis is a core task. The research problem is identified with questions such as "Why?", "How?", "What are the causes?", etc.

When using materials from museums and traditional houses to organize historical investigation activities, teachers can assign tasks to investigate issues such as "Why did Uncle Ho and the Party Central Committee choose Viet Bac as the resistance base?" and "Why is Viet Bac the tomb of the French colonialists?"

For example, during a history lesson "The early years of the nationwide resistance war against the French (1945-1950)," teachers can organize an investigation activity on "Why did President Ho Chi Minh launch the nationwide resistance war on December 19, 1946?". At the beginning of the lesson, teachers pose a cognitive question for the students to consider. Next, students will be guided by museum staff to observe the exhibits in the provincial museum. The museum exhibits include images of the nationwide resistance call or images of the order to launch the nationwide resistance, as well as combat artefacts and weapons such as rifles and grenades. These provide students with more information and allow them to develop a more objective and diverse perspective. After observing the exhibits, teachers ask students to exchange ideas based on what they have learned. Teachers then evaluate and conclude the investigation activity. This approach allows students to not only access knowledge through the teacher's lectures but also independently gather information and think critically.
Organizing history lessons at museums and traditional houses to develop students' adaptation ability

a) Organizing students to act as guides at museums and traditional houses

It is observed that in teaching history, the focus is mainly on imparting basic knowledge to students without emphasizing the practical application of the lessons in real life. This approach is theoretical and lacks practical implementation, which means that an applied pedagogical approach is needed to develop students' competencies. One way to achieve this is by organizing activities where students can act as guides.

During learning activities at museums and traditional houses, guides play an essential role in shaping students' perceptions and providing them with valuable information. Students appreciate museum and traditional house guides for their professionalism, engaging explanations, and ability to convey emotions. By observing guides' presentations and professional activities, teachers can divide student groups and encourage them to participate in role-playing as guides. This experiential activity can help reinforce lesson knowledge, explore new knowledge, or conduct during lesson summaries and wrap-ups. When students take on the role of guides, they not only learn the knowledge but also enhance their communication skills by using materials from museums and traditional houses to apply the knowledge they have learned.

After organizing activities to build new knowledge, teachers conduct role-playing activities as guides to reinforce and practice the knowledge for students as follows:
- Teachers assign tasks and explain requirements of the role-playing activity for each group of students.
- Guidance is provided on preparing explanations and guiding skills for the students.
- Students prepare their explanations, select artefacts, and practice presenting their explanations.
- Students perform their roles as guides
- Evaluating results of students' role-playing activities as guides (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Students act as museum guides

For example, when teaching about the Viet Bac Campaign in the winter of 1947, teachers can divide students into groups to organize activities where they act as museum guides. Based on their knowledge and displayed artefacts, students can present their understanding through these role-playing activities.

Activities at museums and traditional houses through role-playing activities as guides help students apply the knowledge they have learned while providing a practical learning experience, thus enhancing the effectiveness of learning.

b) Guiding students to collect materials to build a virtual museum or traditional house at home

Teachers need to guide students in acquiring document collection skills alongside active exploration and learning experiences. Documents related to significant historical events and figures in museums and traditional houses can help students enhance and deepen their fundamental knowledge of the lesson. Moreover, it contributes to the development of students' practical skills, skills to apply information technology and self-learning abilities. When students...
collect documents, museums and traditional houses serve as spaces containing numerous materials and artefacts for them to select and gather resources to construct virtual museums or traditional houses. The richness of resources in museums and traditional houses is both advantageous and challenging for students. Therefore, students must be equipped with document-collection skills to exploit various sources of knowledge promptly and accurately.

Guiding students in collecting materials to build virtual museums or traditional houses at home is essential to innovative ways of preparing for new lessons. During the process of collecting historical documents to serve in the construction of virtual museums or traditional houses, teachers need to instruct students to follow specific steps, as follows:

- Guide students in identifying the purpose and content of collecting documents and photos.
- Instruct students on how to analyze the sources of documents and select the content to collect.
- Teach students how to use technical means to digitize collected documents.
- Guide students in exploiting the information from the collected documents.

After collecting documents, teachers guide students to build a virtual museum or heritage house. With the digitized materials, students need two types of images: panoramic photos of the exhibition space and detailed photos of each artefact. Based on the digitized resources, students use design software like PowerPoint and 3DVista virtual tour to create the virtual museum. Students perform the following basic tasks: editing and grouping panoramic images, creating navigation links, inserting detailed photos of artefacts, adding audio narration of the museum, and saving and publishing as a virtual museum. The virtual museum format on 3DVista virtual tour software has the advantage of realistically simulating the full space of the actual museum and providing a visually immersive means of learning history. This contributes to creating interest in learning for students.

3.4. Pedagogical experiments

We experimented during the third part of lesson 18, which covered “The early years of the nationwide resistance war against French colonialism (1946 – 1950)” as outlined in the 12th-grade textbook, at the Vietnam National Museum of History. After conducting an experiment, we administered a 15-minute test that aimed to evaluate levels of achievement of the lesson objectives. Based on the test scores, we calculated the mean \((\bar{x})\) and standard deviation (Sd) between the experimental group and the control group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>(\bar{x})</th>
<th>Sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>00 03 04 08 11 13 06 01 00</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>00 00 02 05 08 13 14 04 01</td>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 indicates that the average score of the experimental class is higher than that of the control class by 0.95 points. Both experimental and control classes have a negligible standard deviation, indicating that the data is clustered around the mean. This shows that the proposed measures are feasible.

Apart from the quantitative evaluation, we also conducted discussions and gathered qualitative assessments from the participants. Teachers evaluated the organization of the lesson on the Border Campaign Autumn - Winter 1950 at the Viet Bac Armed Forces Museum as appropriate. They recognized the museum's central exhibition space as rich in materials, artefacts, images, maps, and documentary films closely related to the lesson content. Teachers emphasized the significance of conducting this experimental lesson at the museum for high school students in Thai Nguyen province. When organizing lessons at the museum, teachers acknowledged it as a new and intriguing learning environment for students. The engaging exhibition space and valuable historical materials and artefacts made the lesson content more relatable and specific.
Through the process of organizing the experimental lesson, teachers gained a proper understanding of the distinctive teaching format of history lessons at museums. Lessons at museums are not just recreational visits, but a specialized form of teaching that adheres to the requirements similar to classroom lessons.

For students, learning about the Border Campaign Autumn - Winter 1950 directly at the museum in their homeland has sparked excitement and interest. They appreciate the opportunity to learn in a non-traditional classroom environment. The exhibition hall has transformed into a classroom with the most realistic and vivid visual aids. When participating in learning activities at the museum, students feel engaged and motivated to explore and absorb knowledge. They eagerly participate in various new learning activities at the museum.

4. Conclusion

Alongside the fundamental task of renewing objectives, curriculum, and textbooks in the history subject, there is also a demand to innovate across all aspects of the teaching process. This includes exploring new methods of design, effective utilization of learning resources, and especially original documents preserved and displayed in museums and traditional houses. By examining the relationship between the exhibition contents of museums and traditional houses at the local level, we can determine historical lesson content and teaching methods that can be used in high schools in Thai Nguyen province. However, before exploring and utilizing museums and traditional houses, teachers need to carefully prepare suitable conditions according to the purpose and teaching plan.

Thai Nguyen is an excellent place to utilize museums and traditional houses in teaching history at high schools. With a diverse system that preserves and displays numerous important artefacts, museums and traditional houses have become popular learning destinations for students. When exploring and utilizing them, teachers need to be flexible and choose suitable forms and methods of organizing lessons that incorporate museum and traditional house materials into the curriculum, fostering historical competency development for students.

REFERENCES