

Teaching Vietnamese as the Second Foreign Language – Building and Using the Lesson Vietnamese Teaching Model and Exercise Types

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Received March 07, 2018; Revised April 25, 2018; Accepted May 02, 2018

Abstract Teaching Vietnamese as the second foreign language is the important issues in preserving and developing the Vietnamese language. Using system research method, interdisciplinary research, practical research on curriculum development, lesson plans (typically through the Vietnamese language teaching program for Laotians), this paper presents the opinion in building this curriculum and the lesson model of teaching Vietnamese as the second foreign language and how to use this model effectively. Especially, we present the exercises type in each learning activities (speaking, listening, reading and writing) with: the idea of designing, number, the order, time and how to use these exercises to develop students' ability. These results can use researching and teaching Vietnamese for foreigners as a second language individually and teaching Vietnamese in general.

Keywords: Vietnamese teaching for foreigners, Vietnamese curriculum, Vietnamese language model for foreigners, Vietnamese teaching for Laotians

Cite This Article: Nguyen Thi Hong Van, and Nguyen Thi Hao, "Teaching Vietnamese as the Second Foreign Language – Building and Using the Lesson Vietnamese Teaching Model and Exercise Types." *American Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 6, no. 5 (2018): 519-525. doi: 10.12691/education-6-5-24.

1. Introduction

Research on teaching Vietnamese for foreigners has represented some research works. They focus on the experiences, method of Vietnamese teaching and the Vietnamese curriculum for foreigners in Vietnam. In the first research trend, we can note some projects: 1/*Vietnamese and teaching Vietnamese for foreigners* of Nguyen Anh Que, Vu Kim Bang and Nguyen Huy Can, Press National University, 1997. This book collected 77 articles on experiences and methods of teaching the words, phrasal verbs, grammar characteristics in teaching Vietnamese for foreigners [1]. 2/ The paper: *Teaching Vietnamese language for foreigners with Vietnamese cultural characteristics* of Nguyen Tri Trung, 2014, Journal of Science, pages: 177-184. Nguyen Tri Trung emphasized on: "Culture and language are closely related and inseparable. Language is the way that conveys culture and culture reflects language. Language and writing letters are crystallization of national culture and culture bases language and writing letters which communicated during the years and in the future. Any national culture thanks language to develop. So using a foreign language well, it is important to understand a national culture. Therefore, teaching Vietnamese to foreigners should be attached with Vietnamese cultural characteristics" [2]. In the second research trend, there are lesser projects than the first trend.

Some articles that we can note: 1/The paper: *Researching the reading texts in the textbooks of teaching Vietnamese language for foreigners (level A) currently existing in Vietnam* of Le Thanh Huong, is posted in *Languages and File Journal*, No 8, 2015, pages 54 – 60 [3]. This paper is carried out the base of studying and analyzing reading texts in the textbooks of teaching Vietnamese language for foreigners (level A) currently existing in Vietnamese. This paper covers a number of new contents. 2/ The thesis of doctor: *The language missing of foreigners who learn Vietnamese language*, 2009 of Nguyen Linh Chi, The National University [4]. This thesis presented some missing in using language of foreigners when learning Vietnamese. The paper *Some experiences promoting Vietnamese cultural identity through teaching Vietnamese to foreigners at military university* of Nguyen Thi Thuan, is posted in *Journal of Party History*, no 2 (291), pages 90 – 93, 2015 [5]; *Teaching Vietnamese vocabulary for foreigners* of Tran Thanh Linh, *Journal of Ho Chi Minh city Social Science*, pages: 39 – 46, No 6, 2013 [6]; *Teaching vocative Vietnamese for foreigners – from study to use* of Nguyen Le Dieu Huyen, *Journal of Social Science*, No 1, pages 51 – 58 [7];... In 2 research trends, the authors mentioned to teaching Vietnamese methods carefully but when researching the curriculum is without concerning.

In this context, implementation of the project: "Teaching and learning foreign languages in the national education system in the period 2008-2020 that approved

by the Prime Minister, the development of a program Vietnamese as a foreign language (for foreigners) is an urgent and necessary task. The main beneficiaries of this program are foreign students who study at the educational institutions of Vietnamese education system, learning Vietnamese as a second language.

From this context, we research on building and using the Vietnamese lesson model and exercises types in order to teach Vietnamese as the second language. We choose the case study is the lesson model and exercises of Vietnamese high school curriculum and textbooks for Laotians.

2. Content

2.1. Overview of the Vietnamese Curriculum for Laotian students in Lao People's Democratic Republic

The Vietnamese teaching to Laotian students curriculum is written in the project Developing the quality and effectiveness of Viet – Lao corporation in education are and enhancing the resources in period 2011-2020, based the corporation between Vietnam and Laotian government that is signed on 22 April 2011, in order to implement 2 Parties, States, governments about developing two stakeholders between Vietnam and Lao in education area, help Laotian students, the first the Laotian that have a Vietnamese to use Vietnamese fluently to communicate in a daily, culture exchange and building economical – society relationship of 2 countries. This curriculum and textbooks are being implemented in experimental place before they will be used in general school in Lao as the second foreign language.

The curriculum designing point of view has to ensure scientific, connect to language teaching reality in general and foreign teaching reality. Students will reach the aim of building and developing communicative competency by Vietnamese. The content of curriculum is connection of topic system, subject matter, Vietnamese knowledge system, culture and behavior, communicate duties. In each learning topic, subject matter, we create a communicative environment for students to develop communicative competency. The aims of this curriculum are: and develop communication Vietnamese skills for students, help them communicate and learn confidently; provide the basic knowledge of Vietnamese language; help students understand about people, culture, good relationship of Vietnamese and Laotian.

The teaching contents of curriculum include in: topic system, subject matter and communicative competency that are shown behavior, communicative duties that based on Vietnamese knowledge and culture. This curriculum's implementation is based on topics. Each topic is detailed subject matter, related to students' relationship and communicative environment in each grade, level and provides the stimulus that is suitable and helps students use language knowledge to practice communication. In each level, topic system is identified through providing stimulus and expanding communicative environment, school and society. In Table 1, we present the identifying orientation in each level.

There are 3 levels: A1 when students finish primary education, A2 when students finish lower secondary and B1 when students finish high education. Each level has got the standards of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This curriculum is designed in 3 phases corresponding to 3 levels A1, A2, B1 of Vietnamese language competence framework for foreigners, dividing in first 3 levels in this capacity into 12 levels (12 classes) as follows:

Stage 1: equivalent to level 1 of Vietnamese competency framework, including A1, A1.1, A1.2, A1.3, A1.4, A1.5. This phase helps students perform some simple and minima communication behavior.

Stage 2: equivalent to level 2 of Vietnamese language competency framework, including levels A2.1, A2.2, A2.3, A2.4. This phase helps students perform some common communication behaviors.

Stage 3: equivalent to B1 level of Vietnamese competency framework, including level B1.1, B1.2, B1.4. This phase helps students conduct relatively stable behavior.

Duration of teaching is about 420 (A1), 350 (A2), 250 (B1). During experimental period, each class (in 12 classes) is officially taught 68 periods /school year. In this, there are 2 hours per week, 34 weeks per year. Total of curriculum implement is 818 hours/12 school years. Depending on the specific condition, teachers can spend on more time in teaching plan to ensure to implement curriculum effectively.

From topics, subject matters, will identify the manifestations of communicate competence. It is concretized in to communicative behaviors and tasks based on the knowledge of Vietnamese and culture as suggestions of core content teaching framework, help authors compose textbooks and teachers can be active and more flexible in content implementation of each class.

Table 1. Topics, subject matter in Vietnamese curriculum for Laotian students

Topic	I and my friends	I and my family	I and my school	I and environment
Primary	Myself, my friends, my habits, games, birth	Members in family, furniture, toys	School, class, teachers, activities at school, subject, timetable	Animals, plants, flowers, time, weather...
Lower education	Get friends, learn, play and get happy birthday together	My dear person, daily working, dishes	Learning activities, sports	Nature, countryside, city, festival, traffic, art...
High education	Meet new friends and old friends, exchanges, arts, picnics, work together	Vietnamese family, globe, choose career	Life at school, learning at university, learning outside school, exams, memory at school	Customs, heritage, environment protection, sports, art, the capital of Vietnam – Lao

When evaluating students, we focus on each student's ability of Vietnamese using in each qualification with 4 skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Students demonstrate competency when they can perform communication tasks in new contexts that based on the mobilization of knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivation and learning, scene learned. Each student has a different development pace in terms of psychology, intellects, action, etc...Therefore, their level of achievement is also different. The assessment has to help each student know her/his competency level in order to adjust in learning, training and building each student. We use 2 assessing forms: formative assessment and summative assessment.

Teachers use formative assessment in each lesson in order to evaluate the learning progress of the students and support them to change the learning way to improve the results throughout the process. The results of this evaluation support students to change their learning way to develop the achievement in the next period and support teachers to know the contents that students have good or not good to adjust the way to teach students to better support.

We use summative assessment when finishing a period leaning of students in order to collect information about their academic performance after period study and map results to objectives and requirements to confirm the each student's Vietnamese competency. The results of this evaluation support students to know their competency level and how to enhance their results and competency and support teachers and managers find changes in teaching methods and leaning organizing, provide materials or educational services for students improve their learning results in the next period.

In teaching and learning process, teachers had better use 2 assessing forms to evaluate students in order to assess their students exactly. Based on the results of assessment, they find the suitable method to improve their students.

2.2. The Vietnamese Lesson as the Second Language Model

Teaching Vietnamese are organized 2 periods: books at grade 1, 2 are written in order to teach by oral tradition method, focus on listening and speaking skills. Therefore, they are implemented based on the special process and structure. From books at grad 3 to 12, we write all of lesson based on the general process and structure. Now, we research on the Vietnamese lesson as the second language model at high schools for Laotian students at Lao. This is the moving model because basing on this model, teachers can teach flexibly. We design this lesson based on principles: ensure the target of forming and developing Vietnamese communication for students, integration, development, has executable and cultural, students is the main organ of learning process, articulation, suitable to foreign language competency framework, flexibility and suit to multiform of students and learning conditions. Textbook supports students to develop communication and provides some basic knowledge of Vietnamese, helps them understand culture and relationship between Lao and Vietnam. Each Vietnamese textbook for high school students consists of 17 lessons, after 3 lessons have with review the last one is the review and examination. The main characters are Laotian (Nitmina, Vammy, Thiphon, Suthep) and Vietnamese (An, Cuong, Lien, Trung, Hang teacher) and all of people live in Lao. This characters system will develop in the Vietnamese books from grade 10, 11, 12. Accordingly, the books have the small stories about the life and study of the students in the middle school period of high school. The content of each conversation will continue and grow in the next class. The linkage can be attractive students to learn, without boring. All stories are close to life and learning of students. In addition, the speaking language are used that close to students. Therefore, they will be easy to understand as well as discuss about each topic. This model is shown in Figure 1.

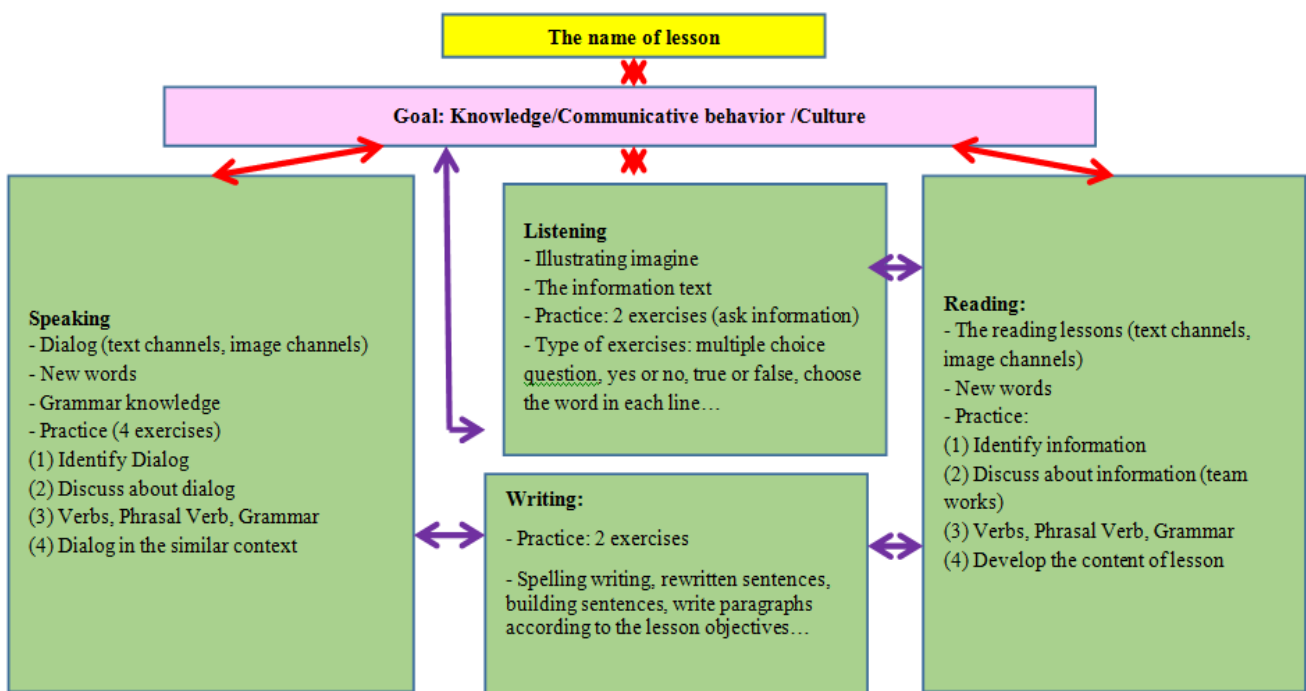


Figure 1. The Vietnamese lesson model as the second language

Look at this model, we can see that this name of lesson is the subject. Each lesson has to ensure 3 goals: knowledge, communicative behavior and culture. In particular, the aim of knowledge provides students' knowledge of new words (according to topics), grammar, the common words and phrasal verbs in Vietnamese language. The aim of communicative behavior provides students competences and communicative behavior that appropriate to the topic of unit. This content is shown throughout 4 skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), correspond to the tasks of the topic, the subject and lesson. It is the basic foundation to construct the lesson. Culture aims to provide students cultural understanding of 2 countries Vietnamese and Lao (or other country). We chose the stimulus related to Lao and Vietnam. For example: Lunar Tet in Vietnam and Bunpimay in Lao, the traditional family, village space in Lao and Vietnam...The knowledge of Vietnamese language and culture include in: phonetic, vocabulary, grammar, cultural. Each lesson consists of 4 parts: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The whole of lesson's contents must be linked closely and achieve these objectives. Learning activities relate closely and support each other to reach the general aims. For example: Lesson *Traditional custom*, we presented 3 goals: talk about traditional customs, know ways of writing friendly invitations; know and use 10 – 15 new words, phrasal verbs related to customs, using grammar structure: when/... as well as; understand the good characters of traditional customs of Laotian and Vietnamese. To implement 3 goals, teachers have to guide student do exercise; introduce vocabulary and grammar, practice more and more. Therefore, we also write workbook for each grade to support teachers in teaching processing, especially homework.

2.3. Four Activities (Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing) and the Forms of Exercise in Each Content

Firstly, the content of speaking:

The issues in this content are provided are:

New words and grammar: about 10 – 15 new words and link to each topic of unit and teachers have to control the number of new words. These words and grammar framework are set after dialogues to help students understand the content of lesson. The grammar structure are simply, easy to understand and can be easy to use. After students reading dialogues, teachers will guide students learning new words and explain grammar in lesson.

The dialogues models and practicing activities: dialogue helps students get familiar step by step with the natural communication contexts that associated with the subject matter. In order to this goal, we built communicative stimulus that related to the topic. Characters are the dialogues and conversation situations need to ensure closer and closer to the ages of students. The layout of sentences and the order of conversation time are suitable to each grade. Students will be provided the number of vocabulary in each subject. Especially, the grammatical phenomena will be appeared all in the conversation and will be repeated in the following contents. In this

conversation, we use both the text channels and image channels. The channels are used not only illustrate text channels but also provide students the understanding of culture, history, geography, meaning the activity that are presented in the text channels. After teachers read the conversation, they guide students learn new words (meaning and the ways of using) and explain the using grammatical ways. After students practice reading (maybe read by role play) according the content of dialog, they have exercise in order to practice. For example: In speaking of the lesson Opening new school year, grade 10, Nitmira and An meet each other at yard school. We present dialogue and draw the picture, is shown in [Figure 2](#).



Figure 2. The image of the lesson Opening School year, Vietnamese for Laotian students, textbook, grade 10 (experimental book) [8], page 1]

Look at [Figure 2](#), we can see the image of 2 students: one of Vietnamese and one of Laotian. They wear the traditional costumes of 2 countries. An (the left of the picture) wear Long Dress – traditional cloth of Vietnam and Nitmina (the right of the picture) wear Sinh Dress – traditional of Laotian. Before teaching of dialogue, teacher can ask students about the picture (ex: Who are they in picture? What do they wear? Do you like these clothes? What do you know the clothes? Do you guess they will talk about?...) and introduce for students to each dress (shape, color, meaning...) and compare 2 clothes. In conversation, Nitmina and An also talk about 2 costumes. An said that Vietnamese girl students usually worn long clothes in the first day of week and anniversary/holiday... She worn this cloth because she introduced Laotian students to Vietnamese traditional costumes. And the same Nitmina. In dialogue, 2 students talk about new school, teachers, learn Vietnamese and Laotian, traditional clothes of Vietnam and Laotian.

The practice exercises are arranged the idea content. There are all 4 practice exercises:

The first exercise, students identify the content of conversation. The type of exercises is signed in this first are simple, for examples: discuss and answer questions; find information that presented in dialogues, answer short questions...Normally, all of the information is collected from conversation. There are 4 questions in this exercise and from easy to difficult level. The questions link to identify the characters, the main contents that they discuss.

Students will teamwork or a pair to develop the communication ability, literacy competency and team work skill to students. This exercise helps students have basic knowledge of lesson's topic.

The second exercise focuses on expand or discuss detail about some content are present in conversation. In this exercises, the questions are built to integrate grammar using way in the situation of conversation. The type of questions may be: students practice the conversation based on the grammar structure, match column A with column B, fill suitable words blanks... The linkages between A and B maybe are content, grammar or communicative situation. This exercise helps students understand details in dialogues.

The third exercise aims to practice grammar knowledge. Students will practice grammar again and again following many forms: choose the suitable words, set sentences with grammar and link to conversation situations, speak sentences or clauses in order to continuing conversation situation... This exercise helps students understand and can use grammar correctly.

The final exercise expands conversation trend to practice the similar stimulus. We provide the similar situation and detailed suggest that help students build conversation. When practicing, students will pronoun, intonation, sound and other skill: communication, presentation, team work... This exercise helps students use vocabulary and grammar in the new similar situations. It is the highest target of speaking content.

In dialog content, the highest aim is help students can communicate in the similar stimulus. Therefore, we focus on the communicative situation instead of content of each conversation. Meaning it is the best after finishing this content; students can practice in the similar stimulus and remember all of content and new words. But if students only practice in the similar stimulus is good and teachers still reach the teaching aim.

Continuing, the content of listening:

This content provides the listening exercises in order to practice to train ability of information capturing and communicative practices. Listening text maybe: an information document, a short conversation, songs, poems... The stimulus have to ensure standards: short, easy to understand, no new words and new grammar, having about 150-200 letters. The content of listening stimulus provides knowledge of topic, can remain grammar or not. There are 2 exercises in this content. They help students learn more and more skills they need to know such as: listening to grasp information, listening to find the mean ideas, listening to train using vocabulary, phrasal verb, grammar, sentence, conversation....

Most of all exercises in this content are built according to the form: multiple choice, filled, true or false, complete the short information... The highest aim in this content is collection and extract information from listening. On the other hand, through this content, students review the knowledge and skills.

Next, the content of reading:

This content provides the stimulus, both text and picture to students. 2 channel supplements each other to show the content and meaning of the reading. The standard that chooses the stimulus in this content: close to culture of Vietnam and Lao (or the country that have students we teach Vietnamese), sentence simple, normal

and have to communicative specific, easy to understand, close to the awareness of students. The content of reading must be linked to topic. The reading helps students have knowledge culture, history, geography, country and people of Vietnam and Laos (or the other country that we teach Vietnamese to students). And students also train vocabulary and grammar through this content. After practicing reading, student will do exercise. There are 4 exercises in this content with:

The first exercise helps students identify the main content of this lesson. The form of this exercise maybe ask students identify the main content of this text, the name of this text, the information that is shown in this text, relationship between the text and picture....

The second exercise helps students extend or understanding in – depth (focus discussion) on topic. Exercises maybe ask students find out about 1 or 2 issues that are mentioned in this content. The form of these: explain meaning of words, connects information...

The third exercise helps students practice grammar. It asks students find the grammar in the reading, use grammar in this similar context, fill words, connect information, set sentences...

The final exercise of this content expands topic in the similar context. Students are practiced in the similar context, maybe write sentences, write paragraphs, present their idea with the similar issues.

Finally, the content of writing:

This content helps student enhance their ability of using Vietnamese in creating sentences, paragraphs and articles. There are 2 exercises in this content. They are designed to ask students: rewrite sentences with condition no changing the meaning; rearrange sentences, in among only change the position maximum 4 words; write passages according to the objectives of the reading. Due to the nature of this activity, students practice individually. In the process of teaching, teachers can exchange the results of this exercise to develop the interaction and check the answers for each exercise.

2.4. Methods and Organization Way Teaching Vietnamese as the Second Language and Exercises Types

It is the first time we note that teachers need to choose the suitable stimulus for each students object. Through each stimulus, students will be familiar with the communicative context. In which, they also learn vocabularies, grammars and practice in a similar context. Apart from the stimulus we provide in books, teachers can choose the other contexts and when using, they have to note these standards: simple, easy understand, close to students, shortage.

In particular, teachers need to teach this lesson based on the Vietnamese language as teaching the second foreign language according to communicative opinion. Meaning teachers have the suitable methods that develop the positive and active promotion of each student based on learner – centered perspective. Depending on the specific conditions, teachers should also collect feedback from students in each lesson, period or semester to adjust teaching methods for effectiveness. Teachers had better encourage each students interact as much as possible. The

using of methods variety help students enhance maximize their ability and interaction with each other. Teacher attends to students to communicate, experience in atmosphere of practical communications to develop their skills, adjust communication in practice. Throughout, teachers create communication in each exercise skillfully. It is important that the teacher needs to provide opportunities for students to practice fluency in the context of similar communication. This is the highest goal of speaking. Teachers should have methods to provide opportunities for self – assessment, self – remarks to be able to communicative more fluently in each practice.

In addition, teachers need to use combination of textbooks, workbooks and teachers books with teaching tools and material flexibly. Textbooks provide the base knowledge, skills for students. Workbooks provide the practicing exercises that help students train more and more their knowledge and skills they had practiced when learn textbooks. Each workbook has 8 exercises totally, including 1 listening exercise, 3 reading ones and 1 writing one. In workbooks, we restrict the new works and grammars. Workbooks are one of the materials that can soften the teaching process. Teachers can choose to increasing or decreasing the number of assignments depending on specific conditions. Teacher books have a specific guide on how to organize the teaching of teacher for each activity, giving instructions to solve the exercises. If teachers use 3 books suitably, they will promote the function of each book and complement each other. For examples: if having more time, students can use all of exercises in textbooks and workbooks, but having less time, they have to choose exercise in textbooks and workbooks that are suitable to qualification of students in a class. Apart from the methods in teacher books, they can choose the other methods that develop knowledge and skills to students. At the same time, they also choose the other exercises to each students group that have a different qualification in each class. Teachers also introduce for students about content, methods of using textbooks and workbooks. It is necessary for students to use books effectively.

Continuing, teachers need to prepare about lesson plan, teaching tools, exercises... The lesson plan is open ones. Meaning the exercises system has to be designed and taught is open. Open exercises are many answers, not only one. This question encourages students creatively. When teaching, teachers need to solve the situation flexibly and anticipate communicative situations in each practicing exercise.

Although using different methods, teachers always note to combine students' knowledge with Laos and Vietnam culture. For example: when teaching on Tet holiday in Vietnam for students at grade 11, teachers introduce to traditional activities of Vietnam and Lao in Lunar Tet and Bunpimay Tet. At once, teachers also describe coming together of Laotian and Vietnamese in new year. Teaching about life in city in Vietnam, we introduce some big cities: Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Vientiane... Students will know the landscape, compare life in big city with life in the villages. In lesson *The traditional sports* at grade 10, we introduce both sports in Laos and Vietnam. Teachers not only teach students each culture, history, geography, people... of 2 countries but also guide them comparing to find the similar characters and different characters.

Especially, note the difference between teaching Vietnamese to foreigners and Vietnamese. When teaching Vietnamese (mother language) to Vietnamese, we focus on training grammar, even difficult grammar and develop Vietnamese competence in special areas. But teaching Vietnamese for foreigners, we have to focus to develop use Vietnamese language in communication fluently. In the practice, we still have the special Vietnamese language for some object in many areas (culture, literature, finance, education...) but in high school, the main aim is communication skill of students.

Teachers need to concern to students' feedback to change contents and method to suit to their students. With the bad students, teachers can reduce total of exercises and chose easy exercises. With good students, teachers can use more exercises and difficult exercises. The speed of teaching depends on the level of understanding of students.

When teaching, teachers had better combine images channel with text channel. Images will support to letters. Images are not only used to illustrate the text channel but also provide students in – depth knowledge of culture, history, geography, meaning of the activities are presented in the text channel. Students will apply their skills and experience to connect imagine channel with the text channel.

Finally, we focus on evaluate assessing students' communicative competency. Teachers can test students under many forms: ask – answer directly, present, dialogues between students. The main elements are used in assessment of communication competency: 1/Vocabulary: students can use right words, semantics, not using miscellaneous, inaccurate, misleading the listener. Beside, students can express some different words in Vietnamese by explaining the words. When using vocabulary, students can avoid word that are too familiar or too common, such as: know, understanding, find... And using the pronoun in Vietnamese (he, she, younger brother, older brother, you...). 2/Students use grammar correctly. This criteria evaluates the sentence structure that they use when answering question from the examiner. Students had better use the simple sentences in stead of complex sentences as possible when speaking. They must avoid the tense and grammar errors. 3/ Pronunciation: students do not talk too fast or too slow, sure to disconnect in the right place, pronounce the vowel and consonant of the words correctly. 4/ Fluency levels: students ensure to talk suitable speaking speed. Meaning, they need to be able to speak continuously over a long period of time to answer questions that are seldom trifled, using uh, uhm,...more. 5/ communicate in a similar context: based on lessons, students can talk in the similar context and understanding meaning of words. The high aim is students can use Vietnamese in the life communication context. Based on the results of evaluation, teachers can find the suitable method to develop the communicative competency for their students.

3. Conclusion

Building and using this model for Laotian students that we present in this article can use in researching and teaching Vietnamese in general and researching and teaching Vietnamese for Laotian students individually. This standards of choosing stimulus, building conversation,

practicing exercises building, the order of each activity (speaking, listening, reading and writing), some notion of developing the effectiveness of teaching Vietnamese based on communicative opinion can be applied when we design curriculum and teaching Vietnamese for foreigners. The integration, suitably and updating are very important. The continuity from grade to grade of characters, content, grammar is very necessary. The linkages of culture between Vietnamese and the countries which have students learn Vietnamese will contribute to strengthen the exchange, preserving and promoting the cultural identity of each nation and having the connection of 2 nations. Finally, in order to apply this model for Laos students individually and for all foreigners in generally, it is important for all of teachers and students and other stakeholders are stick the goals, apply flexibly, perform synchronously.

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