Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry (TOJQI)
Volume 12, Issue 9, August 2021: 3997-4011

Being-in Australia: Vietnamese Skilled Migrants' Relocating Experiences

Dr. Chi Hong Nguyen [a]
[a] English Language Department, FPT University, Can Tho Campus, Vietnam (chinh6@fe.edu.vn)

Abstract

By interviewing 15 Vietnamese two-step migrants living in Australia under a Heideggerian perspective, this paper explores how they experience transnational mobilities through their relocation. This study found that these migrants are not simply located in space, but they experience how they live their lives in space with familiarity and unfamiliarity. They sometimes feel not-at-home with what they think they do in everyday life. When they feel not-at-home with some of their interactions with the world, they turn to what they know and often do, or remain being-not-at-home. Their being-in a place leads to constraints and open-ended possibilities for their spatio-temporal existence. The Heideggerian notion of being-in sheds light on understanding migrants' embeddedness in multiple spaces and times. Their experiences suggest that entwinement with the world unfolds possibilities and constraints for their transitions. The understanding of migrants' entwinement with the world helps extend the conventional conceptualization of migration as a linear trajectory.

Keywords: being-in-the-world; two-step migration; relocating experiences; Vietnamese migration; Australian skilled migration; phenomenology

1. Introduction

Migration does not end with migrants' arrivals in destination countries as suggested by transnationalism studies and theories. Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton (1992, p. 1) have defined transnationalism as "processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement." Through their decisions, actions, concerns, and identities, they develop and sustain multi-level relations that span borders. In particular, transnationalism research has pointed out the importance of transnational social networks on providing migrants with information, practical assistance, and even obligations for their departure and arrival. Information and resources provided by these networks can help lower costs with their relocations, mitigate risks, and secure a smooth transition into the new society (Basch, Glick-Schiller, & Blanc-Szanton, 1996. Migration is considered as sets of people's relationships made by acquaintance, kinship and work relations that connect migrants across space and time. Transnational ties are reported to support migrants in establishing and maintaining connections to host societies, whereas remittances are normally seen as an example of migrant transnationalism in sending countries.

However, not all migrants maintain transnational ties for their relocation. Relocating to a new society, which can be the same place for those who have studied and worked before legally becoming citizens, can involve various experiences. The place they are in may not be the place they used to encounter.

Their experience of their being in the place is made sense through how they make sense of their adjustment and adaptation. This study advances such an understanding by elaborating migrants' concerns of both micro- and macro-influences intensified by cross-bordered networks, local values, and effects of large scales of economic, political, cultural and legal structures (Gold, 1997, p. 410).

The empirical materials yielded from 15 conversations with Vietnamese skilled migrants in Australia showed that migrants' activities in transnational social fields are various, leading to different outcomes and meanings attached to the transnational activities that make up transnational social fields. Migrants' everyday life in terms of social, economic, political, cultural and religious aspects, and professional practices are inherent to transnational mobilities in the sense that fixity and mobility are intertwined through spaces (e.g. Beaverstock, 2005; Conradson & Latham, 2007;). In this sense, transnational practices and spaces are formed through the nexus between mobility and locality. The participants' accounts suggested that their multiple spatial and temporal linkages were experienced as simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar, releasing a range of emotions from preoccupation with present concerns about everyday livelihood challenges to anxiety and fear about the prospects of not meeting their filial and familial responsibilities. This article argues that migrants' mobilities are reflective of their entwinement with the world, in which their feelings of being 'at-home' and 'not-at-home' created constraints and possibilities for their negotiation of their future dwelling-mobility.

2. A Heideggerian perspective on spatiality: Mobilities as unfixedness

According to Heidegger (1962, p. 100), we are already intertwined with our world through our specific ways of being-in-the-world. The "being-in" indicates some sense of familiarity experienced in the way that we are involved in the world (Heidegger, 1962, p. 80). We are not simply included or located alongside a system of objects in a place (Blattner, 2006, p. 42). Instead, things make sense to us through the ways we interact with them by following routines and norms or taken-for-granted knowledge. Our knowledge of going about in the world through following public norms consists of "dispositions to respond to situations in appropriate ways" (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 117). We live in the world with familiarity in the way we go about our business and make sense of our lives as "being-in" (Blattner, 2006, p. 43). However, when we encounter new things, or things are broken, we find them strange or different. An uneasy feeling may appear when we are placed in an unfamiliar situation or locale with unknown people. We "flee in the face of uncanniness" or being "not-at-home" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 234). Even in the same locale when interacting with the same people, we sometimes face an uneasy feeling, as we need to act in ways cannot be predicted or planned. Being at-home and not-at-home shows our absorption in the world in the way we live our lives in relation to others and things in the world.

By being involved in the world, we do not experience space as a container of objects. According to Heidegger (1962, pp. 138-148 & 346), we exist spatially. In everyday activities, we move from one location to another for certain purposes. Our movements, which may include imaginations or be enacted through communications technologies, are embedded with meanings. Space shapes the possibilities of our activities. By being involved in the world, we do not experience space as a container of objects. According to Heidegger (1962, pp. 138-148 & 346), we exist spatially. The concept of being-in-the-world includes this sense of spatiality. In everyday activities, we move from one location to another for certain purposes. Our movements, which may include imaginations or be enacted

through communications technologies, are embedded with meanings. Space shapes the possibilities of our activities. It is "space-of-action", which is embedded with a "referential organization with respect to our context of activities" (Arisaka, 1996, p. 37), or as a "field of potential action" (Harrison, 2007, p. 635). When we engage with our activities, we make "the farness vanish" and "the remoteness of something disappear, bringing it close" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 139). The notions of 'farness' or 'nearness' are geographical, but address our involvement with the world. By using the example of a craftsman working in his workshop, Heidegger (1962, p. 100) points out that the work produced by this worker is intended to entail useability for consumers whom he may know or never meet, but who nonetheless influence his work. The assignment in this handiwork expresses "an immeasurable distance" (Harrison, 2007, p. 631) when this craftsman's relation to space makes sense through his interactions with the handiwork. In this vein, our interactions with things and people show how we are immersed in space.

Being-in indicates our familiarity in a place when we dwell at home. Home is a place of abode with a social context where we are with friends and family members, doing things that we find meaningful. Heidegger (1962, p. 97) terms this as a totality of involvement in which we do things *with some things we use as equipment*. We do this in *a place* alone, or with someone or for someone by using tools which may be made by someone else. We do this in order to reach a target(s) with which we aim to achieve some purpose(s) for the sake of our being a researcher or student or someone. The for the sake of which is central to the totalities of involvement because it is the way we choose to be and because possibilities may open up during our involvement in the world.

Our absorption in space is temporal. According to Heidegger (1962, pp. 418-423), because we always project into the future in realising possibilities grounded in space, our relations to space are temporal. For example, in the period between 1999 and 2009, the Australian Government used the points test system in the Skilled Migration Policy to select skilled migrants. Since 2009, this policy has shifted to employer sponsorship. Applicants in the period before 2009 might have prioritised the possession of Australian credentials with the minimum two-year continuous stay in Australia, IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores or ethnic language translation certificates to secure permanent residency (PR). Presently, prospective migrants tend to seek employer sponsorship as one of the most important criteria to meet. This change in the policy over time matters for PR applications to Australia. The temporal dimension has practical implications when migrants encounter this migration policy in forming aspirations to migrate. Their absorption in space and time extends from their encounter with the migration policy itself to other related things, such as language test certificates, educational qualifications obtained in Australia or the home country, potential employers in Australia and so on. Migrants' interactions with others and things in space and time constitute their world, which is shared with others.

3. Research context and instruments

The 15 professional migrants (7 females and 8 males) from Vietnam who were in the 29– 42 years' age range were selected through a purposive snowball sampling technique. Among them, one was divorced, four were single, and the rest were married with and without children. The participants in this study were professional migrants from Vietnam who held Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral degrees in different fields conferred onshore by different Australian universities. All worked in various

white-collar employment sectors. While 13 participants had their PR granted onshore since 2001, the other two applied for PR from Vietnam.

4. Research findings and discussion

The result of this study showed that the participants experienced both smoothness and constraints in their mobilities. The constraints were encountered as the opening up of other possibilities that allowed some of the participants to experience further opportunities that added meanings to their migration.

4.1 Experiencing transitions with the feeling of being at-home

Tran Minh, Quynh Hoa, Ngoc Dai, Mai Hue and Thai Duong – who held doctoral, medical and pharmaceutical degrees respectively– experienced direct entry to Australian labour market and settled their family lives after their PR visas were granted, enabling them to have "smooth" transitions (Tran Minh's word). Their experiences of the 'smoothness' in transitions were reflective of their entwinement in the world with familiarity with living their public and personal lives across space and time. For example, these five participants perceived that their qualifications were demanded in Australia where degrees in technology, engineering, medicine and pharmacy were valued. The logic of this social norm was assumed in this way: once one got a degree in one of these fields, they would get a job directly. Ngoc Dai, Quynh Hoa, Tran Minh, Mai Hue and Thai Duong fell in line with this norm by using their qualifications to get employment:

> *I think Australia has always needed IT, especially those with higher degrees in IT. This is why I got this job easily.* – Ngoc Dai

> *Everyone needs to eat, and this is why Food Technology is always needed* [laughing]. *So, with my degree, I could get this job faster than other students and migrants.* – Quynh Hoa

When the researcher asked them why they thought their degrees enabled them to get jobs "faster" than other skilled migrants, "Australia needs high qualifications" seemed to be consistent among their responses. Thai Duong and Mai Hue gave more specific explanations to the social norm of the 'need' for medical and pharmaceutical degrees. They both mentioned the difficulties of pursuing these academic programs and social recognition of the degrees in these fields. For example, Thai Duong got a job at a clinic in Australia after using his medical degree recognised as being "scarce" in Australia. The difficulties of following medical and pharmaceutical programs that Thai Duong and Mai Hue mentioned included demanding requirements of academic records and intense competition for entrance. These programs also required students to take some difficult subjects, constantly pass examinations in different stages in specific specialisations and pay high tuition fees. Further, patience, resilience and social communication skills in English were perceived as necessary for medical and pharmaceutical students. From these, they concluded that the likelihood of employability from medical and pharmaceutical degrees was high, as they were "scarce" commodities in the labour market.

The global growing skills demands have created an educational credential-for-migration discourse. From a global perspective, Iredale (2001) and Mahroum (2001) have mentioned that technology and medicine which are in scarcity in some developed countries create an acceleration of demands, fostering chances for foreign graduates with skills and degrees in these fields to obtain jobs in their disciplines in destination societies. Yet, the ways migrants use their qualifications may not always be

in accord with the linearity between meritocracy and two-step migration. For example, being informed by the perceived social norm in valuing degrees in technology, engineering, medicine and pharmacy, these participants used their qualifications in relation to their interactions with others and things across space. Tran Minh used his doctoral degree in Environmental Engineering to apply for a postdoctoral fellowship one month after his graduation. When he was talking about the technical issues of pH levels on shrimp farms in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam, he elaborated the importance of knowledge of the locality:

> *Although I grew up in the North, I used to spend a lot of time working in the Mekong Delta. My knowledge about this delta is… good…. Doing research in a place includes knowledge about local people. You must know how they live, because their daily habits, work routines, and traditional practices on shrimp farms influence the ways they control pH scales on their farms.* – Tran Minh

His account suggested that his doctoral degree was used in combination with his academic publications, professional rapport in Australia, and knowledge of local people's daily routines and traditional farming practices. His understandings of these local "conventions" (Gieryn, 2000, p. 473) enabled him to extend his professional practice from Australia to Vietnam. These academic achievements and social knowledge were seen as his familiarity with Australia's academic environment and employment practices, as well as Vietnam's social life and living routines as "cumulative" capital (Szelényi, 2003, p. 11). He also referred to his interactions with his Australian former supervisor, local people in Vietnam and potentially those involved in the transnational research projects.

Similarly, Quynh Hoa and Ngoc Dai used their doctoral qualifications in combination with other things and interacting with others to strengthen the likelihood of getting the jobs that matched their expertise. These two participants used their doctoral qualifications in technology in combination with their English communication skills, tools for professional practice, as well as social knowledge and understandings of organisational practices in the host society. While Tran Minh used his Vietnamese social and geographical understandings to strengthen his job application, Quynh Hoa strategically used her lived experiences obtained from her exposure to Australian society, as well as English language capital in combination with her understandings of organisational practices of health and safety and social norms of behavioural conduct. Their interactions with things and others were enabled by their familiarity with studying and living in Australia.

In addition, these participants' immersion in the employment aspect was experienced in relation to their involvement in other aspects of life. For example, some of these participants' encounters with their life partners and children influenced their choices of accommodation locations:

> *We decided to get married after we had both graduated. Then, I thought the postdoctoral program would best suit me because we are both living in Australia now… In general, I am happy with my job because it earns me a good salary to raise my children. My workplace is not too far from my home, so it's convenient for me to drive my children to school in the morning.* – Tran Minh

Further, these migrants' immersion in the intersecting professional and familial domains was experienced through their embeddedness in social and environmental aspects, where they expressed concerns with intergenerational securities.

4.2 Encountering interrelated constraints and possibilities in transitions

While the participants mentioned above mobilised the social recognition of their degrees, the other participants encountered constraints and possibilities in different pathways.

4.2.1. Being-not-at-home and experiences of interrelated constraints

Some participants faced several interrelated constraints emerged from their embeddedness in the world during the initial stage of relocation, which was largely caused by their being-not-at-home, making them encounter some sense of dislocation. These participants were unfamiliar with workplace norms, ethnicity issues, and lack of social and professional relationships in Australia. For example, Quynh Thy, Tuong Vu, Ngoc Linh, Minh Thanh and Yen Xuan faced complex registration and licensing procedures as well as constraints posed from Australian employment practices requiring them to follow inflexible "routines" while leaving them with "too little freedom" (Tuong Vu's words) in managing their public lives. With her two Master's degrees in Finance and Accounting, Quynh Thy had worked as an accountant at an Australian food processing company and then an information technology (IT) company. After having spent some years working for these two private companies, she felt bored with "working on balance sheets and invoices with numbers and numbers". Tuong Vu found that his working schedules at one of Australia's largest telephone companies had been so tight that he "could only hang out with friends during Christmas", limiting his socialising with friends. He expected to change his job to one that could give him "more time with friends," because he perceived that "fun from social relationships [enabled] fun at work and life". Yen Xuan encountered some constraints posed from cumbersome registration procedures and "extra licences" to become a teacher at a secondary school in Australia. Having graduated with a Bachelor's degree in TESOL in Vietnam, as well as a Master's degree in Education with a major in Testing and Evaluation and a Bachelor of Economics degree in Australia, she found it difficult to apply for a teaching position in Australia, because she had possessed only experiences in teaching English in a non-English speaking country.

In addition, some of these participants experienced lack of familiarity with living among people of a different ethnicity. The ways they felt "isolated" at work (Van Minh's experience) and "discriminated" (Thanh Huong's word) in job applications made them face several difficulties:

> *I remember that I had applied for several positions, but maybe by looking at my Vietnamese names, they* [potential employers] *rejected my applications right away. I was very worried because I needed money to send my daughter to school.* – Thanh Huong

> *While IT is always in demand, employers* [in Australia] *always look into your ethnicity. I mean they think that Vietnamese people like us can't speak English well.* – Van Minh

These participants' experiences referred their perception of ethnicity to "stickiness" (Latham, 2002, p. 123) inherent to employment spaces where they were embedded. By being seen as "foreigners" (Xuan Hong' word), they felt and anticipated (in Thanh Huong's case with her use of the word "maybe") that they were discriminated by their Asian names, English language competence and complexion, causing

the 'stickiness' to their employment navigation. 'Stickiness' to obtaining professional employment has been well informed in studies on permanent and temporary skilled and two-step migrants' integration in Australia (e.g. Biao, 2005 & 2007; Goldring & Landolt, 2011; Robertson, 2011 Robertson & Runganaikaloo, 2014; Velayutham, 2013). Some of these studies have revealed that two-step migrants waiting for the grant of citizenship may face precariousness of securing legal employment, because Australian employers tend to discriminate against their language competences, as well as lack of professional and social networks and familiarity with the professional milieu. Migrants tend to accept their precariousness as "lives in limbo" (Robertson & Runganaikaloo, 2014, p. 221), but then look for strategies to deal with this constraint, such as doing part-time jobs with labour exploitation or accepting to wait "on the bench" at labour recruitment agents in host countries (Biao, 2005, p. 364).

In addition, those participants who were married and had children encountered the 'stickiness' of workplace norms of discipline and routine, as well as perceived 'ethnic discrimination' causing constraints in their social and familial lives. For example, Ngoc Linh, Minh Thanh, and Thanh Huong were worried when they faced little likelihood of employment caused by 'ethnic discrimination' that would pose problems to their capacity to provide financial support for their children's schooling. The other participants similarly expressed some interrelated constraints in their professional, social and familial domains by telling me how racial discrimination limited possibilities for them to get jobs with "decent incomes to support" their own families (Xuan Hong's experience), while they had to "work really hard and sacrifice time [for work]" (Ngoc Linh's words). Minh Thanh complained that as a salesperson, he had had to follow office hours, and been unable to "drive [his] children to school or take them home, play with them or even take care of the garden". Instead, he had been concerned with "whether [he] was able to catch a train to work on time". Ngoc Linh expressed worries about his family responsibilities if he had worked for a company. He stated, "Eight hours a day and five days a week could steal [his] time with [his] children and wife." These tight working hours "made no sense at all" while he was trying to work hard to maintain family happiness. Tuong Vu similarly found the pressures of working hours and sale orders limited his socialising with friends. Anh Ngoc and Thanh Binh were under pressure to send remittances to their parents in Vietnam, while they were "unable to find jobs right away after having PR granted" (Thanh Binh's experience).

4.2.2. Open-ended possibilities and opportunities in transitions

These participants' feelings of being-not-at-home urged them to look for ways to feel at-home again. Some also faced further constraints emerging from their ambiguous relations to the world.

Interactions with local people and co-nationals, and uses of equipment

Several participants found possibilities open up in several ways for their employment and family settlement through their entwinement with intersecting social domains. For example, Quynh Thy decided to quit her job at the IT company and establish a clothes shop, because she did not want to be "dependent upon others". Her frequent contact with her Vietnamese friends and local people in Australia enabled her to care about how pursue "a new life with freedom" by "working for [herself]". To do this, she used her savings in combination with the knowledge she obtained in her Australian education and knowledge of the business environment shaped by her interactions with people in Australia. Her past contact with various people from many regions in the world became useful for her to approach and retain customers, as well as settle down her life in Australia quite smoothly in terms

of both employment and personal life. In this sense, her Australian qualifications were used in relation to not only the mobilisation of her finance, but also knowledge and skills obtained through her past mobility.

Van Minh experienced a possibility for employment opened up from his social exchanges with former lecturers whom he asked for advice and reference letters for jobs. He used the academic rapport in combination with his Master's degree in IT to successful apply for an IT position at an Australian university. Although Xuan Hong did not face "many stressful moments" in seeking employment, she found it "urgent to earn money" after arrival, so that she could maintain her family life. She used her relationship with locals, particularly her Australian husband, to increase the likelihood of getting the job as an administrator at an Australian university. In quite a similar vein, after having received his PR visa granted from Vietnam, Minh Thanh worked as a salesperson with his Master in Commerce in Australia for a year. Feeling frustrated with the workplace norm of discipline and routine, he expected to get a job that could "free" him from the tight working hours, so that he could take care of his children better. Some of his Australian colleagues had advised him to look for jobs in aviation that could offer him "more flexible time". His social conversations with these local people enabled him to realise the potential of using his English language proficiency and previous working experiences to apply for a funded place in an aviation-training program. After graduation, he was assigned to work as a technician for an Australian airlines company, allowing him "more time to spend with [his] children and take care of the garden". The ways he switched his career through his embeddedness in the world with others and things showed how he cared about living his professional life in relation to his involvement in the familial aspect. In this sense, Xuan Hong, Van Minh and Minh Thanh extended their social relationships to Australian people who were familiar with the professional environment. Through their immersion in space, the notion of "local people" became relatively dependent on where and how these participants experienced their social relationships. Space, in this sense, became the "geographical stretching-out of social relations" (Massey, 1993, p. 60).

Some participants were able to confront employment precariousness by securing their family settlement through international marriages. For example, Xuan Hong experienced:

> *At that time, Binh* [pseudonym for her son] *went to school. He was quite young at that time. I was lonely. I needed to get a job quickly. I needed a mental and material shelter right away. He* [her Australian partner] *had a stable financial condition…* [laughing]. *More importantly, he loves me and has gone with me through my difficult time after my divorce.* – Xuan Hong

Her decision for the second marriage was shaped by not only her personal expectation of happiness, but also consideration over her son's future and husband's economic condition that supported her search for employment. In some sense, her marriage was for "convenience" (Piper, 2003, p. 462)

Similarly, Anh Ngoc and Thanh Binh decided to marry Australians because of their needs to obtain 'shelter' for their everyday lives, social integration and employment. In the conversation with me, Anh Ngoc described the 'shelter' as material support in terms of accommodation, daily expenses and 'mental support' as her husband's love to relieve her loneliness and sense of 'betrayal' to the Vietnamese Government. She further commented that her marriage also enabled her to "enter Australian society" through her access to "the stability in [her] life" to socialise with friends in Australia "without being looked down". Anh Ngoc's engagement with local people also helped her

find a part-time job, which was supportive to her daily expenses and ability to send remittances to her natal family in Vietnam. Her Vietnamese friends suggested her do some 'easy' jobs that were suitable for women, such as folding paper flowers for sale at a newsagent in a Vietnamese community. She accepted this job while waiting for the result of an application for an administration position at a secondary school. Her interactions with Vietnamese people in Australia enabled her to confront the constraints of the perceived 'ethnic discrimination' and "poor English language ability". This part-time job also allowed her to practise her filial piety to her parents through her remittances.

In the same vein, after doing several part-time jobs, Thanh Binh felt "unstable with [his] life without having a place to live or a family to have dinner with". He married a Vietnamese Australian woman, who was 10 years older than he, as a way to "settle down" his life. He was calculative with his marriage decision by anticipating that this marriage would provide him stabilities in terms of ownership of her business, accommodation, living facilities and personal happiness:

> *She owned a migration and travel service company here* [a Vietnamese community]. *She's had almost everything, a house, a car and everything. To be honest, I wanted to have a family. I was lonely in Australia, so establishing a family in Australia was what I wanted at that time.* – Thanh Binh

These three participants' international marriages showed that during relocation, they desired to be grounded in place for settlement. Yet, the ability to be emplaced was challenged by their involvement in the intersecting social and familial structures that they could not avoid or take separate responses to each of these. However, how Yen Xuan experienced the need to be emplaced was slightly different from the other participants. Her participation in her transnational business as an "astronaut" enabled her to live in "multi-local residence" (Ho, 2002, p. 145). She considered Facebook, mobile phones and Vietnam Airlines (Vietnam's national air carrier) as "indispensable accessories in [her] life". She used communications technology and air transportation as means to connect the multiple locations of her residence to achieve both professional and familial responsibilities. Despite her involvement in transnational spaces across borders, she felt it important to be grounded because of the inseparability between work and family life.

The ways some participants were embedded in the world across space also opened up possibilities for self-employment. For example, Ngoc Linh and Yen Xuan mobilised financial sources for their entrepreneurship in Australia by asking their parents in Vietnam for loans. Before migration, Ngoc Linh had spent five years studying music at a Vietnamese university. After facing some constraints of discipline and routine at his former workplace in Australia, he realised that self-employment would allow him to "pay more proper care to the children's schooling and upbringing". With his passion and background in music, he asked his parents and in-law parents in Vietnam for loans to establish two music-teaching centres in a Vietnamese community in Australia. The loans he used for the operation of the music centres were used in combination with his previous Vietnamese degree in music, and Vietnamese linguistic and cultural understandings. His being-in-the-world with others and things enabled him to use his music knowledge together with the loans from his relatives, the location of his residence in Australia, Vietnamese ethnicity in terms of language and socio-cultural understanding and social interactions.

Similarly, Yen Xuan experienced an opening of possibilities that helped her establish her own transnational business through her interactions with others and things across space and time.

> *Relationships with people in Vietnam are important for the establishment and operation of our business. We know both Australian and Vietnamese import and export laws. My husband* [a Vietnamese skilled migrant who used to be a lecturer in law at an Australian university] *deals with the legal documents for the business, and I deal with the production in Vietnam and sales in Australia.* – Yen Xuan

Her interactions with her parents and local people in Vietnam opened up the opportunity to run a transnational business in toy production. Through her familiarity with Vietnam and Australia in terms of socio-cultural and legal understandings, she was able to use cheap labour and materials for production in Vietnam, and opened a representative office and a shop in Australia.

Familiarity with social norms

Some participants' uses of equipment and interactions with others were informed by socio-political and cultural norms that influenced their relocation. For example, Tuong Vu mobilised his parents' investment to establish a mobile phone shop in Australia, which allowed him to "stay away from everyday boring patterns of work" at his former company, and "own something that [could] lead to stability in life". His expectation of a stable life was influenced by the social stereotype of men's successes, which his parents adopted:

> *My parents were concerned. They said that men should have a career at the age of 30 and own a house at 40. They wanted me to have a stable life, so they sent me money to establish this phone shop…. Doing business can earn you a good income. The good income can produce stability. Stability will earn you a life, buy a house, and get married. This stability can make them happy. Of course, they can tell it to their friends with pride* [laughing]. – Tuong Vu

He followed this cultural norm through his interactions with his parents across space, and also informed by the transformation of his parents' of social status through his mobility. As noted by Dall'Alba (2009, p. 39) on historicity that transforms us over time through entwinement with the world, the meaning of Tuong Vu's parents' support for his mobility was transformed through his relocation. While their expectations of "pride" had been initially shaped by the social norm of international mobility, their financial support for his business in Australia was enacted through their practice of the stereotype of men's successes. In this vein, not only was Tuong Vu's relocation influenced by his parents and the social practices of social status in his home community that were relatively immobile and rooted, but it also influenced the rootedness of these people in terms of reproducing social status across borders.

Thanh Huong's interactions with her sister living in Australia were informed by the cultural practice of kinship that enabled her to achieve a "shelter" during relocation, and positively influenced the ways she entered the labour market:

> *My sister picked me up from my stressful moments. At that time, I shared a room with her family here* [in Australia]. *She cooked food for us* [her and her daughter]. *She helped me with everything*

> *from women's tiny things to big things like renting this house and buying the car for me. Then, I could feel secured to go out to look for jobs.* – Thanh Huong

With her sister's material and emotional support, she was able to "feel secured", relieve her sorrow from her previous unsuccessful marriage and "go out to look for jobs". After the conversation with me, she also added that she felt thankful for her sister's help with accommodation, because she was able to send her daughter to a school nearby and maintain a "stable family life". Her sister's support was explainable because in Vietnamese culture, siblings are often bonded to each other through mental and physical support throughout their lives. The practice of this cultural norm opened up a possibility for her to achieve professional and familial relocation, in which both of these aspects were experienced as closely interrelated.

In general, these participants' experiences of employment reflected various ways of their being-in-the-world with familiarity and the needs to feel familiar with the strangeness arising from their being-in Australia. Their interactions with their relatives in Vietnam, local people in Australia, and followed socio-cultural and political norms that had once constrained their mobilities, enabled them to settle their public and family lives. Their entwinement with others and things in the world made them experience various feelings and emotions that influenced their relocation. Their emotions were inherent to material realities that shaped their desires to be grounded in space. However, they were not fixed in space, but immersed in (transnational) spaces where their emplaced negotiations of responsibilities and obligations with their belonging produced some contradictory feelings of being between decisiveness and rationality, and underachievement and incompleteness.

Familiarity with social structures and conditions

Similar to the other participants who experienced possibilities for intergenerational benefits through their being-in Australia, these participants' entwinement with the world spanned across national borders, enabling them to experience securities in several intersecting domains for them and their children's future. For example, most married participants acknowledged that their relocation to Australia could give their children high-quality education for future employment, mobility and personal benefits:

> *Education here is of high quality, very useful for my daughter! Students have access to the world's knowledge such as libraries and the internet. I hope with the world's knowledge she can obtain, she can find work easily anywhere in the future.* – Yen Xuan

> *My children can absorb the civilisation of this society which will benefit their future when they can travel here and there in the world. English is their first language here, and they will be able to communicate if they go everywhere in the world.* – Ngoc Linh

These examples showed that the "high quality" of Australian education was perceived as offering their children "world's knowledge", Western social ideologies (which Ngoc Linh termed as "civilisation"), English language ability and international recognition of Australian qualifications. These qualities were perceived as global commodities and representatives of cosmopolitan memberships that were expected to contribute to their children's future employability, international mobilities and a "better life".

Many participants also compared social and environmental issues between Vietnam and Australia that influenced their and their children's educational and professional lives. For example, Ngoc Linh and Tran Minh mentioned the clean environment in Australia as a benefit for their health and children's growth in contrast to the polluted environment in Vietnam. Ngoc Linh mentioned some insecurities in Vietnam in forms of robberies, pickpocketing, murders and neighbours' quarrels that made him feel so "tired and afraid" that affected his work and life. He told me that once, after he had been chased by a robber at midnight, he was "scared" of going to perform gigs at clubs in his hometown in Vietnam. Then, he had to quit this job, even though he loved doing it, and it could earn him "some money to pay for university tuition fees". Similarly, other participants used adjectives describing worries such as "scary", "afraid" or "dangerous" to mention social evils that they and their children might face and affect their employment and personal lives if living in Vietnam. In contrast, social welfare and healthcare systems in Australia were believed to secure their personal and professional lives, as well as children's future education and health. For example, when Anh Ngoc decided to apply for PR, she did not realise that Australia might offer her better healthcare and social welfare services than Vietnam. After she gave birth to the first baby, she realised that her migration entailed more meanings than her previous economic expectations. Her interactions with Australian healthcare and welfare systems enabled her to reveal that her relocation might benefit not only herself and her children's educational and personal development, but also husband, who did not have to "take a day off work" to take care of her when she was sick.

These securities were perceived and experienced through their dwelling across space and time, in which they interacted with the international political regimes and those who were close to them such as their children, as well as things and places such as places to live, schools for their children to study and other essential items for everyday life. Their perceptions and experiences of these intergenerational securities showed that the formation of their "migrant selfhood" (Conradson & Mckay, 2007, p. 169) was negotiated through their relational engagements with others, rather than an abstract construction of nationhood as simply manifest in their Australian citizenship. The embodiment of their citizenship was encountered through their engagements with others and things across multiple spaces and times.

Ambiguous relations with social norms

Some participants experienced ambiguous relations to the world, which opened up possibilities and created constraints for their relocation. For example, the ways Yen Xuan followed the socio-political norm of bribery in Vietnam for her transnational business showed how she experienced ambiguous relation to this norm. In the past, she had encountered bribery practices as one of the constraints for her professional practice. However, she then realised a possibility of using the other side of this practice to facilitate her transnational business:

> *To be honest, I've spent a lot of money on obtaining permissions for export. I have to go through the Department of Planning and Investment and then the Department of Commerce* [in Vietnam]. *Lucky me, because my parents know a friend, whose son is working as the head of a division in the Department of Planning and Investment. You know what I do, right? Going to the back doors of a bunch of people that I never know under the guidance of this man!* – Yen Xuan

In this vein, her employment practices were experienced through her ambiguous relation to the socio-political practices of bribery. Through this ambiguity, she experienced the ambivalence of time when

her experiences of bribery in the past enabled her to deal with paperwork issues in Vietnam in the present. In a Heideggerian perspective, she encountered her "being-alongside-within-the-world" in Australia with her knowledge and experiences of this norm as "already-in-the-world" in Vietnam, which shaped her projection into the future as "being-ahead-of-herself" through the transnational business (Heidegger, 1962, p. 236). In this sense, she was immersed in the world across space and time.

Although Anh Ngoc and Thanh Binh felt at-home with life in Australia, they felt uneasy with some place-based cultural norms in Vietnam that they were following and had once felt familiar with. For example, Anh Ngoc mentioned that the "shelter" from her marriage enabled her to send some money for her mother to treat uterus cancer and buy a house in another city, so that they could "avoid the punishment from the [local] government" because of her violation of the scholarship conditions in the past. Her parents' relocation to the new place also helped them avoid social judgment as "parents of a cheater to the [Vietnamese] Government". By expecting to overcome her natal family' economic difficulties and help her parents "keep face" in the new place, she used her husband's financial support to send money and computers for her brothers to open a computer shop in Vietnam. Anh Ngoc's attempt to fulfil the family responsibilities in Vietnam was enhanced by her relocation shaped by an opening of possibilities for employment and marriage, providing some material opportunities which made her "sending dollars show feeling" (Mckay, 2007, p. 175) as a "sacrificial sister" (Yeoh *et al.*, 2013, p. 441). Her relocation was affected by her negotiation of her obligations to keep sending remittances, family connections and belonging, with structural and legal obligations posed from the Vietnamese Government. In some sense, she was juggling between her belonging to the two localities, experiencing some dislocation through her negotiation of desires to being anchored in Australia for economic reasons with intimacies at home.

Thanh Binh's remittances helped his parents pay the debt for his former international education journey, buy a new house and open a café for his sister, increasing family solidarity across borders. However, while his remittances were found useful for his natal family's poverty reduction, he appeared shy when telling me that he sometimes had to use his wife's savings for the remittances. He had some arguments with his wife, who complained about his "over-expenditure" for his natal family. He experienced the conflict in his marital family in relation to his natal family in Vietnam, professional practice as the "manager of a company", and social values that made him feel shameful of his "transnational act of recognition" (Yeoh *et al.*, 2013, p. 441) as a filial son. Anh Ngoc and Thanh Binh's experiences in sending remittances illustrated how their "acts of recognition" were informed by the cultural norms of filial piety and kinship support to fulfil familial responsibilities and obtain social positioning for their natal families in Vietnam. Thanh Binh's act of generating remittances acquired from his employment and wife's savings increased his natal family consolidation but created conflicts in his marital family. Yet, Anh Ngoc's case showed that material giving disrupted family solidarity. Their acts of sending remittances carried material and symbolic meanings of cultural practices across spaces, which made them occasionally feel not-at-home with the ways they sustained their family relationships. In this sense, their experiences showed how they were embedded in Vietnam's talent training program and Australia's talent attraction schemes through which they had to negotiate their social relations and interactions with those in the community, their parents and things such as remittances and necessities for everyday life.

5. Summary: Relocation through entwinement with the world

Two-step migrants encounter interrelated effects from their complex relations with people and things across spatial and temporal linkages on their transnational mobilities from the initiation of migration to relocation and into the future. Their interactions with the world include their engagement with global and national regimes of human capital, which manifests in their consumption of international education and subsequent skilled migration, in addition to everyday engagements with local processes in work environments, communities and families. Some participate in national human capital development projects through financial sponsorship or self-funding for international education from the home country, while concurrently following schemes for attracting desired skills in the host society. They also negotiate their participation in these global landscapes of talent through their engagement with their family members, colleagues, friends, administrative officers, as well as those with whom they are not in direct contact.

These findings suggest that migrants do not encounter each domain separately from others, but are always embedded in these interrelated domains. Their embeddedness in the world in intersecting aspects of their lives creates constraints and possibilities for their mobilities. Furthermore, constraints and possibilities are usually encountered in relation to other constraints and possibilities, which produce further challenges or opportunities. In their interactions with the world in intersecting domains, two-step migrants use things in relation to other things to shape and sustain their mobilities, as well as form aspirations for work and life. Through their uses of things, they also encounter people in relation to other people and things to achieve the lives to which they aspire. It is these confluences that arise from migrants' embeddedness in the world, producing heterogeneous experiences of transnational mobilities.

Compliance of research and publication ethics

I, as the Corresponding Author, declare and undertake that in the study titled as "Being-in Australia: Vietnamese Skilled Migrants' Relocating Experiences", scientific, ethical and citation rules were followed; Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry Journal Editorial Board has no responsibility for all ethical violations to be encountered, that all responsibility belongs to the author/s and that this study has not been sent to any other academic publication platform for evaluation.

References

1. Arisaka, Y. (1996). Spatiality, temporality, and the problem of foundation in Being and Time. Philosophy Today, 41(1), 36-46. doi:10.5840/philtoday199640130
2. Basch, L., Glick-Schiller, N., & Blanc-Szanton, C. (1996). Nations unbound: Transnational projects, postcolonial predicaments and de-territorialized nation-states. New York, NY: Gordon and Breach.
3. Beaverstock, J. V. (2005). Transnational elites in the city: British highly-skilled inter-company transferees in New York City's financial district. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 31(2), 245–268.
4. Biao, X. (2005). Gender, dowry and the migration system of Indian information technology professionals. Indian Journal of Gender Studies, 12(2-3), 257-380. doi:10.1177/097152150501200209
5. Biao, X. (2007). Global "body shopping": An Indian labour system in the Information Technology industry. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
6. Blattner, W. (2006). Heidegger's Being and Time. New York: Continuum.
7. Conradson, A., & Mckay, D. (2007). Translocal subjectivities: Mobility, connection, emotion. Mobilities, 2(2), 167-174. doi:10.1080/17450100701381524

8. Conradson, A., & Latham, A. (2007). The affective possibilities of London: Antipodean transnationals and the overseas experience. Mobilities, 2(2), 231-254. doi:10.1080/17450100701381573
9. Dall'Alba, G. (2009). Learning professional ways of being: Ambiguities of becoming. Educational Philosophy and Theory, 41(1), 34-45. doi:10.1111/j.1469-5812.2008.00475.x
10. Dreyfus, H. L. (1991). Being-in-the-world: A commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division 1. London: MIT Press.
11. Gieryn, T. F. (2000). A space for place in sociology. Annual Review of Sociology, 26, 463-496. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.463
12. Gold, S. J. (1997). Transnationalism and vocabularies of motive in international migration: The case of Israelis in the United States. Sociological Perspectives, 40(3), 409-427.
13. Goldring, L., & Landolt, P. (2011). Caught in the work-citizenship matrix: The lasting effects of precarious legal status on work for Toronto immigrants. Globalizations, 8(3), 325-341. doi:10.1080/14747731.2011.576850
14. Harrison, P. (2007). The space between us: Opening remarks on the concept of dwelling. Environmental and Planning D: Society and Space, 25(4), 625-647.
15. Heidegger, M. (1962). Being and time (J. Macquarrie, & E. Robinson, Trans). London: SCM Press.
16. Ho, E. S. (2002). Multi-local residence, transnational networks: Chinese "astronaut" families in New Zealand. Asian and Pacific Migration Journal, 11(1), 145-164. doi:10.1177/011719680201100107
17. Iredale, R. (2001). The migration of professionals: Theories and typologies. International Migration, 39(5), 7-26. doi:10.1111/1468-2435.00169
18. Latham, A. (2002). Retheorizing the scale of globalization: Topologies, actor-networks, and cosmopolitanism. In A. Herold & M. W. Wright (Eds.), Geographies of power: Placing scale (pp. 115-144). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
19. Massey, D. (1993). Power geometry and a progressive sense of place. In J. Bird, B. Curtis, T. Putnam, G. Robertson, & L. Tickner, Mapping the futures: Local cultures, global change (pp. 59-69). New York, NY: Routledge.
20. Mckay, D. (2007). 'Sending dollars shows feeling' – Emotions and economies in Filipino migration. Mobilities, 2(2), 175-194. doi:10.1080/17450100701381532
21. Mahroum, S. (2001). Europe and the immigration of highly skilled labour. International Migration, 39(5), 27-43. doi:10.1111/1468-2435.00170
22. Piper, N. (2003). Wife or worker? Worker or wife? Marriage and cross-border migration in contemporary Japan. International Journal of Population Geography, 9(6), 457-469. doi:10.1002/ijpg.309
23. Robertson, S. K. (2011. Student switchers and the regulation of residency: The interface of the individual and Australia's immigration regime. Population, Space and Place, 17(1), 103-115. doi:10.1002/psp.598
24. Robertson, S. K, & Runganaikaloo, A. (2014). Lives in limbo: Migration experiences in Australia's education – migration nexus. Ethnicities, 14(2), 208-226. doi:10.1177/1468796813504552
25. Szelényi, K. (2003). Explaining the migration and settlement of foreign graduate students: Global integration theory and the theory of cumulative causation. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Centre for Global Comparative Research.
26. Velayutham, S. (2013). Precarious experiences of Indians in Australia on 457 temporary work visas. The Economic and Labour Relations Review, 24(3), 340-361. doi:10.1177/1035304613495268
27. Yeoh, B. S. A., Leng, C. H., Dung, V. T. K., & Yi'en, C. (2013). Between two families: the social meaning of remittances for Vietnamese marriage migrants in Singapore. Global Networks, 13(4), 441-458. doi:10.1111/glob.12032