

# INNOVATION IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING METHODS IN VIETNAM AMID THE ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

## INOVAÇÃO NOS MÉTODOS DE ENSINO UNIVERSITÁRIO NO VIETNÃ EM MEIO À ERA DA TRANSFORMAÇÃO DIGITAL

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**Abstract:** The 4.0 era and digital transformation have had a significant impact on many fields, including the economy, politics, environment, society, culture, and education. Therefore, renovating teaching methods in universities in Vietnam in order to improve people's intellectual level, train human resources, foster talents for the country, and turn our country into a strong one in education and training in the region, keep up with the advanced level of the world, and participate in the international market for human resource training is a crucial task nowadays.

**Keywords:** Vietnam. Methodological innovation. Teaching methods. Industrial revolution 4.0. Digital transformation.

**Resumo:** A era 4.0 e a transformação digital tiveram um impacto significativo em muitos campos, incluindo economia, política, meio ambiente, sociedade, cultura e educação. Portanto, renovar os métodos de ensino nas universidades do Vietnã a fim de melhorar o nível intelectual das pessoas, formar recursos humanos, fomentar talentos para o país e transformar nosso país em um país forte em educação e treinamento na região, acompanhar o nível avançado do mundo e participar do mercado internacional de treinamento de recursos humanos é uma tarefa crucial nos dias de hoje.

**Palavras-chave:** Vietnã. Inovação metodológica. Métodos de ensino. Revolução industrial 4.0. Transformação digital.

## 1. Introduction

The world is going through unprecedented changes. Digital Transformation - the 4th Industrial Revolution creates development at an exponential rate, ranging from knowledge, scientific and technical progress, labor productivity, the amount of wealth created, and changes in the structure of the administrative and institutional system. As a result, our lives have been significantly impacted in all aspects during the 21st century. It can be said that when the scientific and technological revolution and digital transformation began, Karl Marx predicted about "reaching a certain level of development," "common social knowledge," or science as we often say, would turn into a "direct productive force" (Marx and Engels, 1995). Marx's argument is increasingly proven methodologically valid by history.

Through 35 years of renovation, Vietnam has been integrating more and more deeply with the world and revitalizing the education system in the country, which is facing extremely urgent tasks. During his lifetime, President Ho Chi Minh always wanted our country to be rich and strong, our people to be wise, and our society to be a highly cultural one. To do so, the main thing is that the society must train many talented people to participate in the construction of the country. At the 13th National Party Congress, our Party affirmed: "Building synchronous institutions and policies to effectively implement the policy of education and training with science and technology as the top national policy is the key driver for the development of the country. Therefore, synchronously innovating educational and training objectives, contents, programs, and methods towards modernity, international integration, and comprehensive human development to meet the new requirements of the socio-economic development of the country are extremely urgent tasks" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, volume 1).

The fourth industrial revolution, digital transformation, has had a profound impact on the global socioeconomic landscape, including education and training. This poses great opportunities and challenges for higher education to train high-quality human resources for the country in terms of making breakthroughs and carrying out the educational revival, considering it the key to national rejuvenation. Therefore, innovating teaching methods amid the impacts of digital transformation-the 4th Industrial Revolution is an urgent duty, a mission that cannot be delayed.

## **2. Research methodology**

The Marxist dialectic is considered a theory that studies the development of the entire objective world, including nature, society and human thought. Thus, it can be seen that the research scope and application field of Marxist dialectic is very wide, there is no field outside its scope of research, including education and training.

The article takes the method of dialectical materialism and historical materialism of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought as the theoretical basis. On that basis, we have conducted a search for a number of sources in the Documents, Resolutions and Directives of the Party and the State; Dissertations, scientific topics, books, articles published in journals related to the innovation of university teaching methods in Vietnam in the digital transformation era to analyze and extract essential secondary data information. At the same time, the article also uses abstraction, generalization, document analysis, investigation methods, survey methods, and interviews with experts to collect information.

## **3. Results and discussion**

In the past, "fundamental and comprehensive renovation of education and training has been actively implemented, initially effective", "the quality of higher education has been gradually improved" (Communist Party of Vietnam), 2021, volume 1), education and training have an innovative step, making positive contributions to human development and human resource development. Universities have made great efforts in changing teaching methods, gradually shifting from traditional teaching methods to modern teaching methods; conducting teaching methods in a positive direction associated with the application of modern information technology. It can be seen that, with impact of the 4.0 revolution - the revolution with the foundation of digitization and the system of real and virtual connections, smart schools with robots, things connected to the internet, interactive virtual reality, super Cloud computing data, learning applications, exchange forums, etc. will bring a huge source of teaching materials and also a place to share various practical experiences for lecturers and students. Using the application of metadata technology on cloud computing, teachers provide learning materials to learners and collect the results of the teaching process from learners in a continuous and flexible way.

It is also necessary to frankly admit that the quality of teaching in universities in our country today has shown signs of decline in quality, has not met the requirements of the innovation career, has not really created a connection between people and students, between teaching and learning, between learners and learners, between the contents of the book and life, between theory and practice, between learners and information media and social networks, etc. “Innovating thinking, education and training activities have not met the set requirements; a number of innovative tasks and solutions are still lacking in system and stability. The quality and effectiveness of education and training are not high. The education and training system has not yet ensured the synchronization and connection between education and training levels and modes. The content and curriculum of education and training are still more about theory and less about practice. Training is still lacking in connection with scientific research, production, business and the needs of the labor market. There is still not enough attention to developing learners' qualities and skills. Education on "how to be a good citizen", ethics, and lifestyle are still underestimated. Training high-quality human resources has not yet met the requirements of socio-economic development” (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, volume 1). The contradictions and inadequacies in the program, the content have become more and more obvious in the structure of the program, the curriculum and the lecture content, and the practical content has not been updated in time with new problems arising in social practice and in the perception that the industrial revolution 4.0 brings. Content and programs have not been "personalized" for each training sector, leading to a general situation, causing boredom for teachers and learners.

There are still conservative ideas leading to being afraid to innovate teaching methods. They are content with the traditional method of reading and copying, making the lectures impractical, boring and not well associated with the reality of social life, so it has not awakened the students' passion, independence and creative thinking ability. As a result, some students have formed the habit of rote learning, learning to cope, even being bored and lazy to study. The inherent advantages of the traditional method cannot be denied, however, this method limits the students' activeness, initiative and independent and creative thinking in the process of acquiring knowledge. Because of this imposed teaching style, the lecturer imparts and interprets knowledge to the learners within the prescribed framework of the curriculum and lectures, the learners can only listen and take notes, which hampers their creativity, turning learners into listeners and copywriters. Students are

not a vase that needs to be filled, but a torch that needs to be lit. If teachers prepare in advance and only act according to the script, learners are always in a passive receptive position, hindering learners' initiative and creativity. At the same time, it wastes a lot of time and energy of lecturers, causes fatigue and boredom, making the atmosphere in the class dull, and leading to low quality and ineffective teaching.

It is from the way of teaching in the style of cramming knowledge, everything must be learned, knowing everything but not knowing anything, the teaching method is in a passive style, in the style of "water poured into a pot", too emphatic, learning memorization mechanically, paying little attention to approaches and problem solving, make students passive, creating inertia, and lack of dynamism; memorizing the lesson but not understanding the nature of the problem. Topics have a significant impact on creative thinking and lack of dynamism, making learners have a habit that is deeply ingrained in the subconscious and difficult to break. The consequences of learning by cramming knowledge are to disregard learning, learning to let go, learning to cope, not because of the need for knowledge or professional skills to use in work. This method is still quite common among a large number of students in universities in our country today.

Higher education has its own special position in the national education system. The mission of higher education is to train and provide high-quality human resources for society. In the era of globalization, industrial revolution 4.0, and digital transformation, it is necessary to train capable, independent, creative, flexible and responsive people. Innovative teaching methods must be paid a considerable amount of attention in order to really meet those requirements.

However, the "breakthrough" stage in the whole process is the fundamental and comprehensive innovation of teaching content and methods. Renovation of content and programs is closely related to the goal of "teaching people" - one of the three goals of the educational strategy that our Party and State have set out in the renovation period: Teaching literacy - Teaching people and Vocational training. Universities in our country need to aim at training human resource that possess both political integrity and professional competence, or in other words, must have good professional qualifications to integrate with the world economy and must have good qualifications and good moral qualities to master themselves and the country, for the goal of "rich people, a strong country, democracy, justice and civilization".

Innovating teaching methods does not mean rejecting and completely denying traditional teaching methods, but it is avoiding the teaching style of one-way transmission, pouring water into a pot, and remembering – repeating. These are huge barriers to innovating teaching methods at the university level. It is also not possible to use traditional teaching methods as before in the 4.0 revolution era. There is an urgent need to strongly innovate, synchronize content, programs, and methods and in the direction that teaching must be associated with practice, and shifting from equipping knowledge to comprehensive development of capacity and quality of learners. It is especially necessary to orient and guide students on how to search and filter information, and know how to deal with conflicting information.

Amid Digital Transformation – the industrial revolution 4.0, lecturers need to actively and constantly update knowledge to orient and teach students how to choose, refine and continue to receive scientific knowledge of the program, subjects, and courses. In the face of the vortex of the industrial revolution 4.0, digital transformation, there are only two options: either do nothing, or boldly change to integrate with the world's progress. Deputy Prime Minister Vu Duc Dam emphasized: "We have mentioned the Industrial Revolution 4.0 a lot; now is the time for us to act, to make the most of the advantages. We need to identify that "connection" is the key: the connection among diverse and rich sources of knowledge and documents; the connection among teachers, the connection between technology and means of support. In particular, in teaching, it is necessary to apply student-centered pedagogy, harmoniously combine traditional methods with modern teaching methods and supporting means, arousing inspiration, and inspiring learners. The teacher's role is described as going beyond teaching; teachers should play the roles of resource specialists and mentors. Learners not only have knowledge from the teacher, but also actively exploit knowledge from many information sources, such as digital knowledge systems, the internet, and social networks.

Many lecturers are concerned with the need to innovate teaching methods in our country's universities in light of the impact of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and the digital transformation because there is still a traditional idea that it is risky to do so and that it is better to stick with the conventional approach. As a result, the lecturer provides the material one way—in the manner of pouring water into a pot—while the students receive it passively. A teacher who solely imparts one-way, academic knowledge won't be able to get students excited. The goal of teaching is to engage the learner's spirit and heart. No method is the universal solution; teachers

must be able to integrate a variety of ways with contemporary teaching techniques. Each method has its own strengths, weaknesses, and limitations.

To promote effectiveness in teaching amid the impact of digitization and real and virtual connected systems, smart schools with robots, things connected to the internet, and virtual reality interaction teachers must change their methods, and strengthen active teaching methods in order to make students excited, positive and creative. Teachers should not just convey the knowledge available in the curriculum and in the books. Students should be encouraged to use self-discovery, exploit the digital knowledge system, and explore new knowledge on the internet and social networks. Especially, learners directly share the knowledge, and at the same time supplementing and improving the knowledge not only from lecturers but also from friends, the digital knowledge system, on the internet and on social networks. This method encourages learning associated with practice, technology discovery associated with knowledge learned in the educational program, and scientific and technical creation in order to improve the development of new technologies and combat dogmatism, machinery, and clichés. Learners who are happy when they are learning, creating, performing, and doing will realize that the knowledge in the subjects and sections of the training program is completely useful and has explained the problems in real life.

Currently, a number of lecturers overuse the lecture method in the style of monologue, which will make students passively absorb the lecture, not awakening their passion or interest as well as their thinking ability, resulting in low effectiveness of teaching. In the era of industrial revolution 4.0, teachers should enhance methods of dialogue, exchange, discussion and problem-solving in class to make the lecture more lively, and interesting to learners, and improve effectiveness of teaching activities. Learners themselves acquire useful knowledge from actual observations, study tours or from many sources of information through movies, books, documents, exploiting the digital knowledge system, new knowledge on the internet and social networks. Learners actively raise questions or concerns themselves. It is important to know that learners should not only actively discuss with the teacher but also interact with and learn from their friends.

Encouraging students to offer many solutions to situations will stimulate cognitive interest, create an open atmosphere in the classroom, and offer students the opportunity to express their creativity and overcome psychological barriers to form creative thinking. Using positive methods in teaching means that the teacher is both a mentor, a participant

in the learning process, and a source of reference for learners, helping them to overcome difficulties in the learning process, thereby increase teaching - learning effectiveness.

Innovating the content and teaching methods at universities before the impact of the industrial revolution 4.0, digital transformation is now a very important mission. Through this, we can train human resources with solid knowledge, proficient skills, independent thinking, and creativity, ensuring full quality and capacity, making an important contribution to maintaining the quality of life, orientation of political and ideological stability, meeting industrialization and modernization of the country. These are the capabilities that help Vietnamese people take shortcuts and reduce the backward gap compared to developed countries in the region and the world.

Our Party and State, in the process of renovation and industrialization towards modernity and international integration, have determined: Education and training have the mission of raising people's intellectual level, developing human resources, and contributing to building and promoting cultural values and human strength. Teachers, who wholeheartedly devote their wisdom and efforts to human growth, deserve the people's respect. Teachers are role models whose mind goes hand in hand with vision. They have noble character, bright personality, and talent. This is the traditional cultural beauty of the teacher, contributing to fostering and highlighting the cultural tradition of our nation to a new height.

The teacher must be a good model of the spirit of self-study and research. They need to closely link theoretical issues with vivid reality to attract students to the lecture. Self-study and self-improvement requires persistent, resilient will and determination, creative spirit, taking advantage of anytime and anywhere to learn, in order to constantly improve expertise, methods and skills so that teachers can answer students' practical and theoretical problems in a convincing way, not just based on pre-determined mental blueprints from year to year. It is an urgent and legitimate requirement of society, a job that cannot be delayed. Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW, dated November 4, 2013, adopted at the 8th Plenum of the Party Central Committee, term XI, on fundamental and comprehensive renovation of education and training, highlighting the task of perfecting the system. national education in the direction of an open education system, lifelong learning and building a learning society (Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW, 2013). During the life of President Ho Chi Minh, he was an exemplary model of the spirit of self-study, taking self-study as the core, as the main method to improve the level of all aspects of oneself. The valuable



instructions and profound lessons learned from his own enduring self-study example are still valid today.

The market economy also leads to degraded social morality. Many values and standards of traditional society are degraded. Not out of that rule, the current educational environment is also negatively affected by the market economy. There have been negative cases in education such as weighing and measuring on the basis of benefits, credit-driven practice, and teachers suggesting students give them gifts, etc. These things warn about the deterioration of culture and morality in education, so training people with both heart and talent is an urgent and indispensable requirement of the country today and in the future. The teacher must possess high expertise and a good moral center. Both these factors must go hand in hand and in harmony in the teacher, making the teacher responsible for the future of the students; responsibility to the Party and State in teaching and scientific research. Having followed the teaching profession, he must work with all his heart and devote himself to the cause of nurturing talent for the country.

Teachers should be modest, refrain from being haughty, and completely refrain from insulting or discriminating against students. Arrogance can have numerous negative effects and lead to students misinterpreting the teacher's function. Arrogance damages the teacher's reputation in the eyes of students, sparking arguments and adversely influencing the careers of developing individuals. "Intellectuals must know their weaknesses. Be modest. Don't be arrogant. Must attempt to work realistically," once said President Ho Chi Minh (Ho Chi Minh, 2000). In order to shine, spread fire, and touch the hearts of future generations, teachers should set an example for their students. Only the ideals that the teacher lives out may be taught.

Students not only absorb knowledge from the teacher, but they are also influenced by how the teacher teaches. Teaching style reflects the culture and the teacher's inner traits. The teaching style of the teacher directly affects how students behave during learning, including how they interact with other students and the instructor. Friendly gestures and good manners from the teacher will help to establish a welcoming and comfortable environment in the classroom. A teacher who is knowledgeable, skilled in their methods, and excellent in their conduct will win the learners' sympathies and leave an impression on them that will last a lifetime.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, in the context of the nation's socialist-oriented reform, the cause of reform and revival of the education system in the nation faces tremendously pressing difficulties. Being able to adapt and meet the requirements of the innovation cause in Vietnam requires teachers who are good in expertise, proficient in methods, and exemplary in behavior that will cause a lot of sympathy with students and make learners feel important. Digital Transformation - the 4th Industrial Revolution with its impacts have brought many opportunities and challenges, and one of these is the need to have high-quality human resources.

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