

**A SURVEY OF THE CURRENT SITUATION AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS TO  
IMPROVE THE TEACHING QUALITY OF THE COURSE  
CHINESE FOR TOURISM AT THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCES**  
KHẢO SÁT THỰC TRẠNG VÀ ĐỀ XUẤT GIẢI PHÁP NÂNG CAO CHẤT LƯỢNG  
GIẢNG DẠY HỌC PHẦN TIẾNG TRUNG CHUYÊN NGÀNH DU LỊCH TẠI  
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC KHOA HỌC – ĐẠI HỌC THÁI NGUYÊN

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**Abstract** - This study investigates the current situation and proposes solutions to improve the teaching quality of the Chinese for Tourism course for Chinese Studies students at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences. A questionnaire survey using a five-point Likert scale was conducted with 150 second-year students enrolled in the course. The results indicate that the course generally meets the objectives of specialized training; however, limitations remain in the course content, teaching materials, instructional methods, and students' ability to use specialized Chinese. Based on these findings, the study proposes several solutions to improve course content, teaching approaches, and the integration of technology in instruction. The results provide a practical basis for improving the teaching of the course.

**Key words** - Chinese for Tourism; foreign language for specific purposes; situation analysis; solutions.

## 1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and deepening international integration, tourism is regarded as a highly competitive service industry in which human resources play a decisive role in service quality and industry competitiveness. Huynh Quoc Thang argues that the competence, qualifications, communication style, and service attitude of tourism workers are not only factors that create the product but also components constituting the quality of tourism products; therefore, training high-quality tourism human resources is an inevitable requirement in the process of integration [1]. From the same perspective, Nguyen Thuy Dung et al. point out that Vietnam's tourism workforce is currently inadequate in both quantity and quality, which raises the urgent need to improve training quality at tourism education institutions [2].

In tourism human resource training, specialized foreign language competence is considered one of the core competencies, especially for major international tourist markets. However, Le Thi Le argues that although the tourism human resource training system in Vietnam has achieved certain results, the quality of training still does not fully meet practical demands, especially in the context of integration and changes following the Covid-19 pandemic [3]. Similarly, Nguyen Thi Kieu Trinh states that after the pandemic, tourism human resources recovered rapidly in

**Tóm tắt** - Nghiên cứu khảo sát thực trạng và đề xuất giải pháp nâng cao chất lượng giảng dạy học phần Tiếng Trung chuyên ngành Du lịch đối với sinh viên chuyên ngành Trung Quốc học tại Trường Đại học Khoa học – Đại học Thái Nguyên. Nghiên cứu sử dụng phương pháp khảo sát bằng bảng hỏi với thang đo Likert 5 mức, triển khai đối với 150 sinh viên năm thứ hai đang theo học học phần. Kết quả cho thấy, học phần cơ bản đáp ứng mục tiêu đào tạo theo định hướng chuyên ngành, song vẫn còn hạn chế về nội dung học phần, học liệu, phương pháp tổ chức dạy học và năng lực sử dụng tiếng Trung chuyên ngành của sinh viên. Trên cơ sở đó, nghiên cứu đề xuất một số giải pháp nhằm cải tiến nội dung, phương pháp và tăng cường ứng dụng công nghệ trong giảng dạy. Kết quả nghiên cứu làm cơ sở thực tiễn cho việc cải tiến giảng dạy học phần.

**Từ khóa** - Tiếng Trung chuyên ngành Du lịch; ngoại ngữ chuyên ngành; khảo sát thực trạng; giải pháp.

quantity but still had many limitations in quality, among which professional competence and foreign language communication skills remain weaknesses that need to be addressed [4].

From the perspective of teaching and learning specialized foreign languages, Do Tuyet Ngan et al. argue that the view that proficiency in a general foreign language is sufficient for effectively learning a specialized foreign language is not appropriate; in order to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning specialized foreign languages, it is necessary to investigate teaching practices and adjust content and methods according to learners' needs [5]. Regarding Chinese for Tourism, Le Thi Nhu Thuy emphasizes that training must meet social demands, narrow the gap between training and labor utilization, and at the same time innovate teaching methods toward greater practical application and learner-centeredness [6]. These studies show that teaching Chinese for Tourism should not stop at providing linguistic knowledge, but should aim at developing the ability to use Chinese in specific professional situations.

From the perspective of teaching methods, Mai Thi Ngoc Anh et al. argue that applying project-based learning in teaching Chinese for Tourism helps students become more proactive and creative while strengthening the connection between knowledge and professional

practice; however, to achieve high effectiveness, specific practical studies and activity designs appropriate to the course content are needed [7]. Expanding this approach, Nguyen Thi Ngoc Hien points out that the project-based learning model in teaching specialized Chinese can improve students' language competence and 21st-century skills, but there are still difficulties related to learners' proficiency and the guiding role of lecturers, while also suggesting the possibility of taking advantage of technological and artificial intelligence support in the teaching process [8].

In addition, in the context of smart tourism development and digital transformation, Manh Khanh Long (孟庆龙) argues that tourism human resource training needs to focus on developing digital competence and the ability to apply technology in order to meet the new requirements of the modern tourism industry [9]. From the perspective of innovating training methods in an application-oriented direction, the study by Doan Thi Bich Thu et al. shows that learner-centered teaching methods, particularly problem-based learning, have a positive impact on learning performance and student engagement among Tourism majors in higher education [10]. These arguments suggest that the teaching of specialized foreign languages for tourism should adopt an integrated approach that combines professional requirements, pedagogical innovation, and the current technological context.

In the Chinese Studies training program at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences, the Chinese for Tourism course is designed as an elective course to help students progress from learning General Chinese to using Chinese in professional contexts. The course is offered in the second semester of the second academic year with a workload of 3 credits, using the textbook *旅游口语* published by Beijing Language and Culture University Press and edited by Trinh Quoc Hung and Tran Quang Loi (郑国雄、陈光磊). Before taking this course, students have completed the courses Integrated Chinese 1, 2, 3, and 4; Chinese Listening and Note-taking 1, 2, and 3; and have attained a level equivalent to HSK 4. Given these characteristics, the course not only consolidates students' linguistic foundation but also aims to develop their specialized communicative competence. This requires course content, teaching materials, and teaching methods that are appropriate to its application-oriented training objectives.

In addition to the studies reviewed above, previous publications in the University of Danang - Journal of Science and Technology have also addressed tourism-related issues from the perspective of training and workforce development. For example, Tran Tuyen examined collaborative training models for tourism human resources between universities and international tourism enterprises, highlighting the importance of practice-oriented curricula, industry engagement, and the development of professionally relevant competencies [11]. Such studies provide an important contextual foundation

for understanding the training demands of the tourism sector in Vietnam.

Although there have been studies addressing the training of specialized foreign languages and Chinese for Tourism in an application-oriented direction at several educational institutions, research investigating the current situation of teaching and learning the Chinese for Tourism course among Chinese Studies students at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences remains limited. In particular, there have not been many studies based on survey data to systematically analyze aspects such as course content, teaching materials, instructional methods, and learners' competence and difficulties as a basis for proposing solutions appropriate to the context of digital transformation and current professional requirements. Based on this gap, this study was conducted to investigate the current situation and propose solutions to improve the teaching quality of the Chinese for Tourism course at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences.

## 2. Research methodology

To assess the current state of teaching and learning in the Chinese for Tourism course at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences, the study surveyed 150 second-year students majoring in Chinese Studies. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, administered online through Google Forms in order to facilitate participants and ensure the collection of a sufficient amount of necessary data. The survey content focused on the appropriateness of the course content and teaching materials, teaching methods and forms of instructional organization, the ability to use specialized Chinese for Tourism, as well as the difficulties encountered by students during the learning process. The data were processed using descriptive statistics to summarize the frequencies, proportions, and trends in learners' choices, thereby providing a basis for analyzing the current situation and proposing solutions to improve the teaching quality of the course.

## 3. Results and discussion

### 3.1. Survey on the current situation of teaching the Chinese for Tourism course

To clarify the current situation of teaching the Chinese for Tourism course at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences, the study surveyed 150 second-year students majoring in Chinese Studies who were currently taking this course. The survey was conducted through a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. The survey content focused on the basic aspects of the teaching and learning process, including students' ability to use Chinese for Tourism and the difficulties they encountered during the learning process; the appropriateness of the course content and teaching materials; and the methods and forms of instructional organization. The survey results serve as a basis for evaluating the strengths and limitations in teaching the course, while also supporting the proposal of solutions to improve teaching quality and students' learning effectiveness.

### 3.1.1. The current situation of students' competence and difficulties in learning the Chinese for Tourism course

The results in Table 1 show that the ability to use Chinese for Tourism among second-year Chinese Studies students is generally at an average level. The proportion of students selecting the levels of agree and strongly agree for basic communication skills remains low, reaching only 30.7% for the skill of introducing tourist attractions and 25.3% for the skill of advising on and booking tourism services. In particular, the skill of handling unexpected situations in tourism activities was rated the lowest, with 42.7% of students indicating that they were not yet able to perform this skill. In addition, listening comprehension of Chinese conversations in tourism contexts is not yet stable, as many as 41.3% of students selected the neutral level, while only 22.7% assessed themselves as being relatively good at listening comprehension. At the same time, 42.6% of students reported that they still lacked confidence when communicating and participating in role-plays in front of the class. These figures reflect that students still encounter difficulties in using Chinese for practical communication tasks and situation handling in the tourism field.

**Table 1.** Survey results on students' competencies and difficulties

Survey items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I can introduce tourist attractions in Chinese at a basic level.	18 (12.0%)	36 (24.0%)	50 (33.3%)	32 (21.3%)	14 (9.4%)
I can provide consultation and make travel service bookings in Chinese.	20 (13.3%)	34 (22.7%)	58 (38.7%)	26 (17.3%)	12 (8.0%)
I can handle unexpected situations in tourism-related contexts in Chinese.	24 (16.0%)	40 (26.7%)	48 (32.0%)	26 (17.3%)	12 (8.0%)
I can understand spoken Chinese conversations relatively well in tourism contexts.	22 (14.7%)	32 (21.3%)	62 (41.3%)	24 (16.0%)	10 (6.7%)
I feel confident when communicating and performing role-plays in front of the class.	26 (17.3%)	38 (25.3%)	46 (30.7%)	28 (18.7%)	12 (8.0%)

From the survey results, it can be seen that offering the Chinese for Tourism course in the second year is appropriate to the training progression of the Chinese Studies program, when students have already been equipped with a foundation in general Chinese and have reached a level equivalent to HSK 4. At this level, students are able to access specialized Chinese content and begin to familiarize themselves with communication tasks in the tourism field. However, the survey results also show that students still face certain difficulties in spontaneous communication and in handling unexpected situations in tourism contexts, especially situations requiring flexible language response. These difficulties indicate that the organization of teaching for the course can continue to be improved in order to support students in developing their ability to use specialized Chinese.

### 3.1.2. The current situation of the course content and teaching materials for the Chinese for Tourism course

The survey results show that the content of the Chinese for Tourism course is generally appropriate to the training objectives, with 58.0% of students selecting agree and strongly agree, indicating that offering the course in the second year, when students have reached a Chinese proficiency level equivalent to HSK 4, is suitable for the training progression. However, for the criterion reflecting the extent to which the course covers common professional tasks in tourism, the proportion of positive evaluations reached 43.3%, which does not constitute a majority, while 36.7% of students selected the neutral level, showing that the application of the course content to specific professional tasks is still not really clear to a portion of students at this level. Regarding teaching materials, the course uses the textbook *旅游口语*, which is considered appropriate to the HSK 4 level; however, the criteria related to real-life dialogues and communication situations received positive evaluation rates of only 31.4% and 29.3%, respectively, while more than 40% of students selected the neutral level, indicating that the current teaching materials fulfill their foundational role well but can be further strengthened in terms of connection with practical tourism contexts.

**Table 2.** Survey results on course content and teaching materials

Survey items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
The course content is appropriate to the training objectives.	6 (4.0%)	12 (8.0%)	45 (30.0%)	63 (42.0%)	24 (16.0%)
The course content covers common professional tasks in tourism.	10 (6.7%)	20 (13.3%)	55 (36.7%)	48 (32.0%)	17 (11.3%)
Specialized vocabulary and sentence patterns are presented systematically and are easy to apply.	8 (5.3%)	17 (11.3%)	52 (34.7%)	53 (35.3%)	20 (13.4%)
The teaching materials include many real-life dialogues and situations in tourism.	15 (10.0%)	26 (17.3%)	62 (41.3%)	36 (24.0%)	11 (7.4%)
The teaching materials help students access authentic Chinese in tourism contexts.	16 (10.7%)	24 (16.0%)	66 (44.0%)	33 (22.0%)	11 (7.3%)

### 3.1.3. The current situation of teaching methods and forms of instructional organization for the Chinese for Tourism course

The survey results in Table 3 show that the teaching methods and forms of instructional organization have initially created conditions for students to participate in practical communication activities in specialized Chinese; however, the level of implementation remains uneven. Specifically, for the criterion on class time for speaking practice, the proportion of students giving positive evaluations reached 30.7%, while 34.6% selected disagree and strongly disagree. For role-play and tourism situation simulation activities, the positive evaluation rate reached

20.7%, while 40.0% of students selected the neutral level, reflecting that the effectiveness of these activities for learners has not been demonstrated evenly.

**Table 3.** Survey results on teaching methods and classroom organization

Survey items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I have sufficient class time to practice speaking specialized Chinese	20 (13.3%)	32 (21.3%)	52 (34.7%)	34 (22.7%)	12 (8.0%)
Lecturers regularly organize role-plays and simulations of tourism situations.	24 (16.0%)	35 (23.3%)	60 (40.0%)	22 (14.7%)	9 (6.0%)
I am assigned situational speaking tasks and receive specific feedback.	18 (12.0%)	30 (20.0%)	68 (45.3%)	25 (16.7%)	9 (6.0%)
The class encourages the use of Chinese during practice.	16 (10.7%)	28 (18.7%)	70 (46.6%)	26 (17.3%)	10 (6.7%)
Group activities help me increase opportunities to communicate in Chinese.	14 (9.3%)	24 (16.0%)	74 (49.4%)	28 (18.7%)	10 (6.6%)

In addition, the criteria related to the assignment of situational speaking tasks, the receipt of feedback, and the encouragement to use Chinese in class had relatively high proportions of neutral responses (over 45%), suggesting that interactive activities and feedback can continue to be improved in order to increase consistency in instructional organization. On that basis, the course may consider incorporating additional application-oriented teaching methods such as task-based teaching, situation-based teaching, or small-scale projects, while also adjusting testing and assessment methods in the direction of increasing formative assessment tasks associated with professional communication in tourism, such as presentations introducing tourist attractions and role-plays for handling tourism situations.

### 3.2. Proposed solutions to improve the teaching quality of the Chinese for Tourism course

Based on the survey results on the current situation of teaching and learning the Chinese for Tourism course at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences, the study proposes several solutions to overcome the identified limitations and at the same time improve teaching effectiveness and students' ability to use specialized Chinese.

#### 3.2.1. Adjusting the course content in the direction of tourism vocational application

Based on the results of the survey on the current situation, the content of the Chinese for Tourism course needs to be adjusted in the direction of strengthening communication tasks specific to the tourism field. Specifically, the course content should be structured around tasks such as introducing destinations, advising on and booking services, guiding tours, and handling situations arising in tourism activities. Organizing the content according to specific professional tasks will help students more easily relate the knowledge they have learned to actual contexts of use, while also being more consistent with the objective of developing specialized communicative competence in the course.

#### 3.2.2. Strengthening and improving the teaching materials for the course

The survey results in Section 3.1.2 show that the criteria related to real-life dialogues and communication situations did not receive high positive evaluation rates, while neutral responses accounted for the majority. On that basis, the teaching materials for the course can be supplemented with additional dialogues, communication situations, and audio-visual materials reflecting practical tourism contexts, especially situations commonly encountered in working environments in Vietnam. In addition to using the current textbook, the teaching staff may compile internal teaching materials or select and adapt supplementary materials in order to enhance the authenticity and applicability of specialized language, thereby providing better support for the development of students' communication skills.

#### 3.2.3. Innovating teaching methods and forms of instructional organization in an application-oriented direction

In teaching the Chinese for Tourism course, a method of stratifying communication tasks according to levels of requirement can be applied in order to match the diversity of students' language competence. Specifically, within the same tourism communication topic or situation, lecturers design tasks at different levels, from simple to complex. At the basic level, students carry out reproductive tasks, such as introducing information about a tourist attraction based on prompts or an available model. At the intermediate level, students are required to expand dialogues, combine service consultation, or answer tourists' questions. At a higher level, students perform more flexible communication tasks, such as handling unexpected situations or adjusting communicative content according to the interlocutor's feedback.

Organizing tasks according to different levels of requirement helps students participate in learning activities appropriate to their current competence, while also creating conditions for learners to gradually improve their ability to communicate in specialized Chinese. This approach also supports lecturers in organizing classes flexibly, reducing pressure on students with limited proficiency and encouraging progress in the learning process.

#### 3.2.4. Linking the course with simulated tourism professional tasks in real-life contexts

To enhance the practical nature of the Chinese for Tourism course, learning tasks simulating work processes in the tourism field can be designed in accordance with the Chinese proficiency level of second-year students. Specifically, in each topic, students are assigned to carry out tasks such as developing scripts for introducing tourist attractions, advising on services, or handling communication situations with tourists in Chinese, either individually or in small groups. These tasks can be implemented directly in the classroom or in the form of out-of-class practice assignments, linked to the lesson content and the practice time of the course.

Organizing simulated professional tasks helps students gradually become familiar with actual communication requirements, while also creating opportunities for lecturers to monitor, guide, and provide specific feedback

on learners' ability to use specialized Chinese. This solution contributes to connecting the course content with the professional context of tourism, thereby improving the teaching and learning effectiveness of the course.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the survey of the current situation of teaching and learning the Chinese for Tourism course among Chinese Studies students at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences, the study has identified several noteworthy findings. The survey results show that the course has initially met the training objectives in the direction of specialization; however, there remain several limitations related to the degree of connection between the course content and professional practice, teaching materials, methods of instructional organization, and students' ability to use specialized Chinese.

From the empirical results obtained, the study has proposed several solutions to improve the teaching quality of the course, including adjusting the course content in the direction of tourism vocational orientation, strengthening teaching materials associated with real-life contexts, innovating teaching methods and forms of instructional organization in a learner-centered direction, expanding practice and experiential activities, as well as integrating technology and artificial intelligence into teaching and learning support. These solutions aim to enhance students' specialized Chinese communicative competence and their ability to handle professional situations.

Although the study still has certain limitations in terms of scope and survey subjects, the results obtained can be considered a reference basis for improving the teaching of the Chinese for Tourism course at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences, while also suggesting directions for further research on innovating the content and methods of teaching specialized foreign languages in the context of digital transformation and international integration.

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