

Developing Vietnamese Listening - Speaking Skills for First Grade Chinese Pupils in District 5, Ho Chi Minh City During Covid 19 Pandemic Period

Tran Thi Kim Tuyen*

Sai Gon University, Vietnam

**Corresponding author. Email: ktuyensgu@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

Topic "Developing Vietnamese listening - speaking skills for first-grade Chinese pupils in District 5, Ho Chi Minh City during Covid 19 pandemic period" is a necessary topic that is researched to improve Vietnamese competency to Chinese pupils in Vietnam nowadays. In this article, we use the method of surveying, listing results in listening - speaking of first-grade Chinese pupils who are living in District 5, Ho Chi Minh City. We enumerate, describe, analyze and synthesize results, cultural conditions and characteristics that are expressed in these pupils' ability in Vietnamese listening - speaking. Since then, we have given some suggestions about appropriate teaching and learning methods for these pupils with suitable content in the teacher's plan to improve their Vietnamese competency during the Covid 19 pandemic period in Vietnam.

Keywords: *Vietnamese, Listening-speaking skills, first-grade Chinese pupils, 1st-grade Chinese pupils in District 5, Ho Chi Minh City.*

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the Decision No. 2005/QĐ-BGDĐT on August 15th, 2016 of the Ministry of Education and Training on the Issuance of the Plan for Implementation of the Project "Strengthening Vietnamese preparation for Ethnic minority Kinder Garten and elementary pupils in the period of 2016-2020, orientation to 2025" with the aim: "Organizing implementation the Project's quality and effectiveness of the objectives and tasks of the project improve the quality of standard enhancement Vietnamese for ethnic minorities pupils in the primary school; contribute to increasing the number of ethnic minority children to go to school; improve the quality of education in ethnic minority areas. And the implementation of the project ensures efficiency, practicality, mobilizes resources to participate in" [3]. So we survey and list results in Vietnamese listening - speaking of first-grade Chinese pupils, who are living in District 5, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Then we give suggestions to improve Vietnamese competency for them during the Covid 19 pandemic period.

2. CONTENT

2.1. Literature review

2.1.1. Research purposes

In this paper, we are interested in developing Vietnamese listening-speaking skills for first-grade Chinese pupils in District 5, Ho Chi Minh City (1st-grade Chinese pupils in D₅, HCMC).

Determining the Vietnamese ability of 1st-grade Chinese pupils in D₅, HCMC to offer appropriate teaching methods in plans.

Improving Chinese pupils' Vietnamese competency in this area during Covid 19 pandemic period.

2.1.2. Research mission

We set up the following tasks:

Determining Vietnamese ability of 1st-grade Chinese pupils in D₅, HCMC in Vietnamese listening - speaking.

Identifying and analyzing Chinese's difficulties in Vietnamese learning and then offering suggestions for these pupils to overcome them.

2.1.3. Contribution of the paper

Improving Vietnamese competency in listening and speaking of 1st-grade Chinese pupils who are living in District 5, HCMC, as well as in the whole country.

The research results contribute to both academic and practical applications.

2.1.4. Research methods

a. Survey, classification and statistics

We conducted to survey of thirty 1st grade Chinese pupils' Vietnamese competency in listening and speaking in District 5, HCMC. Then we classify the results and statistics on them.

b. Discourse analysis

We based on the number of statistics these Chinese pupils' scores to analyze and explain their difficulties, then give solutions.

In addition, we use other tactics such as systematizing, modeling their difficulties and then, we combine both qualitative and quantitative methods to get results with offers.

2.2. Rationale

2.2.1. Some issues of competence

At the Symposium on Basic Competencies of the Council of Europe, there are different definitions of competence such as F. E. Weinert (OECD, 2001, p.45) concludes "competency is expressed as a system of abilities, proficiency or essential skills, which can enable people to qualify for achievement to a particular purpose." Also, at this forum, J. Coolahan (European Commission, 1996, p.26) said: "basic competency evaluation based on knowledge, experience, values and inclinations of the individual which is developed through the practice of education" [according to 6].

The definition of the general competency system for the general education program in each country is different, very diverse. However, according to Do Ngoc Thong [6], there are eight competencies selected by many countries as follows:

1. Critical thinking, logical thinking.
2. Communication, language mastery.
3. Calculation, number application.
4. Reading - writing (literacy).
5. Teamwork - relations with others.

6. Ingradeation and communication technology (ICT).

7. Creativity, self-control.

8. Solving problem.

However, there are some countries that choose specific competencies such as "Intercultural Insights (Australia), Intuitive (Japanese), participation and contribution (New Zealand), global awareness (Singapore), understanding of culture and art (Spain); independent study (Germany); social competence (Australia, Singapore)" [6].

According to the Comprehensive general education program attached to Circular No.32/2018/TT-BGDĐT of Education and Training Minister on December 26th 2018, it was clearly explained "Competence is a personal attribute which graded and developed thanks to the learner's available qualities and the process of training. Competence is a result of the combination of knowledge, skills and other personal attributes such as interests, beliefs, wills... Someone's competency is formed and developed through their practicing activities and achieving results" [4]. And in Part IX, Section 4 of Circular No.32/2018/TT-BGDĐT of Education and Training Minister clearly affirmed that "Pupil's language competency includes their using foreign language ability which is expressed through activities in four skills: listening - speaking - reading - writing. Pupil's language competency requirement is specified in the Language Arts program and foreign language curriculum that is implemented in all subjects, educational activities, consistent characteristics of each subject and especially, in Vietnamese Literature and Foreign language" [4].

And in the new general education program, Education and Training Minister emphasized that pupil's main competency is common competency which is formed and developed from pupil's educational activities in all subjects. It's also formed and developed from pupil's training and creative thinking...

2.2.2. Some features of Chinese in Vietnam

With the national renewal policy in 1986, Government supported to preserve Chinese culture in Vietnam. Chinese, who are living in Vietnam, are recognized to be Vietnamese citizens. From 1986 up to now, with the policy of national renewal, the Vietnamese government has started a policy to support the preservation and assurance of Chinese culture in Vietnam. Following the Vietnam census in 1999, "Chinese total in Vietnam was about 862,371 persons, which has reached 1.13% of Vietnam population. There are 50% in this total Chinese, who are living in Cho Lon area, District 5, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam" [8].

Chinese, who have been living in Vietnam, have contributed to the development of Vietnam such as Hồ Dzếnh poet, Vương Hồng Sển cultural writer, Lý Lan translator, Lý Đức bodybuilder, Trần Thành actor, famous MC...

2.3. Research results

2.3.1. Vietnamese competency of first-grade Chinese pupils in District 5, Ho Chi Minh city

Due to the time and condition limitation, we only conducted surveys 30 Chinese pupils who are in the first grade through the following table.

Table 1: Vietnamese competency in listening - speaking of first grade Chinese pupils in D₅, HCMC

Skills Marks	Listening	Speaking
< 5	3 (10%)	4 (13,3%)
5 - 6.4	17 (56,7%)	15 (50%)
6.5 - 7.9	10 (33,3%)	11 (36,7%)
8 - 10	0	0

From the table above, these Chinese pupils' marks are low in Vietnamese listening - speaking. No pupil is under 5 marks, but no pupil can listen and speak Vietnamese fluently because of the following difficult reasons.

2.3.2. Difficulties

Through the survey, there are seven difficulties such as:

First, listening skill is considered to be the most difficult of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) in pupils' learning foreign language process. Mostly, Chinese pupils in the first grade, who have limited Vietnamese vocabulary, do not understand the pronunciation or how to rhyme in vocabulary, so they have difficulties when they listen to Vietnamese.

Second, about pronunciation, these children are influenced by the pronunciation of their mother tongue. They have a lot of difficulties with the sound mark when they pronounce Vietnamese. Vietnamese vocabulary has six tone marks while "Chinese vocabulary has only fourth tones" [7]. Besides, Vietnamese has circumflexes on vowels such as conical circumflex: *â, ê, ô*; hook circumflex: *ơ, u* and small moon circumflex: *ă*. Most children do not distinguish hook above from tilde like

chim sẻ - sẽ làm (sparrow - will make); in the first consonant sounds: *gạch đá - rạch ròi (brick and stone - clear/ definite)*...; rhyme vowels: *a - ă - â* as *gặp - gập (meet - bend or fold up)*... or in the final consonants: *ngôi Sao - sau (star - behind), mắt - mắc (eye - expensive)*... so Chinese pupils often make a lot of mistakes when they speak Vietnamese.

Third, first-grade Chinese pupils are always afraid of speaking Vietnamese because they are not confident, don't have enough vocabulary, and cannot express their ideas well. These pupils are afraid of making a lot of mistakes when they speak Vietnamese. They often try to translate what they have heard into Chinese sentences, which makes them spend a lot of time. These things influence pupils' concentration in the listening and speaking process.

Fourth, Vietnamese is considered Chinese pupils' second language because Chinese is their mother tongue. These pupils' learning and Vietnamese practice environment are limited, so they have a lot of difficulties in their Vietnamese communication.

Fifth, first-grade Chinese pupils do not have enough vocabulary, so they don't understand the content of the lesson or the teacher's requirements. These things make them easily depressed, and they are afraid of going to school.

Sixth, in their school timetable, these pupils have to perform many other activities, so the time for Vietnamese practice in class is limited, so they cannot practice more Vietnamese exercises.

Seventh, the cooperation or contact between the school and these Chinese pupils' families has not been close yet because their parents' occupation is business. They are always busy, so they don't have much time for the announcement of primary school.

2.3.3. Discuss proposals for developing Vietnamese listening-speaking skills for 1st-grade Chinese pupils in D₅ HCMC during Covid 19 pandemic period

From the above issues, we give some suggestions to improve Vietnamese listening - speaking skills for 1st-grade Chinese pupils in D₅ HCMC during the Covid 19 pandemic period, such as:

First, from the difficulties in listening skills, the teacher should combine lively teaching methods during listening hours. The teacher helps pupils understand new words, difficult words in the listening section and create a step-by-step guide to listening for pupils so as not bore them and let pupils listen many times. Besides that, the teacher asks pupils to notice and keep in their mind about the pronunciation, emphasize the stress of Vietnamese vocabulary, intonation vocabularies of the grave (̀),

acute (/), hook above (?), tilde (~), dot under (.) and no tone mark (-) in the Vietnamese words in order that pupils can guess the content of listening easily. In addition, the teacher should encourage pupils to practice listening before going to bed. They can listen to anywhere and any low time concentration, listen to clear the mind and help their brains feel relaxed, listen to understand Vietnamese pronunciation, Vietnamese natural speech without attention to the content.

Second, in listening skills for online and offline, the teacher should follow these steps:

a. Pre-listening: pupils listen to the teacher who introduces the topic of the listening section. The teacher should ask pupils to guess the content of the listening part according to the prompts.

b. While listening (practice listening comprehension): The teacher lets pupils listen to the content of the listening section. Then, the teacher should ask pupils to discuss their ideas in groups, pairs or individuals with questions: who do you listening to? What are you listening to?... and tasks: Listen and fill in the blanks, choose the word/ phrase true or false, choose the best answers: a, b, c...

c. Post listening: The teacher reinforces the listening content, and pupils respond positively to the listening content from the tape or the speaker. In addition, teacher should also guide pupils to have a positive attitude and respect different opinions in communication.

Third, from the difficulties in speaking skills, Chinese pupils themselves need to be confident, not afraid of making mistakes and try to catch up, frequently repeat sentences in conversation, try to play roles, active and creative in practice. Chinese pupils should also stop translating what they hear into Chinese mother tongue. Then teacher should help pupils focus on the content of speech of the person who is talking, feedback quickly after hearing in their communication.

Fourth, in speaking skills for online and offline, teacher guide Chinese pupils in the first grade by asking them to imitate then repeat what they hear. And speaking topics usually should be started from the simple things such as greetings, exchanging personal ingratiation, introducing themselves. After that, the teacher should gradually increase the difficulty level of the words, phrases or sentences when these pupils talk in their communication.

In addition, the teacher should follow these steps:

a. Pre-speaking: Pupils listen to the teacher's introduction about the topic. The teacher should ask pupils to guess the content of the topic according to the prompts.

b. While speaking (practice speaking): The teacher lets pupils listen to the topic carefully, then asks them to discuss their ideas in groups, in pairs or individually. The teacher should guide pupils to make an outline of the topic by answering questions: who is talking? Who is hearing? What are you talking about? What is the purpose of the speaking section?

The teacher should ask pupils to practice speaking regularly with the adjustment of loudness, clarity and intonation in their speech.

In addition, the teacher asks pupils to role-play and reverse in their communication of each topic.

Besides, the teacher also guides pupils on how to use gestures, facial expressions and eyes to support their speech. The teacher should also use pictures, charts, and slides to increase the ingradeation of the vocabulary in the topic.

c. Post speaking: The teacher reinforces the content of the topic, and pupils respond positively to the topic and the speaker in communication.

Fifth, the teacher should note an observation sheet according to the regular assessment table as the following example:

Table 2: Regular review table of my notes about Vietnamese skills for 1st-grade Chinese pupils in D₅ HCMC

Components = score	Positive attitude		Cooperation		Content				Accuracy			Score
	-	+	-	+	Fluency	Pronunciation	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range	<50%	>50%	>80%	
1. Tong Kim An	Listening		+		+		+			+		A
	Speaking											
	Reading											
	Writing											
2. To Thanh Binh	Listening											
	Speaking											
	Reading											

	Writing												
...													

Note: A = 8-10 = Excellent, B = 6-5-7.9 = Good, C = 5-6.4 = Average, D = 0.5-4.9 =below average

Sixth, the teacher should create a happy, friendly environment and solidarity through lively and funny activities for all pupils to join. The teacher should avoid discrimination, Ethnic stigma.

Seventh, every teacher, especially the first-grade teacher, should ensure the professional requirements, good knowledge. The teacher should try her best to be an attractive teacher because pupils love teachers, they will love all of their teacher's things like experience, so I think 1st-grade Chinese pupils' learning process will be easier. Besides, the teacher should use "a lot of teaching methods flexibly and creatively when teaching these pupils" [5].

Eight, the teacher should write lesson plans for each Chinese pupil with appropriate content. The teacher should also avoid teaching too much for pupils to understand in a class. In addition, the teacher should use visual aids, illustrative examples for these pupils to decrease or not to make spelling mistakes.

Ninth, the teacher should help pupils expand their vocabularies by playing a lot of word puzzle games, matching songs... and especially, teacher always discusses these Chinese Pupils' problems and give some advice on training more at home as well as at school to their parents. Besides, their parents should spend a lot of time helping their children to practice all lessons in "Vietnamese textbook" [1] and "Vietnamese workbook" [2] more and more.

Tenth, teacher needs to apply ingratiation technology in teaching. This is an indispensable thing during the Covid 19 pandemic as the current lockdown in all Ho Chi Minh City. However, teacher needs to guide these pupils carefully because they are too young to learn online. Teacher should pay attention to designing the new lesson simply and guide them clearly. Teacher should avoid using colorful, moving illustrations that distract pupils from the main content of the lesson.

Eleventh, the teacher should design practical exercises for primary pupils in two forms: proficient exercises such as identifying exercises, correcting mistakes of words, matching pictures with words... and creative application exercises such as connecting exercises with life from appropriate communication situations.

Twelfth, teacher should evaluate pupils' competence according to 3 pairs of criteria: hard work - diligence; self-esteem - self-confidence; and honesty

- a discipline which is based on basic evaluation principles such as assurance of accuracy aim, objectivity, comprehensive system, fit for gradual development, and transparency.

Thirteenth, the principal of primary schools in D₅ HCMC, where Chinese pupils are studying, should support teachers to organize Chinese seminars to understand Chinese psychology, culture and language... to sympathize with these Chinese pupils' difficulties. I think these teachers will be easier to succeed.

Fourteenth, leaders in education should give many benefits to teachers who are teaching Chinese pupils to encourage them to overcome difficulties in their teaching process.

Fifteenth, leaders in education must be interested in supporting and developing the programs about writing Vietnamese student's books, workbooks for Chinese pupils to train themselves. Besides, teachers and even their parents should regularly attend to developing Vietnamese skills to help them when they need them. I think these will help to improve Chinese pupils' Vietnamese speaking and to listen more easily.

3. CONCLUSION

In short, there are a lot of differences between Vietnamese from Chinese, so teachers should note both Vietnamese and Chinese's psychological issues, culture, customs and habits... when teaching Vietnamese to Chinese pupils. Then we give fifteen suggestions that I think they have a positive effect on the Vietnamese teaching or learning process.

Teachers and leaders in primary schools should pay more attention to using a combination of many teaching modern methods to improve pupil's language competence, especially Vietnamese listening and speaking skills for 1st-grade Chinese pupils in D₅ HCMC during Covid 19 pandemic period. Since then, we hope my paper will contribute to promoting and preserving Vietnamese purity in the integration development in Vietnam after the Covid 19 pandemic.

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Biodata

Tran Thi Kim Tuyen is a lecturer at Sai Gon University, Vietnam. She earned her Master and Ph.D in Linguistics years ago. Her hobbies are reading, studying and teaching. Her research interests are semantics, language characteristics, and developing language competency. Her paper is “Developing Vietnamese listening - speaking skills for first grade Chinese pupils in District 5, Ho Chi Minh City during Covid 19 pandemic period”. She hopes everybody helps her to share the experience.

The author’s information

1. Full name: Tran Thi Kim Tuyen
2. Office: Saigon University, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam.
3. Phone: (084) 918 588 451 and email address: ktuyensgu@gmail.com
4. Contact address: 19/ 8A Phan Tay Ho, Ward 7, Phu Nhuan District, HCM City, Viet Nam.