

# Vietnamese cultural conceptualizations of *bụng* (belly) and *lòng* (abdomen)

## Implications for second-language learning

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This paper employs the analytical tools of Cultural Linguistics to investigate the Vietnamese cultural conceptualizations of BỤNG (BELLY) and LÒNG (ABDOMEN), both of which are considered to be the location of thoughts and feelings. Based on our corpus of Vietnamese idioms and proverbs, *The Tale of Kieu*, and several selected modern poems, we found that, while they share many cultural conceptualizations in common, *lòng* is used more in figurative contexts than *bụng*. BỤNG and LÒNG ARE THE SEAT AND CONTAINER OF THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS. LÒNG IS VIEWED AS A VAST SEA, VAST CLOTH, PIECE OF LAND/SOIL, STONE, AND A CHANGEABLE LIVING ENTITY. LÒNG, besides having size and quality, is believed to metaphorically have weight and color. An ethnographic survey reveals the Vietnamese sociocultural historical context, ethnomedicine, and philosophical beliefs that motivate the centralization on the abdominal area to metaphorically host people's thoughts and emotions. Our investigation again reveals that language is a "memory bank" (Sharifian 2011, p. 5), this time for cultural conceptualizations that have prevailed at different stages in Vietnamese history.

**Keywords:** Cultural Linguistics, cultural conceptualizations, cultural models, belly, abdomen, Vietnamese

### 1. Introduction

The study of how bodily experiences influence metaphors across languages has fuelled numerous discussions and received a great deal of attention during the last 20 years. Previous studies have shown that different languages in the world can fall into three types of conceptualizations: "abdominocentrism," "cardiocentrism," and "cerebrocentrism" (or "cephalocentrism") (Sharifian, Dirven, Yu, & Niemeier

2008). Abdominocentrism can be found in languages such as Indonesian (Siahaan 2008), Malay (Goddard 2008), Kuuk Thaayorre (Gaby 2008), Vietnamese (Ly & Le 2013; Nguyen 2009); cardiocentrism in languages such as Chinese (Yu 2008, 2009), Japanese (Ikegami 2008; Occhi 2008), Korean (Yoon 2008), and Thai (Nguyen 2010); and cerebrocentrism, which is generally a signal for dualism or the dichotomy of head/brain (the seat of the intellect) and heart (the seat of emotions), in languages such as Persian (Sharifian 2008), Dutch (Foolen 2008), and English (Niemeier 2008).

The aforementioned studies have highlighted that even though emotions are universally experienced by humans, the body parts that have been selected to locate both cognitive and affective abilities are culture specific. They also show that unrelated languages may use similar conceptual metaphors. It has also been found that languages instantiate cultural conceptualizations (to be presented in the next part) which are negotiated and renegotiated across time and space, and, moreover, that those conceptualizations are motivated by different cultural models (to be further explained in the next part). For instance, the focus on the heart as the ruler of both thoughts and emotions in Chinese can be traced back to the traditional Chinese medicine five-element theory and yin-yang (Yu 2008, 2009). Similarly, the focus on *hati*, “liver” or figuratively “heart” in Indonesian stems from the traditional practice of liver divination based in the old religious beliefs of Indonesian society (Siahaan 2008). The tendency towards viewing the belly as the locus of spirit, intuition, emotions, and characters in Kuuk Thaayorre (a Southwest Paman language spoken on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula) is traced back to the ethnomedicine, cosmology, and physiological experiences of the members of the corresponding cultural group (Gaby 2008).

These earlier studies also reiterate that linguistic evidences demonstrate tendencies towards a specific type of conceptualization in terms of a location for thinking and feeling, not the complete absence of another type. In other words, in a language where abdominocentrism dominates, heart and head may still have some conceptual significance. What matters for each language is which body part has the most salient conceptual significance.

In Vietnam the investigation of body parts and their associated metaphors have gathered escalating interest, which has led to studies on the notion of *bụng*, “belly,” *lòng*, “abdomen,” *ruột*, “intestines,” and *gan*, “liver” (Ly & Le 2013; Ly 2011; Nguyen 2009). The studies emphasize that, as evidenced in proverbs and daily communication, the Vietnamese language tends to center on the abdomen area. These studies have laid an important foundation for our current research but simultaneously reveal a gap in the field. First, they have not provided a systematic and profound analysis of the cultural conceptual metaphors, and second, they have not sufficiently explained what underlies such conceptualizations.

Our study, therefore, will employ Cultural Linguistics as our theoretical and analytical framework to explore the Vietnamese cultural conceptualizations of *BỤNG/BELLY* and *LÒNG/ABDOMEN* found in our corpus of Vietnamese proverbs, idioms, and poetry.

## 2. Cultural Linguistics as the theoretical and analytical framework

Cultural Linguistics is a field of research with multidisciplinary origins which explores the relationship between language and cultural conceptualizations (Sharifian 2011, 2015). Sharifian (2011) laid the foundation for Cultural Linguistics, which explores the interface between language and cultural conceptualization with its analytical tools of cultural categories, cultural schemas, and cultural conceptual metaphors. He states that cultural conceptualizations are heterogeneously distributed across different speech communities and across members of a speech community, and that language instantiates cultural conceptualizations (Sharifian 2011, 2015). As he emphasizes, Cultural Linguistics contends that language is strongly influenced by the cultural construction of conceptualizations based on human conceptual faculties (Sharifian 2011). Cultural cognition is “collective, group level cognition that embodies cultural knowledge that emerges from the interactions between the members of the group across time and space” (Sharifian 2011, p. 5), and language functions as a “collective memory bank” (Sharifian 2011, p. 5) for cultural conceptualizations. The analytical tools of Cultural Linguistics have been profitably applied across disciplines such as translation and interpretation (Sharifian 2015), language education (Dinh forthcoming), and World Englishes (Sharifian 2014, 2015; Xu 2014).

In contrast to a static or essentialized view of ‘culture’, cultural conceptualizations are not equally shared by all members of a cultural group since they are subject to changes in time and space, and individual representations are changed by the social interactions of any subject with others from various groups. Conceptualizations are therefore dynamic, complex, and able to be negotiated and renegotiated (Sharifian 2011).

The process of conceptualizing, according to Sharifian (2011), consists of schematization, categorization, and cross-domain conceptualization. Hence, cultural conceptualization is a collective term comprising the subcategories of cultural schema, cultural category, and cultural metaphor. Cultural schemas “are conceptual structures (or pools of knowledge heterogeneously shared by members of a cultural group)” (Sharifian 2011, p. 24). They are constructed, perceived, and interpreted differently depending on an individual’s experience with a particular object, concept, phenomenon, and so forth.

Cultural categories are “cognitive categories that have a cultural basis” (Sharifian 2011, p.24). In other words, the process by which humans categorize things, experiences, and events, while a cognitive process, is influenced by culture.

Cultural conceptual metaphors are “conceptual metaphors that are rooted in cultural systems such as ethnomedical traditions, religion, and the like” (Sharifian 2011, p.25). The way one domain is compared to another and how this comparison or association is understood and interpreted is highly culture dependent.

The investigation of cultural metaphors in Cultural Linguistics is not confined to the analysis of how different cognitive systems and cultures influence the mapping of different domains, and how this is reflected in language. It also extends to the analysis of the ‘cultural models’ that underlie such mappings. Cultural models are defined to set up specific perspectives from which “aspects of embodied experience are viewed as particularly salient and meaningful in people’s lives,” in “shaping what people believe, how they act, and how they speak about the world and their own experiences” (Gibbs 1999, p.154). According to Sharifian (2008), metaphors can be rooted in cultural models, rather than reflecting them. Cultural models can be understood as “templates” (Yu 2007) that provide the members of a cultural group with a certain understanding of different aspects of life. For example, traditional Chinese medicine lends itself to the notion of cultural model as it functions as a template that determines the conceptualization of HEART AS THE SEAT OF EMOTIONS AND THOUGHTS in Chinese culture (see Yu 2008). Equally, the traditional practice of liver divination based in the old religious beliefs of ancient Indonesian society creates the template for the conceptualization of HATI (“liver,” but figuratively, “heart”) AS THE SEAT OF EMOTIONS AND THOUGHTS (see Siahaan 2008). These examples indicate that cultural models or “social and cultural constructions of experience fundamentally shape embodied metaphor” (Gibbs 1999, p.155).

Among the multidisciplinary applications of Cultural Linguistics, the analysis of conceptual metaphors related to body organs across cultures has been significant. Examples include the cultural conceptualizations of *del*, “heart-stomach” in Persian (Sharifian 2008), and *xin*, “heart” in Chinese (Yu 2009). As previously mentioned, this study will use the tools of Cultural Linguistics to investigate how cultural categories, cultural schemas, and conceptual metaphors are evident in the Vietnamese expressions of *bụng* and *lòng*, and what cultural models motivate these cultural conceptualizations.

### 3. The Vietnamese language and its speakers

According to official statistics from the Vietnamese government, there are around 54 ethnic groups in the country: the dominant Viet or Kinh, and 53 other ethnicities (or minority groups), each with its own language (Ly & Le 2013). Among these ethnic minority languages, only Chinese and Khmer have an official status (and even these are not official languages in Vietnam but rather in China and Cambodia, respectively). There are a variety of language families, subfamilies, or groups of Southeast Asian (SEA) languages that can be used to classify the languages that are spoken by Vietnamese minority groups.

Out of about 54 languages, Vietnamese is the most widespread as the main language spoken by the dominant ethnic group, the Viet. Therefore, this paper will investigate the Vietnamese cultural conceptualizations of *BELLY* and *ABDOMEN* in this Vietnamese language.

### 4. Data and data analysis procedure

This section will present our corpus for analyzing Vietnamese *BELLY* and *ABDOMEN* and the analysis procedure. The study was based on samples from a corpus of proverbs and idioms, *The Tale of Kieu*, and 21 twentieth-century poems by three famous Vietnamese authors: Xuan Dieu, Tham Tam, and Nguyen Binh. Ten poems by Xuan Dieu, ten by Nguyen Binh, and one by Tham Tam were chosen (a list of poem titles can be found in Appendix 1). The proverbs and idioms are drawn from the *Dictionary of Idioms and Proverbs* by Viet Chuong (2010), one of the most comprehensive dictionaries of Vietnamese idioms, folk songs, and proverbs.

Proverbs and idioms have been selected for this research because they have been widely considered as specific examples of linguistic, cultural, and cognitive investigations of a people (Ly 2011). As defined by Mieder (1993, p. 43), “a proverb is a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed, and memorizable form and which is handed down from generation to generation.” Further, the study of proverbs can reveal underlying worldviews (Niemeier 1982). Similarly, idioms carry a large amount of cultural information such as history, worldview, custom, national psychology, and thought patterns (Niemeier 1982). In Vietnamese literature proverbs, idioms, and folk songs play an integral role in daily life as they reflect the people’s history, experience, worldview, and culture over thousands of years (Tran 1991).

*The Tale of Kieu*, written by Nguyen Du (1766–1820), is regarded “the acme of Vietnam’s literary heritage and the purest distillation of its national essence”

(Pham Quynh 1919). It is a poem, considered a classic masterpiece, which was originally written in the old demotic script and later transliterated into modern Vietnamese (Tai 1992). As a pride of the Vietnamese people, it is evidence of the existence and independence of the Vietnamese language that remained despite the linguistic assimilation of colonial times (Nguyen 2002; Pham Quynh 1919).

Besides classic Vietnamese poetry, contemporary poetry in the twentieth century was examined for linguistic evidence of the target terms in the current Vietnamese language. The three authors, Xuan Dieu (1916–1985), Nguyen Binh (1906–1951), and Tham Tam (1917–1950), were selected as they are distinguished modern Vietnamese poets whose works portray everyday life in everyday language.

The procedure for analyzing this data comprises two stages: first, identifying and analyzing cultural conceptualizations embedded in the linguistic evidence found in the data, and second, tracing the cultural models on which these are based on an ethnographic survey.

**Table 1.** The procedure of analysis

Stage	Methods
Stage 1   Cultural conceptualization analysis	Consult dictionary meanings of the concepts of <i>BỤNG</i> and <i>LÒNG</i>  Scan the corpus of data for instances when <i>BỤNG</i> and <i>LÒNG</i> appear  Analyze the instances of <i>BỤNG</i> and <i>LÒNG</i> to tease out the cultural conceptualizations
Stage 2   Cultural model investigations	Conduct ethnographic survey of available literature in anthropology, history, ethnomedicine, cultural studies, etc. for cultural models motivating the cultural conceptualizations  Relate the ethnographic survey to trace cultural models and cultural conceptualizations evidenced in the data

5.   **Vietnamese cultural conceptualizations of *BỤNG*/BELLY**

5.1   Explicating ‘bụng’ from dictionary data

The meanings of *bụng*, “belly” were taken from the three most scholarly Vietnamese-Vietnamese Dictionaries, *Đại Nam Quốc Âm Tự Vị* (Huynh 1895), *Việt Nam Từ Điển* (Hội Khai Trí Tiến Đức 1931), and *Từ Điển Tiếng Việt* (Hoàng Phê 2003).

**Table 2.** A summary of dictionary meanings of *bụng*, “belly”

Dictionary	<i>Bụng</i>	Belly
<i>Đại Nam Quốc Âm Tự Vị</i> — National Vietnamese dic- tionary of lexicons (Huỳnh 1895 )	<i>Chỗ chứa cả bộ ruột; số ra, bụng ra, nở lớn</i>	An area containing intestines, a protruding and enlargeable part
<i>Việt Nam Từ Điển</i> — Vietnam Dictionary (1931)	<i>Phần được ruột gan ở trong thân thể người và các giống vật: Bụng trên (phía trên rốn). Bụng dưới (phía dưới rốn)</i>  <i>Nói chung về tâm địa và tính tình người ta: tốt bụng, xấu bụng, bẩn bụng</i>	A part where the intestines are located, liver of human and animal body: upper belly (above navel) and lower belly (below navel)  Generally indicating humans’ intentions and personalities
<i>Từ điển tiếng Việt</i> — Vietnamese-Vietnamese Dictionary (Hoang Phe 2003 )	<i>Bộ phận cơ thể người hoặc động vật, chứa ruột, dạ dày</i>  <i>Bụng con người, coi là biểu tượng của ý nghĩ, tình cảm sâu kín đối với người, với việc</i>  <i>Phần phình to ở giữa một số vật.</i>	A human and animal body part containing intestines and stom- ach  A symbol of inner thought, love for humans and work  The protruding part of some objects and animals

As seen in Table 2, the Vietnam Dictionary and Vietnamese-Vietnamese Dictionary give a secondary meaning of *bụng*, “belly” in which it metaphorically refers to the thoughts and emotions of the Vietnamese people.

Previous studies by Nguyen (2009) and Ly and Le (2013) also postulate that the Vietnamese language and culture belongs to that group of languages that prioritize the abdominocentric region or the belly and abdomen area for the cognitive and affective faculties.

Though *bụng* contains sub-parts such as intestines and stomach, we will only investigate the concept of *bụng* on its own, not its sub-parts, in this paper.

## 5.2 Linguistic expressions of *bụng*

Our data reveals one instance of *bụng* in *The Tale of Kieu* and 30 instances in the dictionary of Vietnamese idioms and proverbs, but none in the designated poems by the three chosen poets. From these instances, the cultural conceptualizations were analyzed as follows.

### 5.2.1 *Bụng as a seat of thoughts, inner thoughts and ideas.*

Examples 1 to 3 show the use of *bụng* as a carrier or container of cognitive abilities:

- (1) *Nghĩ bụng*  
Think belly  
“Have something in mind”
- (2) *Định bụng*  
Intend belly  
“Plan something in mind”
- (3) *Đi guốc trong bụng*  
Walk shoes in belly  
“See someone/know someone’s inner thoughts and intentions”

These three examples show that the belly is considered to be where confidential or unspoken thoughts and intentions are stored. Therefore, if we “have something in our belly,” we do not necessarily let it out. However, if someone “walks in our belly,” as in Example 3, this means he/she can see our inner thoughts.

### 5.2.2 *Bụng as the seat of romantic love and other basic emotions.*

Examples 4 to 6 from our corpus show that the belly stores love and feelings:

- (4) *Yêu thầm dấu bụng*  
Love secretly hide belly  
“Love someone secretly/unspoken love”
- (5) *Mở cờ trong bụng*  
Open flags in belly  
“Feel excited/happy”
- (6) *Ứng cái bụng*  
Pleased (noun classifier) belly  
“Agreeable to/pleased with”

Apparently, love is hidden in the belly, as shown in Example 4. In English, the heart is the seat of love, so if we love someone, we have him/her in our heart. In Vietnamese if “our belly likes someone” (*ứng bụng ai*), we begin to like and love him/her. Furthermore, the belly can store joy and excitement, as in Example 5.

It seems that the thoughts, emotions, and love that are stored in the belly are implicit and unspoken. That is, if we have a thought in our belly, we keep it there and do not necessarily let it out.



### 5.2.3 *Bụng as the seat of human characters, moral qualities and prestige.*

Examples 7 to 10 illustrate how different personal qualities both good and bad, morality, and prestige are viewed as located in the belly.

- (7) *Tốt bụng*  
Good belly  
“Kind-hearted”
- (8) *Xấu bụng*  
Bad belly  
“Not kind-hearted”
- (9) *Miệng Nam mô                      bụng bồ      dao găm*  
Mouth Buddhist chanting belly bucket knives  
“Have a nice mouth but a bad heart”
- (10) *Bụng dạ              hẹp hòi*  
Belly stomach narrow  
“Narrow-minded/mean”

These four examples exemplify the notion of belly as a container, and one that can store knives which metaphorically refer to ill/wicked intentions, as in Example 9. This proverb, even though it focuses on inner thoughts, also refers to the human characteristic of wickedness or perfidy. It can be observed that both negative and positive human characteristics are rooted in the belly. While English speakers measure kindness and generosity in terms of the metaphorical size and quality of the heart, speakers of Vietnamese describe a kind and generous person as someone who is good-bellied and big-bellied. The placing of characteristics in the belly is also found in other languages such as Kuuk Thaayorre (Gaby 2008). This similarity accentuates that totally unrelated languages may share something in common at a conceptual level.

The belly is also viewed as a place that stores prestige, as is evident in Example 11, from a proverb:

- (11) *Đói      trong bụng không ai      biết*  
Hungry in      belly no      one know  
*Rách áo      mặc chẳng ai      hay*  
Torn clothes wear no      one interest  
“Don’t let other people know that we are in an impoverished circumstance”

The proverb advises people to maintain their social standing by appropriate behavior and self-presentation even though they are actually experiencing poverty and hunger.

In brief, the Vietnamese cultural conceptualization of BỤNG AS A CONTAINER is evidenced in the data. *Bụng* is also understood as a container for books as in the example of *bụng sách*, “belly-books,” so someone with “a belly of books” is a keen and knowledgeable reader, and someone whose belly contains knives, as in Example 10, is wicked. In addition, belly is understood as a location for human characteristics, morals, intentions, and prestige.

6. Vietnamese cultural conceptualizations of LÒNG/ABDOMEN

6.1 Explicating lòng from dictionary data

Table 3. A summary of dictionary meanings of lòng, “abdomen”

Dictionaries	lòng	place of abdomen
<i>Đại Nam Quốc Âm Tự Vị</i> — National Vietnamese dictionary of lexicons (Huynh,1895 )	<i>trái tim, tình ý, tâm tình, cả bộ ruột</i>	Heart, love, confidence, a part that contains the intestines
	<i>Nói c hung về ruột gan</i>	Generally refers to intestines and liver
	<i>Tâm tính, bụng dạ người ta</i>	Human personalities, ‘belly and stomach’ of humans
<i>Việt Nam Từ Điển</i> — Vietnam Dictionary (1931)	<i>Phần giữa</i>	The middle/central part A part in the knitting process (jargon)
	<i>Những bộ phận trong bụng của con vật giết thịt, dùng làm thức ăn (nói tổng quát)</i>	All the parts inside the belly of animals
	<i>(kết hợp hạn chế). Bụng con người</i>	The human belly
<i>Từ điển tiếng Việt</i> — Vietnamese-Vietnamese Dictionary (Hoang 2003)	<i>Bụng của con người, coi là biểu tượng của mặt tâm lý, tình cảm, ý chí, tinh thần</i>	The human belly, a symbol of psychology, emotions, spirits, and mental abilities
	<i>Phần ở giữa hay ở trong một số vật, có khả năng chứa đựng hay che chở</i>	The middle or inside part of humans, things, and animals, which can contain or provide custody

As is clear, the three dictionaries recognize the literal meaning of lòng, synonymous with that of bụng, but it figuratively refers to human thoughts, emotions, and spirit. Lòng and bụng, as defined in the dictionaries, do share the same figurative

sense to a large extent. The two concepts, however, do not actually overlap, since there are two kinds of ‘world view’ regarding the location of human thoughts and feelings in inner body organs: the ‘dualistic cultural construct’ in English versus the ‘monistic cultural construct’ in Vietnamese, constructs which are also observed in Thai and Japanese, respectively (Berendit, Tanita 2011, as cited in Ly & Le, 2013). In our study, we examined the concept of *lòng* as a non-anatomical part in which the affective and cognitive abilities are located.

## 6.2 Linguistic expressions of *lòng*

Our data shows that there are 32 instances of *lòng* out of 3254 lines in *The Tale of Kieu*, 227 instances in the Dictionary of Vietnamese idioms and proverbs, and 10 instances in the chosen poems. In these instances *lòng* both appears as an independent unit and is collocated with noun classifiers, nouns, adjectives, and verbs to form longer expressions. The nature of these collocations subject to semantic analysis helped reveal the conceptualizations of *LÒNG* as follows.

### 6.2.1 *Lòng as a container.*

In Vietnamese, the abdomen as the seat of affective and cognitive abilities is often understood as a container. Examples 12 and 13 demonstrate this usage:

- (12) *Đã lòng                quân tử    đã mang*  
 Once abdomen        noble man many carry  
 “Once the noble man sets his mind on something”

- (13) *Thiện căn            ở        tại        lòng ta*  
 God well-nature reside abdomen we  
 “Good will is within ourselves”

The two examples from *The Tale of Kieu* illustrate that the place of abdomen carries many thoughts and intentions and it is where human nature is rooted and resides.

Besides, our data indicates that *lòng* hosts numerous emotions, such as anger, happiness, joy, and nervousness, which will be demonstrated in the next section. As *lòng* is conceptualized as a container, it can be opened or locked, as in the examples of *mở lòng*, “open-abdomen” (“let people see and hear what you think/feel,” “be willing to welcome the new”), as an opposite to *khép lòng*, “close-abdomen” (“keep thoughts and feelings to yourselves,” “be unwilling to welcome the new”). It has a ‘bottom’, as in *tự đáy lòng* (“from-bottom-abdomen”/“from the bottom of one’s heart”). It can also be described as empty or full of emotions, intentions, or thoughts, as in *lòng trống rỗng*, “abdomen-empty” (“feel empty”), *lòng không dạ trống*, “abdomen-empty-stomach-empty” (“have no bad intentions,” “be

innocent”) and *lòng đầy yêu thương*, “abdomen-filled-love” (“full of passion for”). It can be pressed when feelings seem to be overflowing, as in *nén lòng*, “press-abdomen” (“refrain from,” “suppress feelings”) or broken, as in *tan nát cõi lòng*, “broken-area-abdomen” (“heartbroken”).

### 6.2.2 *Lòng as a vast sea, a piece of cloth, a field/land and stone.*

Vietnamese has the following compound words related to abdomen that reveal how it is categorized and conceptualized:

- (14) *Bão lòng*, “**storm**-abdomen”
- (15) *Chuyện lòng*, “**story**-abdomen”
- (16) *Tấc lòng*, “**inch**-abdomen”
- (17) *Tấm lòng*, “**layer**-abdomen”
- (18) *Tiếng lòng*, “**sound**-abdomen”
- (19) *Tơ lòng*, “**connection**-abdomen”
- (20) *Cõi lòng*, “**area**-abdomen”

The above collocations indicate that *lòng* is categorized as “sea” (Example 14), “cloth” (Example 17), and “vast land” (Example 20), which have a connection with storms, sounds, layers, and areas, respectively.

Examples 21 to 25 demonstrate how ABDOMEN is conceptualized as making sounds, making waves, having the ability to spread out, and having the ability to have seeds grown in it.

- (21) *Đưa người ta không đưa qua sông*  
 See off people we not accompany cross river  
*Sao có tiếng sóng ở trong lòng*  
 Why have sound wave in inside abdomen  
 “We do not accompany our friends till they cross the river when we see them off. But why do we still feel melancholic?”
- (22) *Trải lòng*  
 Spread abdomen  
 “Open the heart and confide everything”
- (23) *Gieo vào lòng*  
 Grow in abdomen  
 “Grow a thought or passion in the heart/mind of someone”

- (24) *Dò sông dò biển không dò được lòng người*  
 Measure river measure sea not measure can abdomen human  
 “It is possible to measure the sea but not to measure what people think and what they have in mind”
- (25) *Ghi lòng tạc dạ*  
 Write abdomen carve stomach  
 “Bear in mind/remember for good”

Example 21 is about the mixed feelings inside a person on seeing his/her beloved person off. “Having a wave in the abdomen” indicates a little change or a little pain in the heart as if the abdomen were to undergo a minor disturbance. Example 24 implies that the abdomen is similar to the sea/ocean in that it is vast, but differs from it in that the former is immeasurable. These two examples accentuate the conceptual metaphor of ABDOMEN AS A VAST SEA.

Example 22 indicates the openness of our heart when we get confidential stories and thoughts off our chest. “Spreading open the abdomen” shows that abdomen is compared to cloth, which can be unfolded or spread out so that people can view what is inside it.

In Example 23, the verb *gieo*, “grow, cultivate” is collocated with “abdomen,” similar to the English expression “grow something in the mind/heart.” The Vietnamese expression depicts ABDOMEN AS A PIECE OF LAND/FIELD/SOIL that can nourish the seeds of love and thought sown upon it.

Example 25 captures the metaphor of ABDOMEN AS STONE onto which words can be written or carved. The expression means that we will remember someone’s teaching, a lesson, or good deeds as permanently as words carved and written onto stone which do not fade over time.

These examples from the data demonstrate that abdomen is understood as something that is foldable and movable and has size, since it is conceptualized as VAST CLOTH, VAST SEA, LAND/SOIL, and STONE.

### 6.2.3 *Lòng as the core/seat of emotions, morals, memories, attitudes, characteristics and human spirits.*

Our data demonstrate the linguistic instantiation of the PLACE OF ABDOMEN AS THE CORE/SEAT OF MULTIPLE EMOTIONS, MEMORIES, AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS metaphor.

In English there is an idiom “learn by heart” which captures the notion of the heart as a container of memories; however, in Vietnamese, the equivalent is *học thuộc lòng*, “learn by abdomen.” As such, it is the abdomen that is understood as holding our memories rather than the heart.

The abdomen, as the data reveals, contains different types of emotions. Below are some examples:

- (26) *Đau lòng*  
Pain abdomen  
“Heartbroken”
- (27) *Vui lòng*  
Joy abdomen  
“Pleased/satisfied”
- (28) *Động lòng*  
Move abdomen  
“Feel touched/feel moved”
- (29) *Lòng chộn rộn*  
Abdomen tumbling  
“Have butterflies in one’s stomach”

These linguistic instances indicate that different shades of human emotions, including happiness, pain, anger, and nervousness, reside in the abdomen.

Besides, as shown in the example of *nghĩ trong lòng* (think-in-abdomen/have something in mind), it stores thoughts and hosts mental activities.

The abdomen is where different personal characteristics, morals, and spirits are placed, as demonstrated in Examples 30 to 42 from our corpus:

- (30) *Tận đáy lòng*  
At bottom abdomen  
“From the bottom of one’s heart”
- (31) *Thật lòng*  
True abdomen  
“Honest/genuine”
- (32) *Lòng tin*  
Abdomen trust/faith  
“Trust/faith”
- (33) *Lòng hiếu thảo*  
Abdomen piety  
“Piety”
- (34) *Lòng kính trọng*  
Abdomen respect  
“Respect”

- (35) *Lòng yêu nước*  
Abdomen love country  
“Patriotism”
- (36) *Lòng quyết tâm*  
Abdomen determination  
“Determination”
- (37) *Lòng can đảm*  
Abdomen bravery  
“Bravery”
- (38) *Ăn ở hai lòng*  
Eat live two abdomen  
“Be two-faced/unfaithful”
- (39) *Lòng dạ đen tối*  
Abdomen stomach black dark  
“Wicked/unreliable”
- (40) *Lòng dạ trong sạch*  
Abdomen stomach pure clean  
“Noble/transparent”
- (41) *Thay lòng đổi dạ*  
Change abdomen change stomach  
“Change one’s mind”
- (42) *Nặng lòng ≠ nhẹ lòng*  
Heavy abdomen ≠ light abdomen  
“Be occupied with thoughts and worries ≠ feel comfortable”

These twelve examples demonstrate that abdomen can be viewed as a container of moral virtues such as piety and respect; personal characteristics such as honesty and faith; spirits such as determination; and courage, patriotism, trust, and love. The abdomen is believed to be capable of taking on colors, as in Examples 39 and 40, and weight, as in Example 42. These findings are relatively similar to the Indonesian cultural conceptualizations of *HATI*, which, according to Siahaan (2008), also has size, qualities, and weight. As can be seen in Examples 39 and 40, in Vietnamese BEING MORAL AND NOBLE IS HAVING CLEAN AND PURE PLACE OF ABDOMEN, so someone with PURE CLEAN PLACE OF ABDOMEN IS MORAL AND SINLESS. On the contrary, BEING IMMORAL/VICIOUS IS HAVING BLACK AND DARK PLACE OF ABDOMEN. Therefore, the abdomen can change from pure white to black, as in *lòng đổi trắng thay đen*, “abdomen change from white to black” or *thay lòng*

*đổi dạ*, “change abdomen change stomach.” These two expressions indicate a moral deterioration in a person.

The abdomen has weight, as can be seen in Example 42; therefore, it can be heavy or light. A “heavy abdomen” indicates lots of thoughts, worries, stories, and emotions kept inside, so a person is advised to “open or spread his/her abdomen” and let their thoughts out to feel “light” and more comfortable. The heavy and light capacity of the abdomen reinforces the conceptualization of ABDOMEN AS A CONTAINER which can become heavy if it carries too many thoughts and emotions.

Besides having color and weight, the abdomen is elastic, for it can be loosened or pressed. Consider Example 43, from a poem by Xuan Dieu:

- (43) *Vì thả lòng kim chế dây cương*  
 Because release/loosen abdomen suppress limit rein  
 “Because I do not suppress my feelings and I just follow my heart”

This example shows that the abdomen can be loosened to fully express and receive love without restrictions or suppression; on the contrary, *nén lòng*, “suppress/tighten abdomen” indicates the suppression of feelings and acts.

Also, the abdomen is the seat of love, humanity, and affective feelings, as shown in Examples 44 to 51:

- (44) *Thương ai để trong lòng*  
 Love someone put in abdomen  
 “Unspoken love”
- (45) *Buổi ấy lòng ta nghe ý bạn*  
 Day that abdomen me hear idea you  
*Lần đầu rung động nỗi yêu thương*  
 Time first vibrate love  
 “I can hear how you feel  
 The moment I know I am falling in love with you”
- (46) *Lòng anh thôi đã cưới lòng em*  
 Abdomen me already marry abdomen you  
 “I have fallen in love with you”
- (47) *Yêu là chết ở trong lòng một ít*  
 Love is die in inside abdomen a bit  
 “Love means our heart will get hurt”
- (48) *Nói ra sợ mất lòng em*  
 Say out afraid lose abdomen you  
 “I am afraid I will upset you if I tell the truth”



- (49) *Tấm lòng vàng*  
Layer abdomen gold  
“Heart of gold”
- (50) *Xa mặt cách lòng*  
Far face far abdomen  
“Out of sight out of mind”
- (51) *Bằng mặt không bằng lòng*  
Agree face not please abdomen  
“What is shown outside is not necessarily what is felt inside”

As can be seen, romantic love, as in Examples 44, 46, and 47, or human love/humanity, as in Example 45, is kept in the abdomen. It is apparent that the abdomen is a living entity that can hear the thoughts held in the abdomen of another person, as in Example 45, and partially die, as in Example 47, when people experience different degrees of love.

The abdomen also stores affective feelings in general. Therefore, if we *được lòng*, “win-place of abdomen,” we win someone’s heart and earn his/her favor; in contrast, if we *làm mất lòng*, “lose someone’s abdomen” as in Example 48, we offend or upset him/her; in other words, we fail to maintain a harmonious relationship by saying or doing something displeasing.

In Example 49, the Vietnamese proverb *xa mặt cách lòng* is a near-equivalent to “out of sight out of mind” in English. However, they differ in that the English proverb means that if you do not see or hear about someone or something for a period of time, you stop thinking about them (Cambridge Idioms Dictionary 2006); and that if you do not see someone or something frequently, you will forget about it (Ly 2011). Sometimes this proverb is used to imply that you will forget people who have moved far away (McGraw-Hill Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs 2002, as cited in Ly 2011). These definitions show that while the English proverb is ‘broader’ with a sense related to *someone or something*, the Vietnamese proverb is used for persons only, predominantly lovers. Therefore, it refers to how long distance can weaken not only the thoughts people have of each other but also the love/passion they feel for each other.

Example 47 indicates a general genuine positive mutual feeling expressed in *bằng lòng*, “agreeing-place of abdomen.” Therefore, if we are *bằng mặt không bằng lòng*, “agree in face but not in place of abdomen with someone,” we do not genuinely like someone but, possibly out of courtesy and/or to avoid conflict, we behave as if we do.

The linguistic evidence indicates that *lòng* is an umbrella concept, which, as we observe from the corpus, is capable of multiple figurative meanings. *LÒNG* is

conceptualized as A CONTAINER AND SEAT OF EMOTIONS, MORALS, SPIRITS, LOVE, HUMANITY, MEMORIES, AND AFFECTIVE FEELINGS. We also observe that *bụng* and *lòng* provide the location for similar affective and cognitive faculties, although to a large extent *lòng* tends to be used in figurative contexts more than *bụng*. In other words, *bụng* is a more colloquial expression, but this is not to say that *lòng* is not commonly used in everyday contexts.

## 7. Cultural models behind the conceptualizations of BỤNG and LÒNG

### 7.1 The agriculture-based and historical context of Vietnam

As explained by numerous scholars, including Ly and Le (2013), Nguyen (2008), and Nguyen (2010), it is the sociocultural, agricultural, and historical contexts of Vietnam that motivate the focus on the abdomen as the center of thoughts and emotions. The living environment with the agriculture-based economy, frequent natural disasters, and a long history of war have ensured difficulty with even basic survival needs (Nguyen 2001). The wet-rice agriculture ultimately placed a high level of concern on the food harvest, and the possibility of famine caused by a failed crop has become a primary fear for many Vietnamese people. As Nguyen (2008, p. 11) states,

*... Tư duy của người nông dân trồng lúa Việt Nam luôn gắn với cái ăn. Nỗi lo đói kém mất mùa, lo nhất là thiếu ăn, đói bụng khiến cái bụng trở thành đối tượng tư duy của người Việt Nam, họ thường lấy cái bụng (dạ, lòng, ruột) làm thước đo mọi hiện tượng đời sống từ cụ thể đến trừu tượng.*

“The worldview held by many Vietnamese people is attached to food and eating. The pivotal worry revolves around hunger, empty belly, and failed crop in a wet-rice agricultural economy, resulting in belly as the measure for all literal and figurative phenomena in life.”

Besides, natural disasters such as floods and unnatural disasters such as invasions made the need to “fulfil the stomach/belly,” to sustain and fight, very real. Nguyen (2011) observes that the Vietnamese people prioritized food and eating because without food, they could hardly have survived to struggle with the annual catastrophes and their enemies. As a Vietnamese proverb goes, *có thực mới vực được đạo*, roughly translated as “without food we can barely conquer the religious journey.” It is noticed that the ability to survive, sustain, struggle, and develop relies on food and the stomach for energy and physical and mental strength.

## 7.2 The ethnomedical beliefs and practices

Traditional Vietnamese Medicine (henceforth abbreviated as TVM) has a long history starting at the time of the Hung Vuong dynasty over 2,000 years ago. For thousands of years, TVM evolved and was influenced by Traditional Chinese Medicine but it developed its own distinct tradition. TVM is called *Dong Y*, and while it shares its theoretical foundations such as yin and yang and the five elements with the Chinese Traditional Medicine, it differs in practice (Hue 2003). *Dong Y* is based on the observed effects of *Qi* (energy). Despite *Qi* taking different forms (Digestive, Immune System, Mental State), these forms are all related to the original Source or Essence and Food *Qi* (Hue 2003). While the Essence is inherited from our parents, Food *Qi* is extracted from food. Here the yin-yang and five elements in *Dong Y* will not be explained in detail, but instead the role of food as a distinctive feature of *Dong Y* will be explained in relation to the cultural context of the linguistic expressions of belly and abdomen in Vietnamese.

The TVM places high importance on dietetics. Food and digestion are so important that the investigation of food leads to the categorization of food into different types, basically hot and cool/cold foods (Hue 2003; Tran, Pharm, & Bodeker 2001). The categorization of food as hot or cold does not depend on the temperature but rather on the effects that the food brings about on the body as well as food preparation method. For example, cold/cool food includes fresh food and steamed or boiled vegetables while hot food includes fried, deep fried, or very rich foods (high sugar/high fat foods). Hot and cold foods are believed to impact the state of health differently, and for patients the choice of diet and medication depends on which source of food has been over- or under-consumed (Hue 2003; Godman 2009; Manderson & Mathews 1981a, 1981b; Mathews & Manderson 1981). The body is seen as operating in a delicate balance between these elements. Thus medical treatment normally starts with the investigation of food intake as it is considered to be the cause of most diseases, and prescribing a change in the patient's diet is an important part of healthcare.

The belly is where the food is digested — the point at which food becomes part of the body — and impacts the state of the whole being, both mental and physical. This belief is witnessed, for example, in the food practices prescribed for pregnant women. There are certain foods that most Vietnamese women try to avoid during their pregnancy, some of which are believed to have physical and others mental impacts.

That the place of the abdomen, especially the stomach and intestines, is closely related to cognitive and affective functions, as emphasized in the TVM, is reinforced by recent scientific medical research by Blakeslee (1996); Gershon and Erde (1981); Gershon, Chalazontitis, and Rothman (1993); Gershon (1998); and

Mayer (2011), who have found that intestines can be considered the ‘second brain’. Gershon (1998) states that nerve cells in the gut act as a brain. This ‘second brain’ can control our gut by itself. Our two brains — the one in our head and the one in our bowel — must cooperate. If they do not, then there is chaos in the gut and misery in the head. He also shows that the brain in the gut plays a major role in human happiness and misery, but few people know of this connection (Gershon 1981). Gershon and Erde (1981) and Gershon (1998) explain that just as the brain can upset the gut, the gut can also upset the brain. Recent years in medical science have witnessed a rising interest in the second brain and the interaction between the brain in the skull and that in the gut (Blakeslee 1996). In other words, the ethnomedical belief and practices in Vietnam which place emphasis on the abdominal organs have recently been reinforced by Western medical evidence. This shows that the Vietnamese cultural conceptualizations of ABDOMEN as the governor of emotions and thoughts also have a scientific basis.

### 7.3 Vietnamese philosophical beliefs

Western philosophical tradition upholds the reason-emotion dichotomy of the head and the heart (Yu 2009). There is also a Vietnamese philosophical conception of the heart but this was developed under the influence of Chinese culture (Ly 2011). In Vietnamese the notion of heart as the center of both thoughts and emotions is evidenced in 25 expressions containing *tâm*, “heart” (*xin* in Chinese) (Nguyen 2008). However, as he notes, the “heart” is metaphorically referred to as the Vietnamese people’s “adopted child,” while the “abdomen” is viewed as their “biological child.” In Nguyen’s (2008) words, “*Mặc dầu qua hơn 2000 năm, ông bà ta cũng coi tâm như đứa con nuôi, nhưng xem lòng mới là đứa con ruột ruột đẻ ra và thương nó nhiều hơn mười mấy lần !*” (translated as “even though over 2,000 years has passed, evidence has shown our ancestors considered *tâm*, ‘heart’ as an adopted child, and *lòng* as our biological child, the child we bore, adore, and prioritize much more”).

Besides, our experience as cultural insiders makes it indisputable that in everyday life, Vietnamese people tend to use *bụng* and *lòng* expressions much more frequently than *tâm* or *tim* to refer to their emotions and thoughts. Besides, expressions using *bụng*, “belly” and *lòng*, “abdomen” in many cases draw on metaphorical meanings, which is not the case with *tim*, “heart.” For example, if we say *đau tim*, “pain-heart,” it means that our heart is literally in pain (heart attack) or we are taken aback. The expression for heartbroken as an emotional state is *đau lòng*, “pain-abdomen.”

The question of why it is not the head that stores the thoughts and emotions but the belly and abdomen in Vietnamese might remain. As illustrated above, the

Vietnamese people lived in an agricultural economy which was largely dependent on geographical and climatic circumstances. This reality placed high importance on flexibility (Tran 2001; Phan 1998) as the people had to be mentally dynamic and flexible and always ready to deal with unexpected disasters and even attacks by sudden invaders (Phan 1998; Tran 2001). As a result, BELLY AND ABDOMEN CONCEPTUALIZED AS LARGE AND ELASTIC ORGANS corresponds with the flexible and dynamic patterns of thought of the Vietnamese people. The head, however, is small in size and framed by the skull; hence, it tends to be viewed as rigid (Nguyen, 2009). Furthermore, the Vietnamese people have tended to opt for the belly and abdomen rather than the head as their representation of affective and cognitive abilities, as the chosen organs have to house a large volume of thoughts, emotions, memories, and so forth.

## 8. Implications for second language learning

The analysis of the Vietnamese cultural conceptualizations of BỤNG and LÒNG indicates a stark difference between the Vietnamese language and other languages such as English which focus on the dichotomy of HEART- HEAD as the respective seats of emotions and thoughts. This shows that when Vietnamese learners learn English, they need to shuttle between two different conceptual systems or cultural conceptualizations, i.e., from abdominocentrism to cerebro-cardiocentrism and vice versa. To facilitate this process, explicit instruction to foster conceptual fluency, metaphorical competence in the L2 context (Yu 2009), and meta-cultural competence (Sharifian 2013) should be implemented in second language education.

As language reflects an underlying conceptual system which has been constructed in a specific cultural context, the study of cultural conceptualization, including the conceptual metaphors behind linguistic expressions, has garnered increasing attention in the literature on second language learning (e.g., Achard & Niemeier 2004; Boers & Littlemore 2003; Cameron & Low 1999; Johnson & Rosano 1993; Ponterotto 1994; Putz, Niemeier, & Dirven 2001a, 2001b; Yu 2009). Boers (2003, p. 236) states that:

If language is an integral part of culture, and if culture is expressed (albeit indirectly) through metaphor, then it follows that cross-cultural communication would benefit substantially from a heightened metaphor awareness on the part of educators and language learners.

Danesi (1993, 1995, 1999) suggests that second language learners often demonstrate a lack of “conceptual fluency” despite their “verbal fluency.” Danesi (1995) clarifies this point as follows: “to be conceptually fluent in a language is to know,

in large part, how that language reflects or encodes concepts on the basis of metaphorical reasoning,” which “is by and large unconscious in native speakers” (as cited in Yu 2009, p. 299). Danesi’s (1993) study showed that learners’ metaphorical competence was inadequate even at the level of comprehension. The reason found was “not that they are incapable of learning metaphor, but most likely that they have never been exposed in formal ways to the conceptual system of the target language” (Danesi 1993, as cited in Yu 2009, p. 300). Danesi (1993) and Yu (2009) share the view that linguistics research, specifically research into metaphor, should be translated into pedagogically applicable principles. They propose questions that educators need to be aware of, including “to what extent do the conceptual domains of the native and target cultures overlap and contrast? What kinds of conceptual inferences come from the students’ native conceptual system?” (Yu 2009, p. 300). Danesi (1999, p. 16) puts forth the so-called “conceptual fluency theory,” which is defined as a theory that ensures that “learners have access to the conceptual structures inherent in the target language and culture in a systematic, sequential and integrated fashion with other areas of language learning.” The theory emphasizes cultural variation and views culture as being “built on metaphor, since conceptual metaphors coalesce into a system of meaning that holds together the entire network of associated meanings in culture” (Danesi & Mollica 1998, as cited in Yu 2009, p. 300).

Sharing the same view, Boers (2003) argues for incorporating conceptual metaphor in second language learning to help learners gain a deeper understanding of figurative expressions and cross-linguistic differences and similarities in a coherent manner. This approach is far better than individually analyzing cross-linguistic differences without raising students’ awareness of the conceptualization (as is normally done in the classroom).

Boers (2000, 2004) highlights the point that awareness of conceptual metaphor can help L2 learners expand their vocabulary and retain new items more efficiently. Likewise, Kovecses (2001) proposes that consciousness of metaphor facilitates the learning of idioms in L2 classroom contexts. Barcelona (2001) supports the view that L2 textbook writers and teachers can benefit from a contrastive study of conceptual metaphors when it comes to the process of selecting and arranging teaching materials. Yu (2009) argues that introducing the conceptual metaphor and cultural context behind these linguistic expressions is beneficial for second language learners in that it helps “set up street lights and road signs” for them so that they can see where they are going and hence move faster. Sharifian (2013), who proposes “meta-cultural competence,” which acknowledges the heterogeneous distribution of cultural conceptualizations across individuals and cultural groups, stresses the importance of awareness of various cultural conceptualizations and the use of a range of strategies like clarification, asking for clarification,

and negotiation strategies when people with different conceptual systems are in contact.

As discussed above, the cultural conceptualizations of BELLY and ABDOMEN can be automatically distributed across the minds of native speakers of Vietnamese. They are not, however, understood by speakers of those languages that lack the abdominocentrism of Vietnamese, and so they have to be acquired through negotiation and renegotiation. Therefore, if, for instance, the cultural conceptualizations of BELLY and ABDOMEN are made clear to learners of Vietnamese, it would facilitate their learning of the language and enable them to avoid misunderstandings in intercultural communication. Without some knowledge of cultural conceptualizations, if a Vietnamese and an English speaker communicate with each other in English, for example, they are likely to automatically draw on their own conceptualizations, in this case abdominocentric and cerebrocentric, respectively, without realizing they are talking past each other. Therefore, they need to acquire meta-cultural competence to explain themselves and negotiate what they mean by, for example, “big-bellied” or “a heart of gold” for better mutual understanding.

## 9. Conclusions

This study has provided an array of embodiment metaphors for *bụng*, “belly” and *lòng*, “abdomen,” as evidenced in Vietnamese idioms, proverbs, and poetry. It reinforces former studies by Vietnamese scholars including Ly and Le (2013), Ly (2011), and Nguyen (2010), who emphasize that belly and abdomen signify the center of thoughts and emotions in the Vietnamese culture. This study has yielded an in-depth investigation of conceptual metaphors including BELLY AS A CONTAINER/SEAT OF INNER AND CONFIDENTIAL THOUGHTS, LOVE, PRESTIGE, EMOTIONS, AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS and ABDOMEN AS A CONTAINER OF THOUGHTS, MEMORIES, PERSONALITIES, MORALS, ATTITUDES, AND HUMAN SPIRITS. Besides, the study finds that in Vietnamese culture the belly has size and quality. It can be big or small, good or bad. Similarly, the abdomen has size (vast or narrow), weight (heavy or light), and color (black/dark or pure/clean/white), and ABDOMEN is conceptualized as A VAST SEA, VAST CLOTH, PIECE OF LAND/SOIL, STONE, AND A CHANGEABLE LIVING ENTITY.

What is new in this research is the investigation of cultural models that underlie such cultural conceptualizations. Sharifian (2008) reiterates that the search for conceptualizations of body and mind across cultures is not new; rather, what is new is the search for the cultural models that have channeled those cultural conceptualizations. This study is based on an ethnographic survey and has consulted multiple fields, including history, medicine, anthropology, and cultural studies.



It explains that it is the three stands of the Vietnamese sociocultural and historical context (as a country based on wet-rice agriculture), Traditional Vietnamese Medicine with its emphasis on dietetics, and the Vietnamese philosophical beliefs that all motivate the focus on the abdomen region as the place of thoughts and emotions.

The study has shown that “language is a memory bank” (Sharifian 2011, p.5) for cultural conceptualizations that have prevailed at different stages in the history of speech community, and “discourse is a vehicle for the representation of cultural conceptualizations” (Sharifian 2011, p. 12). It also proves the effectiveness of Cultural Linguistics in providing the analytical tools of cultural categories, cultural schemas, and conceptual metaphors and emphasizing the investigation of cultural models in embodiment analysis.

Through this study, we would like to argue for the implications of this for second language learning. Curriculum selection, arrangement, and development and pedagogy should not only be aimed at the linguistic level but also address the conceptual level. We argue that since learning another language is exploring another cultural conceptualization system, a comparative study of cultural conceptualization, conceptual competence, and meta-cultural competence should be incorporated in language teaching materials and practice.

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## Appendix. List of poems by Xuan Dieu, Tham Tam and Nguyen Binh

Xuan Dieu (1916–1985)

1. Voi vang
2. Tho duyen
3. Yeu
4. Dai kho
5. Vi sao
6. Phuong muoi nam
7. Day mua thu toi
8. Mua xuan
9. Chi o long ta
10. Tuong tu chieu

Tham Tam (1917–1950)

- Tong Biet Hanh

Nguyen Binh (1906–1951)

1. Co hang xom
2. Dan toi
3. Khan hong
4. Co gai mo
5. Tuong tu
6. Chan que
7. Ghen
8. Qua nha
9. Vang
10. Bong nguoi tren san ga

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