

Principal for Teaching Vietnamese Language as a Second Language in Taiwan, Case Study in Feng Chia University

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Abstract: *In recent years, in the developing international relations, cultural exchanges between Vietnam and the world community, the linguistic contact between Vietnamese and other languages has been increasingly expanded. Vietnamese for foreigners and Vietnamese as a foreign language has become one of the subjects of interest of domestic and foreign language teaching. This article presents a number of issues concerning Teaching Principles, reality as well as initial achievements of teaching Vietnamese as a second language (option), based on documentations on Vietnam study, Vietnamese language of some universities in the world, in Vietnam and the teaching of Vietnamese for foreigners by Foreign Language Center, Feng Chia University (FCU) since 2014.*

Keywords: Teaching Vietnamese, foreign language, second language, Feng Chia University

1. Introduction

Beginning in the 2018 school year, the Taiwan Ministry of Education decided to include the Southeast Asian language [6] including Vietnamese as the official subject at the primary schools and will be an elective subject at the high schools and the universities in Taiwan. However, right from the first semester of the 2014 school year, Vietnamese classes were opened in Feng Chia University.

In the past five years, Feng Chia University of Taichung city has opened many Vietnamese classes for students' option. Each semester is two classes, and more than 100 students enroll Vietnamese every semester.

In these classes, in addition to basic knowledge such as how to pronounce, rhyme, create sentences and greetings ... the students are introduced about Vietnamese culture. Vietnam and Taiwan have many similar cultural features, both have many traditional holidays and festivals such as Lunar New Year, Full Moon Festival, Thanh Minh, Dragon Boat festival.

Vietnamese is increasingly interested by schools in Taiwan. The number of students enrolling in Vietnamese has increased significantly compared to many years ago. Bringing in mother tongue, home culture and cuisine to foreign students is both a noble duty and a pride of overseas Vietnamese teachers.

2. Background

In the world, the English teaching as a foreign language began officially in the early 1940s, when Charles Fries opened the University of Michigan English Language Institute [4]. Since 1979, Blatchford [2] has released a statistic showing that in the US there are 8 institutes and universities that offer English as a foreign language teacher training programs at doctoral level, 66 institutes offering master's degree program, a total of 84 academies and

universities offering English as a foreign language teacher training program

Currently, there are hundreds of English as a foreign language teacher training centers in the world. In France, in Japan ... there are many students, Japanese, French... as a foreign language teacher training centers

In Vietnam, in the 1980s, due to a sudden increase in demand for Vietnamese teachers for Cambodian universities, the Ministry of Education and Training mobilized hundreds of foreign language teachers in the faculty of foreign language, Hanoi General University and Hanoi University of Foreign Languages to Cambodia to teach Vietnamese. Most of these teachers before going to Cambodia were given a short course (about a month and a half) about Vietnamese and teaching methods at the Faculty of Vietnamese Language of Hanoi General University. These courses provided the most basic knowledge of phonetics, vocabulary and grammar, creating opportunities for foreign language teachers to become familiar with Vietnamese textbooks for foreigners at that time of the Vietnamese Department and a part of teaching skills. Thanks to these training and exchange courses, the Vietnamese language teaching of non-Vietnamese teachers is much more convenient. It was also basis for Hanoi University of Foreign Languages (current Hanoi University) to establish Vietnamese Teaching Center for foreigners in the early 1990s. In 1995, the Vietnamese language school for foreigners under the Institute of Social Sciences in Ho Chi Minh City, led by Dr. Vo Xuan Trang organized a number of short-term training courses for foreigners. Some linguistics professors used to be experts in teaching Vietnamese abroad as Professor Nguyen Tai Can, Professor Hoang Trong Pha were invited. Such courses were worthwhile, but in reality it was just all. Time pasted, the training of teachers of Vietnamese for teaching Vietnamese in Laos, in some areas with a large number of Vietnamese children abroad were still experiential and academic. The knowledge acquired by students was either not systematic, or

cannot be applied because it was too confusing and academic or research-intensive.

Only till the last 5 years, a quite methodical teacher of Vietnamese training program was adopted and carried out in the Department of Vietnam Studies and Vietnamese Language, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, VNU. In English there is an acronym that refers to the Vietnamese training for foreigners that is TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), we also do this for Vietnamese: (TVSOL: Teaching Vietnamese to Speakers of Other Languages). This really meaningful for the career of teaching and learning Vietnamese as a foreign language.

Not only in Feng CHia University, but also in Taiwan, the number of Vietnamese learners in recent years has increased rapidly; learners are many different nationalities, from many countries in the world such as Korea, Japan, Laos, China, Thailand, Taiwan, Malaysia, America, England, Australia, Canada, Indonesia ... Most learners' purposes of study are learning about Vietnam country, people, culture or having Vietnam research to be able to live, work in Vietnam or for immediate communication needs; Besides, some learners of Vietnamese also learn about Vietnam country, people, culture or study about Vietnam. The attractiveness of a rich tone spoken language associated with a particular culture can make some tourists who come to Vietnam only for a few days still spend a little time to attend a few Vietnamese lessons. Besides Vietnamese language learners are foreigners, a part of students whose mother is Vietnamese but living in Taiwan - a different language environment, Vietnamese has become their second language - a foreign language. And learning Vietnamese here as a matter of course, can be seen as a way that learners return to their roots.

In the world, some countries (such as Korea, Japan, China, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, France, Germany, Russia, America, Australia, Singapore ...) already have Vietnamese training centers. The birth of these Vietnamese classes is mainly from the need for language exchanges, cultural exchanges, or to help learners have access to a particular language and culture in the Orient. At present, Vietnamese language - Vietnamese culture is still receiving attention of language teaching, Orientalism of some universities and cultural training schools in the world. In 2012 school year, in order to enhance mutual understanding between the two countries, especially on culture, Dong Phuong University of Naples (Italy) introduced the Vietnamese curriculum as an official subject (According to Hanoi Moi Newspaper, 06-05-2011).

- The reality of the need for Vietnamese study and culture requires teaching to be not only spontaneous and temporary but also formalized. Thus, many related sectors (such as Vietnam study, Vietnamese language, Vietnamese and Vietnamese culture) in some universities have been born, marking the development of this subject as well as affirming position of Vietnamese in the world language, culture, civilization.

3. Principal of Teaching Vietnamese in Feng Chia University

3.1 The program is build according to the following principles [1]

The principle of appropriateness: The program must be consistent with the language competency development trend of countries in the region and the world.

The principle of feasibility: The program must be easy to apply in the specific conditions and circumstances of learners. Accordingly, the teaching and evaluation of Vietnamese language proficiency of overseas Vietnamese should be orderly and easy to implement. The program must be consistent with the training context. However, it should not depend only on the systemality but also orient the perfection according to international norms and practices to facilitate international communication.

Principles of consistency: The program must be internally consistent to avoid conflicts; At the same time, it must be appropriate for language learning in training institutions in Vietnam and abroad.

Principle of focus: On a comprehensive viewpoint, the Program must reflect important issues that are crucial to the learners' Vietnamese competence and must also pay due attention to the specificity of Vietnamese. The study and evaluation focus in the Vietnamese Language Program for overseas Vietnamese is to conduct communication activities.

Principle of classification: To ensure the principle of classification, the program is divided into 6 levels named in order from level 1 to level 6. Each level has its own criteria of capacity [1].

3.2 Approaching methods

3.2.1. Standard teaching and evaluation (output standards) is a key solution in current education innovation.

Teaching, learning and testing according to the output standards focus on the following key points:

- Creating program frameworks, outlining key features of knowledge and skills students need to achieve.
- Measuring knowledge and linguistic competence based on relevant criteria.
- High requirements in some main exams.

3.2.2. Teaching and assessment testing according to standards require to:

- Creating specific, detailed, measurable standards in an integrated program framework. All assessment criteria apply to all students regardless of who they are; where they come, race or richness.
- Tests should have standards-based criteria rather than indicators-based ranking (student comparisons).
- Higher new standards for good or average students.
- Paying attention to reducing academic distance between groups of students (in terms of race, gender, richness and poverty...)

3.2.3. Education based on standards or output standards is differentiated from traditional education in the following points:

Firstly, in terms of philosophy, traditional education takes teachers as a center while standards or output standards-based education takes learner as a center

Secondly, in terms of goals, traditional education mainly transfers knowledge and skills of the previous generation to the learners, while standards or output standards-based education directs to the satisfaction with the labor market's competitive needs

Thirdly, in terms of direction, traditional education mainly focuses on providing knowledge to students (input); while standards or output standards-based education focus on measuring students' performance and experience ability (output).

Fourthly, in terms of learners' thinking capacity, traditional education emphasizes on knowing and understanding; standards or output standards-based education emphasizes application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation ability

Fifthly, in terms of teaching, traditional education directs teachers to the same style, based on general regulations; standards or output standards-based education directs to creation of knowledge and encourages many approaches, based on the teaching of events and standard methods, incorporating ideas and advanced teaching models, not imposing any specific teaching and learning style, teachers may teach at their own discretion

Sixthly, on terms of assessment, in traditional education, each student is scored and ranked in comparison with other students. Training institution uses tests mainly according to the content criteria while the standards or output standards-based education emphasizes learners' practice, requiring the students to prove what they have learned and how they do.

4. Teaching methods, a case study of teaching Vietnamese in Feng Chia University

The authors applied those teaching methods and using these main textbook: Base on the main textbook for teaching Vietnamese language such as Elementary Vietnamese, use for non-Vietnamese speakers [3], Vietnamese for Beginners [5], the author integrated the knowledge and teaching methods as bellow:

4.1. Communication direction

The effectiveness of teaching language by communication method is increasingly affirmed. Therefore, the language teaching textbooks in general and Vietnamese language teaching textbooks in particular are often compiled in direction of communication. This compilation direction

governs structure, content of syllabus, lessons, how to choose exercise system... For example, the pronunciation and Vietnamese writing at the beginning of course are only presented in general and being taught through lessons to make it less boring and more effective (sounding with meaning); The grammatical knowledge is not conveyed in a boring manner but through lively conversations, case studies that are close to the daily communication of Vietnamese people.



Figure 1: Send FCU students to Vietnam to learn Vietnamese language, Vietnam Culture in 1 month (2018)



Figure 2: FCU students are learning Vietnamese language (taken in 2018)

4.2 Integration direction

Content of syllabus is compiled in the direction of integrating knowledge about language with knowledge about country, people, and culture of Vietnam. This is reflected in the selection of topics of conversations, readings, vocabulary system for learners. This compilation is also consistent with the goal of teaching language in general and teaching Vietnamese in particular.

4.3. Consistency with the level of learners

A set of textbooks is often compiled at three levels: begin (or elementary), intermediate and advanced, ordered by increasing knowledge and skills such as Vietnamese 1, 2, 3 or A, B, C. In order to meet qualification requirements, the authors often use appropriate methods; for example, at the beginning level, the visual method is often used as an

alternative to explain by abstract concepts. An example could be given: when providing knowledge of unit nouns that traditional Vietnamese study often refers to as classifiers, Vietnamese textbooks 1 (KNV- HCMC University of Education is compiling) using pictures for learners to have idea of words showing unit such as pictures, fruits (left), and understanding the Vietnamese people's appreciation of these units (picture: word used to describe each shaped unit, the surface has pictures, letters, fruit: word used to refer to each unit with picture of fruit, trees - Vietnamese dictionary, Institute of Linguistics 2003).

4.4 FCU Textbook and classrooms

Based on the main textbook as mentioned above, Feng Chia University has been teaching Vietnamese for Taiwanese students since September 2014 and concurrent with teaching Vietnamese language in Taiwan, the school also cooperated with Thai Nguyen University of Education on exchange programs. Every year, Taiwanese students are taken to Vietnam for 1 month to learn Vietnamese culture and language (equal 2 credits, studying at .

Based on practice and experience, the authors focused on compiling the reference textbook with 10 topics (Publishing process) that focus on the essential topics Taiwanese students need the most when coming to Vietnam.

Most importantly, these 10 topics are compiled in 3 languages, Chinese, English, and Vietnamese. It will be very convenient for foreign students currently studying at Feng Chia University, they can use it when going to Vietnam. Classroom supplies are fully equipped: air conditioner, fan, door, window, table, chair, pen, book, glasses, phone, computer) These items can be used as visual means for students to recognize in Vietnamese.



Figure 3: FCU Classroom (2018)

4.5 Visual aid

A visual aid are Writing board, colors felt-tip pen, air conditioner, fan, door, window, table, chair, pen, book, computer in the classroom that can make such a deep impression for students to recognize in Vietnamese.

Pictures, slogans, diagrams, forms, maps, models: nowadays, thanks to search engines, teachers can find any images on the

internet, helping to reduce the process of preparing learning tools. These media are used to illustrate lesson content or to do exercises to reinforce knowledge. Students can ask questions through drawings, character descriptions, and conversation.

Videos, projectors, movies, computers ... nowadays phones, camcorders with both transceiver functions integrated, FCU classrooms are equipped with computers, projectors, so the implementation of short videos and MP4 is a very intuitive Vietnamese conversation.

Some topics apply visual methods: Within the scope of an article we only have conditions to deploy some topics in the syllabus.

Example Lesson 1: Content: Greeting, using personal pronouns, structure "Yes ... no" (it mean: Có ... không)

The visual medium is the students in the class, they are both the subject, the object and the medium. Although lesson 1 only requires students to use pronouns in the first and second throne, in fact the addition of geography in the singular third, plural of the second, and third is not difficult. What is the best thing for students? On the contrary, it creates more excitement for students to practice and remember the names of their classmates.

The difficulty of using personal pronouns in Vietnamese is that it is not known how the age gap is used to call a brother / aunt / uncle / aunt / uncle (this need not translate). It was difficult to see how old he was on the picture. To overcome this difficulty, teachers will prepare images of men, women, people or people of different ages. Write down their names for their convenience.

5. Conclusions and discussions

In order to meet the requirement of learner-centered learning, group-based teaching method is considered a key solution. Group-based learning is a very important solution. The output standard is an assertion of what graduates need to achieve, what they need to know, need to understand, their skills, behavioral attitudes and what they will do. Output standards are regulations on professional knowledge; practical skills, cognitive ability and problem solving learners can get after graduation.

Output standards can help innovate learning methods, teaching-learning processes that focus on learners, not teachers; overcome some of the problems of traditional education that attach much importance to teaching, teachers teach what they have ... output standards-based education has a good effect on the chain of activity relation TEACHING - LEARNING - EXAMINATION - EVALUATION. Therefore, a natural requirement is that the design of the training program must be attached with demand. Output standards-based education also supports quality assurance and formation of training standards.

Above are achievements and principles, Vietnamese teaching methods at Feng Chia University, Taiwan. If properly paid attention and invested, Vietnamese Studies / Vietnamese Language can develop both in width and depth, attracting interest of domestic and foreign learners. And this is an effective bridge that can bring Vietnam - Vietnamese culture and Vietnamese language to many countries and nations in the world.

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