

A STUDY ON COMMON LANGUAGE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY FOREIGN LEARNERS IN LEARNING VIETNAMESE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DANANG - UNIVERSITY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDIES

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Abstract - In recent years, the number of foreigners coming to Vietnam to live, work, and study has increased significantly, especially in Da Nang City, leading to a growing demand for learning Vietnamese. However, differences in language, culture, and communication styles pose considerable challenges for many foreigners in acquiring Vietnamese. This paper employs a mixed-method approach, including a questionnaire survey with 60 participants and in-depth interviews with 10 students enrolled in the Vietnamese language program for foreigners at The University of Danang - University of Foreign Language Studies (UD - UFLS), to identify the common language problems they encounter. The findings indicate that the difficulties include: (1) communication culture, (2) local accent, (3) writing, (4) phonetics and intonation, (5) vocabulary, (6) grammar, (7) word order, and (8) forms of address. Based on these findings, this paper proposes practical solutions to enhance teaching effectiveness and support learners in approaching Vietnamese more easily and successfully.

Key words - foreigners; learning Vietnamese; The University of Danang - University of Foreign Language Studies; language problems

1. Introduction

In the context of globalization, Vietnam has been increasingly expanding its international cooperation in various fields such as economics, education, tourism, and investment, which has led to a growing number of foreigners coming to live, work, and study in Vietnam [1]. As not only the economic and tourism center of Central Vietnam, Da Nang has also become a destination that attracts many foreigners to study Vietnamese because of its safe and friendly living environment, reasonable cost of living, and beautiful scenery. According to statistics from the Department of Science and International Cooperation, The University of Danang, in the academic year 2023–2024, The University of Danang received and trained 502 international students in long-term programs, an increase of more than 30% compared to the previous academic year [2]. In addition, through short-term training programs, The University of Danang (UD) also welcomed over 1,000 international students through exchange activities, internships, and cultural exchanges. These students came from 24 different countries, including Laos, China, South Korea, the United States, Canada, France, and others. The Faculty of International Studies, UD – University of Foreign Language Studies (UFLS), is responsible for providing Vietnamese language and culture training for foreigners with a variety of programs, ranging from short-term exchanges and university preparatory courses to

regular undergraduate programs. Most of these learners come from countries such as Laos, China, the United States, South Korea, and several others [2].

During the process of learning Vietnamese, foreigners encounter various difficulties due to differences between their native language systems and Vietnamese. This paper aims to identify and analyze the language problems commonly faced by foreigners when learning Vietnamese at UD - UFLS. Based on these findings, the paper proposes solutions to improve teaching methods and enhance the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning, thereby contributing to the improvement of Vietnamese language training quality for foreigners. Specifically, this study will: (1) identify the language problems that foreigners face when learning Vietnamese; (2) analyze in detail the specific difficulties encountered during the learning process; and (3) propose solutions to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning. These objectives are significant not only for the teaching and learning of Vietnamese at UD - UFLS, but also contribute to the development of Vietnamese language teaching as a foreign language in general. The research findings can serve as a reference for educators in adjusting teaching methods and designing curricula appropriate to the characteristics of foreign learners. At the same time, improving the quality of Vietnamese language teaching will help promote cultural exchange and support foreigners in better integrating into the living, learning, and working environment in Vietnam.

2. Literature review

2.1. International research

Research on teaching and learning Vietnamese as a foreign language worldwide remains limited. Most international studies focus on more widely spoken languages such as English, Chinese, or other European languages, while studies on Vietnamese are mainly conducted in the context of theoretical linguistics or comparative language studies. Notable works related to the study of learning Vietnamese for foreigners include “*Dynamic Perceptions in Learning Vietnamese: A Case Study of Vietnamese Majors at a Chinese University*” by Luo, M., Lu, and colleagues, which shows that the process of learning Vietnamese among Chinese students is a journey of changing perceptions, influenced by policy, learning environment, and individual effort. These factors

have contributed to forming a positive learning attitude among Chinese students when studying Vietnamese [3]. In addition, the study “*A Vietnamese Reference Grammar*” by L. C. Thompson plays an important role in providing a systematic and comprehensive view of Vietnamese grammar from a linguistic perspective [4]. The author P. T. Ngoc, with the study “*A Comparative Study of Korean and Vietnamese Cultures-Family Communication Using Honorific Expressions*”, points out that honorifics in family communication in Korea and Vietnam clearly reflect the influence of Confucianism, demonstrating hierarchy, order, and respect in family relationships [5]. However, these studies often do not deeply analyze the linguistic difficulties faced by learners, especially in the context of learning Vietnamese at universities.

2.2. Domestic research

In Vietnam, research on teaching and learning Vietnamese for foreigners has developed significantly in recent years. Several studies have analyzed the linguistic difficulties faced by foreigners when learning Vietnamese, such as: “*Lexical category errors in Vietnamese by foreign learners*” by Nguyen Thien Nam, which focuses on analyzing classifier errors and identifies three main types (omission, redundancy, and incorrect use), providing practical value but focusing only on one grammatical aspect, without a comprehensive survey of other linguistic difficulties or connections to teaching practice [6]. The study “*The difficulty level of vocabulary in Vietnamese textbooks for foreigners*” by Nguyen Thi Thanh Van constructed a vocabulary difficulty scale in textbooks, contributing to the orientation of teaching material compilation, but did not approach the issue from the learners’ perspective or address their actual experiences [7]. Other studies, such as “*Grammatical errors by foreigners learning Vietnamese*” by Du Ngoc Ngan, have identified common grammatical errors such as missing sentence components, incorrect word order, etc., but remain descriptive, lacking in-depth analysis of causes and specific teaching solutions [8]. In addition, Nguyen Thi Hai’s article “*Issues in teaching Vietnamese to foreigners*” provides theoretical orientation on the role of teaching Vietnamese to foreigners, but is more theoretical and not based on practical surveys [9]. Based on these premises, this paper focuses on a comprehensive survey of the linguistic difficulties faced by international students in the process of learning Vietnamese at UD - UFLS, combining error analysis and learner feedback, in order to propose suitable teaching solutions and enhance the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning for foreigners.

3. Theoretical framework

Based on the aforementioned domestic and international studies, this research addresses the following issues:

3.1. Communicative culture

Communicative culture governs the language used in communication, reflecting the characteristics of context and the level of interaction among different communities, professional groups, or societies. Communicative culture is

a component of social culture, expressed through polite, friendly, sincere, and mutually respectful behaviors, including speech, gestures, attitudes, and manners [10].

3.2. Regional accents

Regional accents, also known as dialects, are linguistic variations primarily used in specific geographical areas. Each region of Vietnam-North, Central, and South-has its own distinctive features in pronunciation, vocabulary, and intonation, creating a rich diversity in the Vietnamese language [11].

3.3. Vietnamese script

Writing is an important element in conveying information and reflecting the thinking of its users. Vietnamese uses a modified Latin script called Quốc ngữ, which consists of 29 letters, 10 numerals, and 6 tone marks (level, acute, grave, hook above, tilde, dot below). Quốc ngữ not only represents pronunciation but also reflects the tonal characteristics specific to Vietnamese, making it markedly different from non-tonal languages such as English or Korean [12].

3.4. Phonetics and intonation

Phonetics plays a crucial role in pronunciation and effective communication; accurate pronunciation helps speakers convey meaning and avoid misunderstandings. Vietnamese has a complex phonetic system with six tones (level, acute, grave, hook above, tilde, dot below) and distinct initial, medial, and final sounds. Vietnamese phonology is isolating, with clear distinctions between syllables, morphemes, and phonemes, as well as suprasegmental features such as tone, stress, and intonation. The tonal system is essential for distinguishing word meanings. For example, “ma” (ghost), “má” (mother), and “mà” (conjunction) share the same rhyme but differ entirely in meaning due to tonal changes [13]. Additionally, intonation influences the entire utterance and helps convey emotional nuance and communicative intent, distinguishing between questions, statements, and exclamations [13].

3.5. Vocabulary

Vietnamese vocabulary is systematic, encompassing relationships such as synonymy, antonymy, and homonymy. The language is rich in simple words, compound words, and reduplicative words, with compounds and reduplications expanding vocabulary. Flexible meaning shifts through metaphor and metonymy enrich the language without the need for new word creation. Vietnamese is also influenced by Chinese and Western languages, further diversifying its lexicon [14].

3.6. Grammar

Vietnamese grammar is characteristic of an isolating language, with no inflection, relying mainly on word order and function words to express grammatical relationships. Sentence structure typically follows the Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) order but can be altered for emphasis. Function words such as “đã” (past), “đang” (progressive), and “sẽ” (future) indicate tense, while “bởi vì” (because), “mặc dù” (although), and “nếu” (if)

connect clauses. The passive voice is primarily formed by changing word order and using function words like “bị” and “được” [15].

3.7. Vietnamese word order

Vietnamese word order mainly follows the Subject–Verb–Object (SVO) pattern and does not change word forms to indicate grammatical relationships. However, word order can be flexibly adjusted for emphasis or to express emotional nuance, as seen in exclamatory or interrogative sentences [16].

3.8. Forms of address

The Vietnamese system of address is highly diverse and flexible, reflecting social relationships, family culture, and emotional nuances in communication. Vietnamese uses a wide range of address forms, including personal pronouns, kinship terms, titles, occupations, and proper names. Address forms are not only determined by age and social status but also vary according to context and the degree of intimacy [16].

The linguistic issues faced by foreigners when learning Vietnamese are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Language Problems in Learning Vietnamese

No.	Problem	Previous Studies
1	Communication culture	Huu Dat [10]; Bach Thanh Minh [16]; Nguyen Van Chien [17]
2	Local accent	Hoang Thi Chau [11]; Bach Thanh Minh [16]
3	Writing system	Hoang Thi Chau [12]; Bach Thanh Minh [16]
4	Phonetics and intonation	Phan Tran Cong [13]; Bach Thanh Minh [16]
5	Vocabulary	Nguyen Thi Thanh Van [7]; Bach Thanh Minh [16]; Nguyen Thien Giap [18].
6	Grammar	Diep Quang Ban [15]; Bach Thanh Minh [16]; Hoang Trong Phien [19]
7	Word order in Vietnamese	Bach Thanh Minh [16]; Dang Van Dam [20].
8	Forms of address	Bach Thanh Minh [16]; Nguyen Van Chien [17].

4. Research methods

Survey method: The survey method was implemented through a questionnaire to identify the linguistic difficulties faced by international students learning Vietnamese at UD - UFLS. The survey participants included students from various countries (the United States, Syria, China, Laos, etc.), representing a diversity of ages and Vietnamese proficiency levels (beginner, intermediate, advanced). The questionnaire was designed based on theoretical frameworks of language assessment, emphasizing the evaluation of not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to use language in real-life contexts [21]. Legally, the questionnaire was constructed

in accordance with the Vietnamese Language Proficiency Framework for Foreigners (Circular No. 17/2015/TT-BGDĐT), which comprises six levels from A1 to C2, specifying output standards for listening, speaking, reading, writing, and language use in specific situations. This framework served as the basis for determining the content and difficulty levels in the survey [22]. The questionnaire was distributed in two formats: printed copies and online via Google Forms. Its content consisted of three sections: (I) Personal Information, (II) Linguistic Issues, and (III) Proposed Solutions. The questionnaire combined various question types, including multiple-choice, word ordering, open-ended, and ranking questions. The scales used included: nominal scale (for multiple-choice questions) and ordinal scale (for ranking questions). Prior to deployment, the questionnaire underwent a pilot test with a small group of international students to gather feedback on the clarity and comprehensibility of the questions. Based on this feedback, the questions were revised and finalized to ensure validity and reliability, appropriate for the target respondents and research objectives. After the survey, a total of 60 responses were collected. The data obtained were analyzed to assess the prevalence of each issue, thereby proposing solutions to improve the teaching and learning of Vietnamese for foreigners.

In-depth interview method: The in-depth interview method was employed to collect detailed information about the difficulties encountered by foreigners learning Vietnamese at UD - UFLS. Interviewees were international students at various Vietnamese proficiency levels, ensuring diversity in learning experiences. The interviews were conducted both in-person and online, lasting from 5 to 10 minutes, and focused on the following issues: (1) communicative culture, (2) regional accents, (3) script, (4) phonetics and intonation, (5) vocabulary, (6) grammar, (7) word order, and (8) forms of address. A total of 10 interview samples were collected. The author analyzed the results using thematic analysis, manually coding the data to identify major themes and common patterns of difficulties. The findings helped clarify common issues and inform the proposal of appropriate solutions to enhance the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning for foreigners at UD - UFLS.

5. Research results and discussion

After conducting a survey with 60 foreign learners (NNN) and in-depth interviews with 10 international students, the study identified eight linguistic issues that align with those highlighted in previous research. These issues are ranked from most to least challenging. Table 2 provides the coding for survey and interview participants, while Table 3 presents the ranking of linguistic difficulties encountered by foreigners learning Vietnamese.

Table 2. Information encoding table

Number of survey participants	Symbol	Number of interview participants	Symbol
60	N1 – N60	10	PV1 – PV10

Table 3. Ranking the level of difficulty in language issues when foreigners learn Vietnamese

Content	Rank								Position
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Communication culture	2	5	4	6	6	5	10	22	8
Local accent	11	18	11	9	2	1	3	5	2
Writing system	11	9	18	9	2	4	3	4	3
Phonetics and intonation	24	10	5	6	5	3	3	4	1
Vocabulary	6	7	11	14	10	3	6	3	4
Grammar	1	7	4	7	16	15	3	7	5
Word order in Vietnamese	2	2	2	5	10	20	15	4	6
Forms of address	3	2	5	4	9	9	17	11	7

5.1. Issues with phonetics and intonation

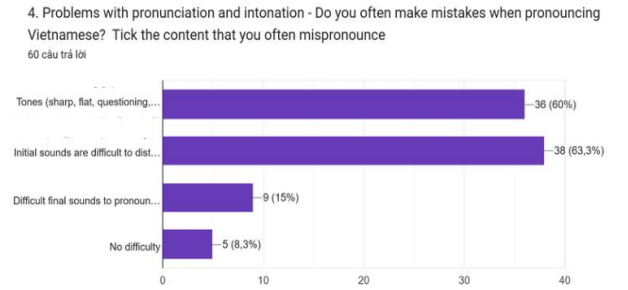


Figure 4. Survey on difficulties in Vietnamese pronunciation for foreigners

According to the phonetics survey, 63.3% of international learners struggled with initial consonants such as *s/x*, *ch/tr*, *d/gi/r*. Tone errors (*acute*, *grave*, *hook above*, *tilde*, *dot below*) accounted for 60%. Additionally, 15% had difficulties with final consonants (e.g., *t/p/c*), while only 8.3% reported no issues with these features. These results highlight the complexity of the Vietnamese phonological system for foreign learners, especially those whose native languages lack tonal distinctions or have markedly different sound systems. Learners not only face pronunciation challenges but also significant differences in intonation patterns between their mother tongue and Vietnamese. For instance, Lao students tend to maintain a slow rhythm in speech, Chinese students use more abrupt and less varied intonation, and American students-whose native language is stress-timed rather than tonal-often produce unnatural rhythms and misplaced stress in Vietnamese. These differences in phonetic and intonational systems present substantial obstacles to effective language acquisition.

5.2. Issues with regional accents

At UD - UFLS, international students are taught standard Vietnamese, yet in daily communication, they primarily encounter the Da Nang accent, a variant of the Central dialect. This presents challenges in listening comprehension, pronunciation, and language use.

2. The problem of local accents - When you communicate with Da Nang people, do you understand what they say?
60 câu trả lời

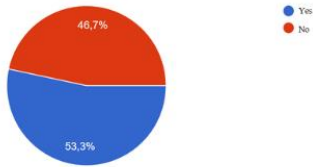


Figure 5. Survey on the ability to understand Da Nang dialect of Vietnamese learners

Results show that 53.3% of respondents could understand local communication, while 46.7% reported difficulties. Although most students adapt to the regional accent, nearly half perceive it as a barrier. Regional accents differ in initial consonant articulation, tone usage, and speech rate, all of which complicate language acquisition for foreign learners. Furthermore, regional vocabulary-such as “*răng*” (instead of “*sao*”) and “*nó*” (instead of “*kia*”)-is often absent from textbooks, causing confusion. As one interviewee (PV4) noted: “*In class, I understand the lessons easily, but outside, I encounter many words I’ve never learned, which makes me confused.*” Another (PV9) added: “*If Vietnamese people speak slowly and clearly, I can understand, but if they speak quickly or use regional terms, I need time to process the meaning.*”

5.3. Issues with script

- When you write Vietnamese, do you often make mistakes?
60 câu trả lời

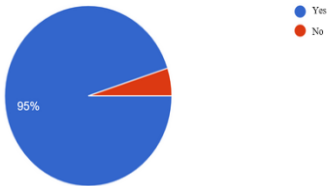


Figure 6. Survey on Vietnamese spelling mistakes of international students

Surveys indicate that 95% of international students frequently make spelling errors in Vietnamese, with only 5% reporting infrequent issues. Mastery of the Vietnamese script is a significant challenge, especially for those from countries with different writing systems. Common mistakes include misspelling (e.g., “*kin tế*” for “*kinh tế*”, “*hoc*” for “*học*”, “*gia đinh*” for “*gia đình*”), confusion with tone marks (“*mỗi*” for “*mỗi*”, “*giúp đỡ*” for “*giúp đỡ*”, “*vui vẽ*” for “*vui vẽ*”), and incorrect capitalization (“*sinh viên lão*” instead of “*sinh viên Lào*”). These errors affect both pronunciation and meaning, sometimes rendering sentences unclear or incorrect. Grammatical errors, often influenced by direct translation from the learners’ native languages, also occur (e.g., “*Gia đình của em có 4 người có bồ, mẹ, em gái và em.*” instead of “*Gia đình em có 4 người: bố, mẹ, em gái và em.*”). Punctuation mistakes further disrupt sentence clarity and logic.

5.4. Issues with vocabulary

Given the diversity of Vietnamese vocabulary, memorization and usage pose significant challenges for new learners.

- Do you find Vietnamese vocabulary easy or difficult?
60 câu trả lời

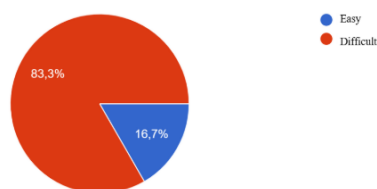


Figure 7. Survey of Vietnamese vocabulary level

At UD - UFLS, 83.3% of international students found Vietnamese vocabulary difficult, while only 16.7% considered it easy. The variety and complexity of vocabulary, especially synonyms and near-synonyms, hinder long-term retention. Many can understand new words upon first exposure but struggle to recall or use them in real-life communication, often due to limited exposure or ineffective learning methods.

5.5. Issues with grammar

6. Grammar issues - What do you find difficult about Vietnamese grammar?
60 câu trả lời

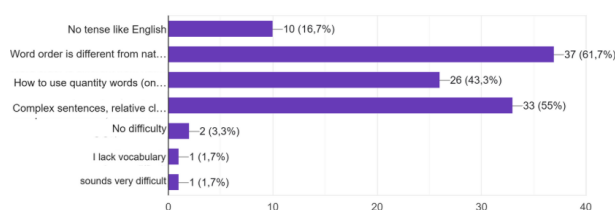


Figure 8. Survey of difficulties in using Vietnamese grammar

The majority of international students reported difficulties with Vietnamese grammar. Specifically, 61.7% struggled with word order due to influence from their native grammar. Additionally, 55% had trouble with complex sentences and relative clauses, and 43.3% were confused by quantifiers such as “một”, “những”, and “các”. Only 3.3% reported no difficulties with Vietnamese grammar.

5.6. Issues with Vietnamese word order

- Do you often make sentences in the word order of your native language instead of Vietnamese?
60 câu trả lời

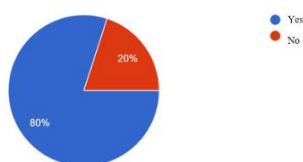


Figure 9. Survey on word order in Vietnamese

Survey results show that 80% of learners tend to construct sentences following the word order of their native language rather than Vietnamese rules, while only 20% do not encounter this issue. Differences in syntactic structure between Vietnamese and learners' native languages lead to frequent confusion.

5.7. Issues with forms of address

Vietnamese has a complex system of personal pronouns and forms of address, unlike many other languages that use a single pronoun. Vietnamese speakers must choose

appropriate pronouns based on age, social status, and intimacy. Incorrect usage can lead to misunderstandings or discomfort in communication.

- Have you ever been misunderstood because of using the wrong pronoun?
60 câu trả lời

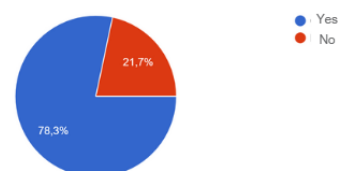


Figure 10. Survey on the use of personal pronouns

According to the survey, 78.3% of learners reported having experienced misunderstandings due to incorrect use of pronouns, often resulting in unintended disrespect or social distance.

5.8. Issues with communicative culture

Communicative culture significantly impacts Vietnamese language learning for international students at UD - UFLS. Learners must adapt not only to vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation but also to Vietnamese greetings, forms of address, indirect expression, and body language.

1. Cultural communication issues - Do you find the way Vietnamese people greet each other different?
60 câu trả lời

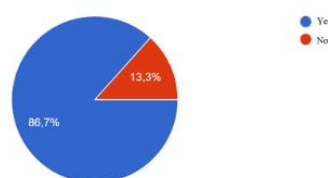


Figure 11. Survey of the differences in greetings between Vietnamese and foreigners

Survey results indicate substantial differences in greeting customs between Vietnamese and other cultures. Many participants noted that Vietnamese greetings differ from those in their home countries. American interviewees (PV1–PV3) commented: “In Vietnam, forms of address are much more complicated than in the US, where we just say ‘Hello’ regardless of age.” Lao students (PV6–PV8) noted: “Laotians usually greet with folded hands, while Vietnamese people shake hands and ask questions, which sometimes confuses me.” Beyond greetings, other aspects of Vietnamese communication also present challenges for foreign learners.

6. Solutions to Enhance the Effectiveness of Vietnamese Language Learning for Foreigners at UD - UFLS

Based on the survey ranking the levels of difficulty regarding linguistic issues faced by foreigners when learning Vietnamese in Table 3, up to 24 out of 60 participants considered “phonetics and intonation” to be the greatest obstacle. Ranked second is “regional accents,” followed by “script.” These are the three issues assessed as the most difficult for learners in the process of acquiring

Vietnamese. This result aligns with several previous studies but also points out new, distinctive features according to each learner group. Specifically, learners from China often encounter difficulties with phonetics and intonation due to the differences between the tonal systems of Chinese and Vietnamese. Learners from Laos mainly struggle with regional accents and script, while learners from the United States-with English as their native language-face fewer difficulties with script but experience many obstacles with phonetics and intonation. Compared to previous studies, which mainly described the general difficulties of Vietnamese language learners, this research delves deeper into analyzing the differences in linguistic challenges by nationality group, thereby contributing feasible pedagogical recommendations that are closely aligned with the realities of multicultural classrooms. By clearly identifying these specific obstacles, it can be seen that support solutions for learners need to be developed in a more personalized and practical manner. Survey and interview results show that many foreigners believe that theoretical learning alone is not enough to form real communicative competence. Although methods such as increased practice and the organization of extracurricular activities (clubs, seminars, exchanges, etc.) are common, they still require clearer orientation. To find solutions to the eight issues that foreigners encounter while learning Vietnamese as presented above, the research team consulted with lecturers directly teaching Vietnamese to foreigners at the Faculty of International Studies, UD - UFLS, and combined these insights with suggestions made by the foreigners themselves to address the issues they face. The following solutions are proposed in order from the most to the least difficult:

(1) For phonetics and intonation, it is necessary to apply recording methods in combination with speech recognition technology. Accordingly, learners will record their spoken Vietnamese and use pronunciation support software such as Google Translate, Speech to Text AI, or applications specialized for Vietnamese. These programs are capable of analyzing learners' pronunciation and providing immediate feedback. If the learner pronounces correctly, the software will accurately recognize the word or sentence; conversely, if the pronunciation is incorrect, the displayed result will not match, helping learners identify their mistakes. This method allows learners to practice at any time, receive instant feedback, and quickly detect and correct errors. (2) Regarding regional accents, some international students (PV5, PV10) suggested that the curriculum should include content on Vietnamese dialects, especially the Central dialect-the variety that learners are exposed to daily in Da Nang. In addition, teachers can develop a library of short videos introducing different regions of Vietnam, presented by native speakers with characteristic regional accents, to serve as teaching materials in Vietnamese language classes. Through this method, international students can practice listening comprehension, become familiar with the diversity in pronunciation and word usage in each locality, and reduce the feeling of "language shock" when interacting with native speakers outside the classroom. (3) Script is also a

significant obstacle for foreigners just beginning to learn Vietnamese. Some solutions have been implemented, such as integrating handwriting support software, notably Monkey Junior or Vietnamese Writing Examples-programs that assist with letter recognition and Vietnamese writing practice. However, during the teaching process, instructors should flexibly use various software and select the most appropriate tools to achieve optimal effectiveness in teaching Vietnamese to foreigners. (4) For vocabulary and (5) grammar errors, it is advisable to prioritize teaching through real-life situations, combined with immediate feedback from teachers. The use of integrated skills methods (listening – speaking – reading – writing) within specific topics will help learners develop comprehensively and more clearly recognize their mistakes. (6) Especially for word order errors, it is necessary to design activities comparing Vietnamese sentence structure with that of the learners' native languages, while also organizing language games such as "sentence ordering" to increase interaction and retention. (7) The system of forms of address in Vietnamese, which is inherently diverse and complex, also needs to be taught systematically, with illustrative diagrams, practical scenarios, and specific role-playing activities to help learners easily choose the appropriate forms of address. (8) Finally, to enable learners to gain a deeper understanding of Vietnamese language and culture, the university should facilitate participation in local cultural and social activities. These activities not only enhance experiential learning but also create opportunities for real communication, helping learners use Vietnamese in diverse and life-related contexts. Additionally, the university should establish an academic advisory system to provide suitable learning pathways, psychological support, and clear academic orientation for each international student.

7. Conclusion

In the context of Vietnam's strong and ongoing development across many fields, the use of Vietnamese as a foreign language for foreigners plays an extremely important role. Despite the challenges in language learning, learners can still make significant progress if they receive appropriate teaching methods and support from experienced lecturers. Enhancing the effectiveness of Vietnamese language learning not only helps improve learners' language skills but also promotes cultural exchange, strengthens international cooperation, and contributes to Vietnam's global integration.

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APPENDIX 1: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Personal Information

- Nationality: _____
- Mother tongue: _____
- How long have you been learning Vietnamese?
 - ☐ Less than 6 months
 - ☐ 6 months – 1 year
 - ☐ 1 – 2 years
 - ☐ More than 2 years
- Your current Vietnamese proficiency level:
 - ☐ Beginner
 - ☐ Intermediate
 - ☐ Advanced

- What is your purpose for learning Vietnamese?

- ☐ Studying in Vietnam
- ☐ Working in Vietnam
- ☐ Daily communication
- ☐ Tourism
- ☐ Other: _____

II. Language Issues

1. Issues of Communication Culture

- Do you think the way Vietnamese people greet others is different from that in your country?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Do you find Vietnamese people's way of speaking easy to understand?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Issues of Regional Accents

- When communicating with people in Da Nang, do you understand what they say?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

- When studying Vietnamese at UD - UFLS, is your teacher's accent easy to understand?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Issues of Script

- Do you often write Vietnamese words incorrectly?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Exercise 1: Write a short paragraph (about 4-6 sentences) on a topic you like (introduce yourself, your family, your studies, your pet, etc.)

.....

4. Issues of Phonetics and Intonation

- Do you often make mistakes when pronouncing Vietnamese?

Please tick the aspect you most often mispronounce:

- ☐ Tones (sắc, huyền, hỏi, ngã, nặng)
- ☐ Initial consonants that are hard to distinguish (s/x, ch/tr, d/gi/r)
- ☐ Final consonants that are hard to pronounce (t/p/c)
- ☐ No difficulty
- ☐ Other: _____

5. Issues of Vocabulary

- After learning Vietnamese vocabulary, do you find it easy to remember the words?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Can you reuse the vocabulary you have learned?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Do you find Vietnamese vocabulary easy or difficult?

- ☐ Easy ☐ Difficult

6. Issues of Grammar

- What do you find difficult about Vietnamese grammar?

- ☐ No tenses like in English
- ☐ Word order is different from your mother tongue
- ☐ Use of quantifiers (một, những, các)
- ☐ Complex sentences, relative clauses
- ☐ No difficulty
- ☐ Other: _____

7. Issues of Word Order in Vietnamese

- Do you have difficulty arranging Vietnamese sentences in the correct word order?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Do you often arrange sentences according to your mother tongue's word order instead of Vietnamese?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Exercise 1: Rearrange the words to form a complete sentence

1. rất / trời / hôm nay / đẹp → _____

2. ăn / sáng nay / tôi / phở → _____

Exercise 2: Choose the sentence with correct word order:

- (a) Tôi thích ăn cơm gà.

(b) Tôi ăn thích gà com.

(c) Com gà tôi thích ăn.

2. (a) Tôi đã học tiếng Việt hai năm.

(b) Tôi tiếng Việt đã học hai năm.

(c) Tiếng Việt đã học hai năm tôi.

8. Issues of Forms of Address in Vietnamese

- When communicating with Vietnamese people, do you have difficulty choosing the appropriate pronoun?

- ☐ Very often
☐ Sometimes
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

- Have you ever been misunderstood because of using the wrong pronoun?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

III. Suggestions and Feedback

- Rank the level of difficulty of language issues for foreigners learning Vietnamese at UD - UFLS (from 1: most difficult – 8: least difficult)

Language Issues	Ranking
Communication culture	
Regional accents	
Script	
Phonetics and intonation	
Vocabulary	
Grammar	
Vietnamese word order	
Forms of address	

- In your opinion, what could help foreigners learn Vietnamese more easily?

- ☐ Learning through real-life communication with native speakers
☐ Using Vietnamese learning apps
☐ Learning through Vietnamese films, music, podcasts
☐ Studying with official textbooks and materials
☐ Other: _____

- Do you have any suggestions to improve the Vietnamese language curriculum at the university?

- ☐ More practice sessions with native speakers
☐ Less theory, more practical exercises
☐ Improved learning materials (textbooks, lectures)
☐ More extracurricular activities to practice Vietnamese
☐ Other: _____

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

I/ Personal Information

- What is your name?

- What is your nationality?

- What is your current Vietnamese proficiency level? (Beginner, intermediate, or advanced)

- How long have you been learning Vietnamese?

- What is your main purpose for learning Vietnamese? (Work, study, daily communication, travel, etc.)

II/ Language Issues

1. Issues of Communication Culture

- Do you think Vietnamese greetings are different from those in your country? If so, how are they different?

- Do you find the way Vietnamese people speak easy to understand?

2. Issues of Regional Accents

- When you are in Da Nang and talk with local people, do they understand you, and do you understand them?

- When studying Vietnamese at UD - UFLS, which regional accent does your teacher use? Is it easy for you to understand?

3. Issues of Script

- Do you often make mistakes when writing Vietnamese words?

- When you write in class, does your teacher check your handwriting? Does your teacher give you feedback on whether it is correct or not?

4. Issues of Phonetics and Intonation

- Do you often make mistakes when pronouncing Vietnamese?

For example:

+ Do you make mistakes with tones? Which tones do you often get wrong?

+ Which vowels do you find difficult (n, h, c)?

+ Which consonants do you find difficult (ang, âng, etc.)?

- Do you have any other pronunciation errors?

5. Issues of Vocabulary

- After learning Vietnamese vocabulary, do you find it easy to remember the words?

- Can you reuse the words you have learned?

- Do you find Vietnamese vocabulary easy or difficult? Why?

6. Issues of Grammar

- How is Vietnamese grammar different from the grammar of your mother tongue? What are those differences?

7. Issues of Word Order

- When forming phrases, do you notice that Vietnamese word order is different from your mother tongue? For example, in English it is "My mother," but in Vietnamese it is "mẹ tôi." Do you feel confused about this?

8. Issues of Pronouns

- In English, "you" is used for everyone, but in Vietnamese there are many different pronouns. When learning Vietnamese, do you get confused or find it complicated to use pronouns?

III. Suggestions and Feedback

- In your opinion, what could help foreigners learn Vietnamese more easily?

- Do you have any suggestions to improve the Vietnamese language curriculum at the university?