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**Position:** Full-Time Lecturer, Suryadhep Teachers College

**Title of The Best Practice:** Promoting Intercultural Learning by a Study Visit

**Goals:** To promote intercultural learning for graduate students in Bilingual Education Program

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**Need for the Best:**

Currently, higher education is in a state of flux, not only with regard to standards, economy, and curriculum, but also student cohorts and pedagogical approach (Vinther and Slethaug, 2013). It is evident to see that increasing internationalization has become one of the visions stated in most educational schools' philosophy or higher education's vision and mission.

Promoting values of local culture is one of the five-year Rangsit University strategic plan. According to the plan, the philosophy of the university is to promote international and local culture. Moreover, the university shall understand and experience in management in a balanced and sustainable manner. Life-long learning and openness to learners' needs, interests in the community are to be promoted as well. The university is responsive to enhance learners to appreciate both their own countries and communities' culture. In addition, learners are encouraged to understand and be proud of cultural diversity including Thai culture. To support learning for cultural understanding and development, students should be encouraged to be exposed to Thai culture. This can help prepare students for international challenges.

**The Best Practice:**

Seventeen students who registered in Bilingual Education program, Suryadhep Teachers College, in 2/2017 were accompanied by a group of lecturers from Suryadhep Teachers College to visit 'Love and Warmth at Winter's End' on February 28, 2018. Before the trip, students were provided with the trip objectives, roles, and expectations. They were encouraged to prepare themselves as suggested by the lecturer as follows:

1. Bring fieldnotes with them.
2. Make an observation on one particular sub-culture or activity they are interested in. Then collect data in general.
3. After the trip, there was a discussion session on Thai cultural knowledge and what they learn in terms of cultural differences and awareness from the trip.

**Evidence of Success:**

- **Qualitative results:** It is found that the trip is highly useful in terms of learning Thai culture. The knowledge they learn broaden their perspectives of a new cultural knowledge. They really appreciate the exotic atmosphere of traditional Thai ways of life. Importantly, they learn how to respect other cultures and this can help them shape the relationship between culture and thoughts. Finally, they all agree that the activity meets their expectations. They suggest that the program should implement this activity in the next future.

- **Quantitative results:** It is found that the students have a very high degree (5.00) of satisfaction based on all 6 questions:

1. The time schedule is appropriate for the Study Visit Program.
  2. A brief detail of the program is provided in advance.
  3. The Program could enhance knowledge and understanding of Thai traditions and cultures better especially to multicultural students.
  4. The Study Visit provides an experience in different cultural education context.
  5. The Study Visit is arranged properly for the students to recognize and respect the culture diversity.
  6. The overall evaluation of the Program is very high.
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## Reference

Vinther, J., Slethaug, G. (2013) The Danish educational tradition: Multiple heritages and international challenges and 'Conversation'. In Jin, L., Cortazzi, M. (Eds), *Researching intercultural learning: Investigations in language and education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.58-76.