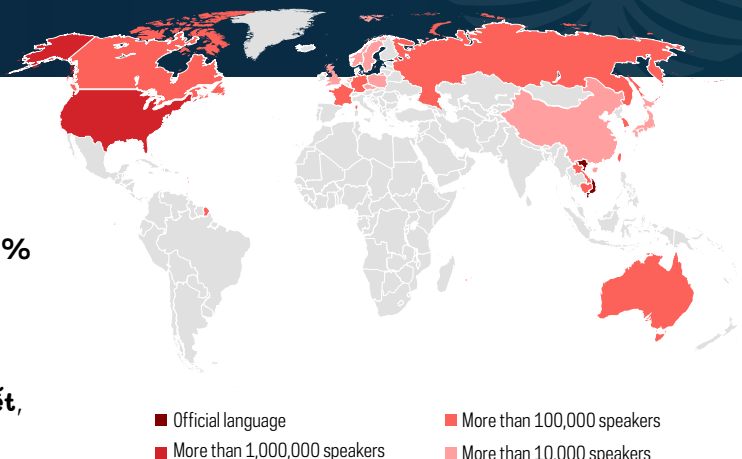


VIETNAMESE *at a Glance*

A Comparative Linguistic Analysis for Classroom Teachers

HELPFUL INFORMATION

- ▶ There are **1.5 million** Americans of Vietnamese heritage.
- ▶ The Vietnamese population in the U.S. **grew by 38%** from 2000 to 2010.
- ▶ Vietnamese culture places a strong emphasis on family, respect, and the importance of food. These values are especially evident in celebrations like **Tết**, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year.



COMPARISONS AND COMMON DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN VIETNAMESE AND ENGLISH



PRONUNCIATION

Students who speak Vietnamese often have difficulty pronouncing consonants at the end of words. This can make spelling the words challenging, often resulting in the deletion or substitution of the ending letters.



LINKING VERBS

In English, we often link a subject to an adjective with a linking verb. In Vietnamese, linking verbs are not necessary to connect the adjective to the subject.



ARTICLES

In Vietnamese, there is no parallel use of the definite article (“the”) and indefinite articles (“a” or “an”). As a result, students struggle when to know which article to use and when to use them. The use of articles needs to be explicitly explained.



VERBS

In English, you can often determine if a verb agrees with the subject by looking at the verb’s ending. In Vietnamese, however, there are fewer verb tenses, and instead of conjugating verbs, specific words are used to indicate tense, rather than modifying the verb endings.

Resources:

- [Cross-Linguistic Analysis of Vietnamese and English with Implications for Vietnamese Language Acquisition and Maintenance in the United States \(Tang, 2007\)](#)
- [Grammatical Characteristics of Vietnamese and English in Developing Bilingual Children \(Dam, 2020\)](#)

EXAMPLES AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

LINGUISTIC ELEMENT	EXAMPLES	TEACHING STRATEGIES
PRONUNCIATION	<p>Consonants that are particularly difficult to pronounce include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ /z/ as in “tables” or “rose” ▪ /s/ as in “bass” or “rice” ▪ /t/ as in “rat” or “sight” ▪ /v/ as in “relieve” or “drove” ▪ /ks/ as in “desks” or “flasks” 	<p>These mispronunciations often cause spelling and reading errors. Provide ample opportunities to practice consonant sounds. Celebrate students’ accents as a sign of bravery!</p>
LINKING VERBS	<p>In English, we often link a subject to an adjective with a linking verb. For example, “The pizza is yummy,” or “My mother became very angry.” In Vietnamese, linking verbs are not necessary, so the above sentences might appear as, “The pizza yummy,” or “My mother very angry.”</p>	<p>Create a list of linking verbs, explicitly teach their purpose, and provide sentence frames to model appropriate usage.</p>
ARTICLES	<p>In Vietnamese, there is no parallel use of the definite article (“the”) and indefinite articles (“a” or “an”). As a result, students struggle to know which article to use and when to use them.</p>	<p>Create a chart with model sentences and visual supports that shows when to use “a,” “an,” and “the.”</p>
VERBS	<p>In Vietnamese, there are fewer verb tenses. Additionally, instead of using verb conjugations to indicate tense, Vietnamese uses specific time-identifying words. For example, “đã” is used for the past, “đang” for the present, and “sẽ” for the future, rather than changing the verb endings like English does (walked, walking, walks).</p>	<p>Create anchor charts of verb conjugations and provide sentence frames to model appropriate sentence structure.</p>

PONDER AND DISCUSS

- ▶ What percentage of your students speak Vietnamese?
- ▶ How can you integrate Vietnamese into your classroom?
- ▶ What countries of origin are represented in your classroom?
- ▶ What do you know about these countries? How can you learn more about them as a class?
- ▶ What Vietnamese traditions and holidays do your students celebrate? How can you integrate these celebrations into your school year?