ЯЗЫКОВАЯ СИТУАЦИЯ

LANGUAGE SITUATION

CURRENT STATE OF ENDANGERED ETHNIC MINORITY LANGUAGES IN VIETNAM

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In the light of the digital revolution that is taking place strongly around the world, the threat of the endangerment of ethnic minority languages in many nations in general and in Vietnam in particular is gradually becoming an urgent issue. The main goal of this article is to address two issues: (1) describing the current state of endangered ethnic minority languages in Vietnam today, (2) proposing some solutions for preserving endangered ethnic minority languages in Vietnam. The sociolinguistic investigation method, language structure research method, and endangered language dataization technique are the key methodologies employed in this study. According to the findings, there is a significant risk of extinction for the 35 surveyed ethnic minority languages and dialects in Vietnam on three different levels: Level 1 refers to the extremely endangered endangered languages and dialects (06); Level 2 to the severely endangered endangered languages and dialects (19); and Level 3 to the highly endangered languages and dialects (10). Two categories of language preservation strategies have been put forth: static preservation (language documentation) and dynamic preservation (real-world application).

Keywords: endangered languages, ethnic minorities, Vietnam, current state, solutions

СОВРЕМЕННОЕ СОСТОЯНИЕ ЯЗЫКОВ ЭТНИЧЕСКИХ МЕНЬШИНСТВ, НАХОДЯЩИХСЯ ПОД УГРОЗОЙ ИСЧЕЗНОВЕНИЯ, ВО ВЬЕТНАМЕ

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В контексте мировой цифровизации угроза исчезновения языков этнических меньшинств во многих странах, в том числе во Вьетнаме, становится актуальной проблемой. Цель статьи - описать текущее состояние языков этнических меньшинств во Вьетнаме, находящихся под угрозой исчезновения и предложить решения для сохранения миноритарных языков Вьетнама. Результаты предпринятого исследования показывают, что существует значительный риск исчезновения 35 исследованных миноритарных языков и диалектов. Данные идиомы делятся на три группы: первая группа включает языки и диалекты, находящиеся под угрозой исчезновения (0б); вторая группа включает языки и диалекты, находящиеся под серьезной угрозой исчезновения (19); третья группа вкючает языки и диалекты, находящиеся под значительной угрозой исчезновения (10). Предлагаются две стратегии сохранения идиомов: статическое сохранение (языковая документация) и динамическое сохранение (реальное применение).

Ключевые слова: языки, находящиеся под угрозой исчезновения, этнические меньшинства, Вьетнам, современное состояние, решения

1. Introduction

The risk of loss (also known as the risk of extinction or endangerment) for ethnic minority languages has so far been global in nature and cannot be excluded in Vietnam. The United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and many other social organizations, in addition to linguists, are concerned about this issue. One of the most frequently mentioned points is language rights and sustainable development in multi-ethnic and multilingual countries.

Researchers around the world have issued warnings about the alarming endangerment of some languages. A language perishes when there is no speaker, no member of the younger generation to learn it. UNESCO [2003: 2] in its report Language Vitality and Endangerment confirms "a language is endangered when it is on a path toward extinction. Without adequate documentation, a language that is extinct can never be revived"; "a language is in danger when its speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next". This situation has made researchers around the world and in Vietnam very interested in endangered languages.

Vietnam has 53 ethnic minorities, with more than 14 million people residing in 51 provinces and cities. The largest residential areas are in the Northwest, Central Highlands, Southwest, and Central regions, which also have significant geopolitical locations. These are often border areas, deep-lying and remote areas that are especially difficult. The Northwest, Central Highlands, Southwest, and Central regions all have sizable residential areas and significant geopolitical locations, which are also extremely challenging borderlands, and deep-lying, remote regions. Researchers and policymakers have therefore always been interested in minimizing challenges and shortcomings in social life, particularly in the culture of ethnic minorities in Vietnam, in order to support the achievement of the common goal of the strategy for sustainable development of ethnic minority areas by 2025 and the vision orientation to 2030. In such a context, there are many socio-economic problems arising in ethnic minority areas that require urgent solutions. It is impossible avoid requesting solutions to preserve and develop traditional cultural capital, especially the endangered languages of ethnic minorities. This is a real and risk in many multi-ethnic countries, including Vietnam.

For many years, the Party and State have always paid attention to investing resources for the socio-economic and cultural development of ethnic minorities. It is undeniable that the great achievements of ethnic policies have been implemented in Vietnam. However, with the characteristics of a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country, no policy can be suitable for all ethnic groups and all regions. Moreover, the practice of development policies by the Party and State in ethnic minority areas is always considered the key to practicing policies for sustainable development. The preservation and promotion of traditional cultural values of ethnic minorities continue to be of

interest. However, the content of preserving and developing endangered ethnic minority languages in Vietnam is often scattered or "accompanied" in many policies with other content, often unnoticed or not feasible. The answer to how to achieve the desired effect can only be obtained through study of theory, summarization, complete and profound analysis of Vietnamese practice, and fundamentally, synchronously, and systematically shaping solutions, policy models, and preservation and development solutions for endangered ethnic minority languages in Vietnam.

From both a theoretical and practical viewpoint, it can be said that learning about the situation of endangered languages in Vietnam is a crucial subject because:

Firstly, the language of ethnic minorities is one of the elements of culture, an important criterion to determine the ethnic composition, a means of preserving indigenous knowledge of the community, and a contribution to the culture of each ethnic group, one of their most fundamental identities.

Secondly, as a result of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, globalization, and other factors, some ethnic minority languages are rapidly disappearing, which is an issue of concern to the whole world. When a language vanishes, a piece of human history and culture is lost, then making the culture of the entire world "poor".

Thirdly, preserving and developing ethnic minority languages in danger of extinction in Vietnam is associated with protecting the rights of ethnic groups to languages, ensuring diversity in unity. On the one hand, this contributes to the realization of the Party's lines and policies on ethnic languages in the 2013 Constitution; on the other hand, it is also the legitimate aspirations of ethnic minorities whose languages are in danger of extinction. Moreover, it is the concretization of ensuring human rights, citizens' rights – the right to speak their own language, contributing to maintaining and developing the diversity of the language ecosystem.

2. Literature Review

The issue of endangered languages has been mentioned by many researchers, such as Peter Ladefoged (1992), Konrad Schröder (1995), Lenore A. Grenoble (1998), Dieter Wunderlich (1998), Matthias Brenzinger (2007), Lindsay J. Whaley (2009), Christopher Moseley (2010), Peter K. Austin, and Julia Sallabank (2011).

Some authors have proposed a scale to assess language vitality. The earliest is the assessment by the authors: Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977). They emphasized the importance of language transfer in the intergenerational family (from one generation to the next). Among the assessment methods, the most influential are the Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS, Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale) introduced by Fishman in 1991 and the 9-factor scale assessment

introduced by UNESCO in 2003.

Evaluating the vitality of endangered languages and figuring out how well they are surviving are prerequisites for language preservation [Dorian, 1992; Dixon, 1997]. Michael E. Krauss (1997) proposed a language warning system with 10 levels in which he focused on language transmission through generations.

David Crystal (2002) classifies languages into five levels: *Viable languages; Viable but small languages; Endangered languages; Nearly extinct languages;* and *Extinct languages.*

Stephen Wurm (2001) identified seven levels of language extinction: *Safe, Stable yet threatened; Vulnerable; Definitely endangered; Severely endangered; Critically endangered,* and *Extinct.* Stephen Wurm's identification system focuses on two basic factors: the number of people using the language and the transmission of the language to the next generation.

Sun Hongkai (2008) identified a six-point scale to assess the vitality of China's ethnic minority languages as follows: (*1) dynamic; (2) robust or active; (3) dwindling vitality, threatened, and showing some signs of endangerment; (4) definitely endangered; (5) minimal vitality and severely endangered; and (6) Critically endangered, inactive or extinct.*

UNESCO (2011) has developed the Atlas of the World's Endangered Languages based on the number of people using the language. In this document, Wurm proposes five levels of language extinction as follows: *Vulnerable languages; Endangered languages; Seriously Endangered Languages; Critically Endangered Languages; Extinct languages.*

After two years of research by a special group of linguists commissioned by UNESCO, a document titled Language Vitality and Endangerment was published in 2003. This document has established six levels of danger to the language, as follows: *Safe (5); Stable yet threatened (5); Vulnerable (Vulnerable) (4); Definitely endangered (3); Severely endangered (2); Critically endangered (1); Extinct (0).*

According to the classification of Peter K. Austin and Julia Sallabank (2011), there are six different levels of danger. *Safe; At Risk; Disappearing; Moribund; Nearly Extinct;* and *Extinct.*

In addition to the nine criteria put forth by UNESCO to determine the viability of the Ngwi language (China), Katie B. Gao (2015) also considered three criteria suggested by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to determine the viability and endangered status of Chinese languages. For a measure of language vitality, Katie B. Gao also used the Language Endangerment Index (LEI). Languages Catalog (ELCat), an online representation of the Endangered Languages Project (Lee & Van Way, 2014), created this index. The LEI index, which establishes the standards for language transmission between generations, is twice as high as other sets of criteria for evaluating language vitality. The four criteria in the LEI are: (1) intergnerational transmission; (2) absolute number of

speakers; (3) speaker number trends; and (4) domain of use. LEI scores four criteria on a scale of 0–5, where 0 is "safe" and 5 is "critically endangered".

As can be seen, worldwide researchers employ three fundamental criteria – the number of language users, the degree of language transmission, and the breadth of language use in community life – to determine the degree to which a language is endangered.

Nguyen Van Loi raised the issue of endangered languages in Vietnam for the first time in 1999. In order to address practical issues in Vietnam, the author raised and analyzed theoretical issues related to endangered languages, such as endangered language status, as well as concerns that must be resolved to preserve and enhance the diversity of languages and ethnic cultures in Vietnam.

Nguyen Van Loi (1999) divided endangered ethnic minority languages in Vietnam into the following five categories based on their survival and socio-linguistic conditions: Languages are (1) almost lost; (2) seriously endangered; (3) at risk of extinction in the younger generation; (4) used by a few thousand to tens of thousands of people; (5) used by ten thousand to a few tens of thousands of people.

Ta Van Thong (2011), based on the situation in Vietnam, has divided language status into four different levels as follows: (1) Language is "healthy"; (2) Language is "weakened"; (3) Language is "endangered"; (4) Language is "almost only in memory".

The issue of endangered languages has also been addressed by author Nguyen Van Loi (2012) in a series of studies on collecting data and compiling a search work to preserve endangered languages in Vietnam. The author has raised five relevant issues in these articles:

1) Language encyclopedia and language rights issues;

2) Endangered language: Language is disappearing and endangered;

3) Red Book: Encyclopedia of Endangered Languages in the Russian Federation;

4) Endangered languages in Vietnam and the compilation of search works on them;

5) Case study: Ngôn ngữ của người Cơ Lao ở Việt Nam (Language of the Co Lao people in Vietnam)

Also in these studies, author Nguyen Van Loi mentions three levels of language decay: language is being lost, language is dying, and language is endangered.

The issue of "the death of language in the present era" is raised in a 2012 study by Nguyen Van Khang. The risk of languages being lost over time, particularly at a time when globalization is a major global trend, is real. According to him, the signs to recognize a language at an unsafe level are: the number of users and their age; their proficiency level; and the scope of use. The number of users is the most recognizable of these indications. However, it can also be seen that population is no longer

the number one indicator when combined with other factors. Therefore, signs to recognize that a language is at an unsafe level also need to consider other factors such as whether those people live in concentration or not, the impact of the living environment on that language, language culture, etc.

Regarding the death of a language as well as the threat to a language, author Nguyen Van Khang poses three issues:

1) Is this the death of a language or just the death of a form of existence of a language (dialect)?

2) Is the entry of other linguistic elements into a language considered an "unsafe" risk leading to the death of the language?

3) Does the gradual loss of dialects of a language belong to the content of "the death of language"?

Nguyen Van Khang (2014) continued to bring up concerns about endangered, nearly extinct, and extinct languages while analyzing the current state of language in Vietnam. According to him, Vietnam is also facing a number of languages that are endangered. It is the language of five ethnic groups with a population of less than 1,000 including Si La, Pu Peo, Ro Mam, Brau, and Odu. He also supposed that the so-called "language in danger of extinction" or "endangered language" will encompass both language and dialect due to the complexity of the interaction between language and dialect, which is generally referred to as "language" in television (may be language, can be dialect).

Nguyen Van Loi and his research colleagues on ethnic minority languages also conducted "*Investigation on Vietnamese ethnic minority languages*" (1995–2000), "*Investigation of ethnic minority languages contributing to redefining ethnic composition in Vietnam*" (2000–2005), "*Investigation, collection, and research on traditional writing systems of Vietnamese ethnic minorities*" (2000–2005); carried out many research projects such as "*Completing handwriting script and compiling Pa Co-Ta Oi language book*" [Binh Tri Thien Province, 1984–1985]; participated in a number of cooperation projects with Russian and American scientists, such as the program "*Vietnam-Soviet Union (later Vietnam-Russia): field survey on Vietnamese ethnic minority languages*" from 1985 to 2011 and the project in collaboration with Jerold Edmondson, University of Texas at Austin, USA, "*Surveying ethnic minority languages along the Vietnam-China border*" from 1995 to 2000.

Tran Tri Doi (2018) said that among 53 ethnic minorities in Vietnam, the number of languages corresponding to the number of ethnic groups is currently an issue that needs further discussion. When talking about the list of endangered languages in Vietnam, one can refer to the language of an ethnic group and also to the dialect or dialect of an ethnic subgroup. Based on it, he compiled a detailed list of the endangered languages (languages, regional dialects, and indigenous dialects) in Vietnam at five levels. Specifically:

1) The extinct language: Edu;

2) The critically endangered languages: Co Lao Do dialect, Song dialect, Thuy dialect, Bo Y language, Ro Ma language, Brau language;

3) The severely endangered languages: Tu Di dialect, Co Lao Trang dialect, Pu Peo dialect, Nung Ven dialect, Dan Lai – Ly Ha dialect, Tay Pong dialect, Ma Lieng dialect, May dialect, Ruc dialect, Sach dialect, Arem dialect;

4) The definitely endangered languages: La Chi, La Ha, Mang, Khang, Cong, Si La, Xa Pho, and Phu La;

5) The vulnerable languages: Xinh Mun, La Hu, Na Meo, Pa Then, Lo Lo, Pa Co and Pa Hi dialects.

Thus, according to Tran Tri Doi, in the list of 32 languages or dialects listed, there is one language on the verge of extinction, which is the Ơ-đu language of the Ơ-đu ethnic group. The rest are thought to be in various degrees of endangerment.

Ta Van Thong and Ta Quang Tung (2017) argue that the languages of ethnic communities in Vietnam exist in three states: the state of being maintained, the state of being endangered, and the state of being lost. The authors identify several factors, including demographics, language use and teaching, ethnic minorities' handwriting, literary language emergence and development, scientific study, and social psychology, as reasons for language loss.

In summary, the basic research on endangered languages in the world and in Vietnam has now obtained certain results. First of all, it is the fact that scientists have relatively unified in defining the connotation of the term "*Endangered languages*" (languages at risk of endangerment, languages under threat, languages at risk of loss, languages at risk of extinction) and agree with the set of nine criteria proposed by UNESCO for identifying endangered languages. On that basis, the researchers initially classified the levels of language endangerment, determining a list of endangered languages according to each level. However, the determination of the list and geographical indications of languages has not been unified and has been studied synchronously in all 13 hot spots in the world for endangered languages (especially in Indochina, including Vietnam), the central region of the language hotspot.

The findings of this study are restricted to literature publications, structural descriptions, or lexical data of endangered languages. When studying endangered languages, linguists face the urgent need for quantitative studies, the provision of precise parameters to classify the level of language endangerment, the identification of a list of endangered languages at each level, the analysis of the factors contributing to language endangerment, and the creation of a data bank of endangered languages using modern technology. On that basis, the issue of studying endangered languages is

transnational and territorial in order to make predictions about the development trend of each language.

3. Methodology

The sociolinguistic investigation method and the research method of language structure and endangered language dataization techniques were combined to ascertain the reality of endangered ethnic minority languages.

In the first group of methods, the following methods and tricks were flexibly applied:

1. Field method.

– Communicating ritually through 12 seminars at the survey site and freely exchanging with relevant individuals to collect authentic, multi-dimensional information.

– Conducting in-depth interviews based on scenarios that are appropriate for two primary subjects: members of ethnic minorities whose languages are endangered, managers and respectable locals.

– Making observations, taking notes, recording audio and video to comment, and evaluating the information to be collected

– Doing a case study: Due to the broad nature of the research's subject and scope, it is required to choose representative cases for in-depth analysis.

Due to limited human and financial resources, the study only surveyed 35 ethnic minority languages in 12 provinces (Ha Giang, Lang Son, Quang Binh, Kon Tum, Lai Chau, Son La, Ha Tinh, Nghe An, Cao Bang, Dien Bien, Lao Cai, and Tuyen Quang) that were predicted to be at high risk of extinction. The districts and provinces on the list of districts and provinces selected for the survey (on a national scale) are the "origin" districts and provinces of endangered languages or with significant populations of ethnic minorities. This study relies on the actual situation to survey ethnic minority languages effectively and appropriately in accordance with the permitted language and geographic scope: There are languages surveyed in 1 province and district; there are languages surveyed in 2 to 3 provinces and districts. This is a good choice for several languages with extremely broad distribution areas for which earlier research lacked survey data.

2. Expert method.

This method is employed to gather data from experts, including policymakers, researchers in related subjects, managers at all levels, etc. In-depth interviews, consultations, in-depth discussions at seminars, scientific seminars, etc. are a few of the techniques of conduct. In order to get a more impartial perspective on issues affecting ethnic minorities, the study has gathered and assessed a variety of expert viewpoints.

3. Documentary research method.

This method is used to analyze and refine information from collected documents, such as the Constitution, laws, documents of the Party and State, Government decrees, local documents, foreign documents, etc. On that basis, analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing problems helps the researchers deploy in the right direction, have a solid legal basis, and propose practical and feasible solutions.

This method uses statistical analysis, surveys, descriptions, etc.

In addition, the technical means and equipment used are recorders, cameras, video recorders, etc. The sociological questionnaires P04 and P05 are processed by SPSS software.

Three questionnaires were built in group 2 to learn about language structure, including: one *Questionnaire about vocabulary*, one *Questionnaire on structure* (Single and complex sentences), and one *Questionnaire on speech purpose* (Questions, imperative sentences, and exclamatory sentences). For languages surveyed in one province: Each province chooses 1 to 2 districts, and each district chooses 1 to 2 communes. 60 questionnaire samples per language are divided equally among actual units, or if the unit with the highest quality of ethnic minority people can be selected, the sample survey will be conducted. Those who choose to record must ensure professional criteria.

From the collected structural documents of endangered ethnic minority languages, the researchers used the descriptive method to show the features of that language in the following aspects: origin relationship, typological characteristics, lexical features, grammatical features, and sociolinguistic features (self-names and variations, names and variations; scope of language, multilingualism and bilingualism use; scope of language use; and language attitudes of native speakers). From there, the main goal is to establish a scientific foundation for the Red Book of Vietnamese ethnic minority languages that are endangered.

Statistical classification techniques are used to analyze the data and identify endangered ethnic minority language groups that need further research.

Techniques of endangered language dataization

To dataize a language at risk of extinction in audio form, the first stage that needed to be performed was recording. During the recording process, collaborators were asked to read lexical units or sentences (according to the meaning given in Vietnamese, thereby finding the corresponding units in their mother tongue); each unit was read three times (with separate words) and twice (with utterances as sentences) in daily pronunciation.

Audio files were recorded at a sample rate of 22,050 Hz, 16 bits, as.wav files and recorded with a dedicated recorder such as the H2n Handy Recorder or the H2 Handy Recorder. The reason for the need is a dedicated recorder because most of the current receivers on the market record in an

omnidirectional format that means, when recording, the sound is captured in both the front and rear of the machine. In order for the recording process to be effective, it is best to choose a unidirectional receiver, which only focuses and collects sound from the front machine.
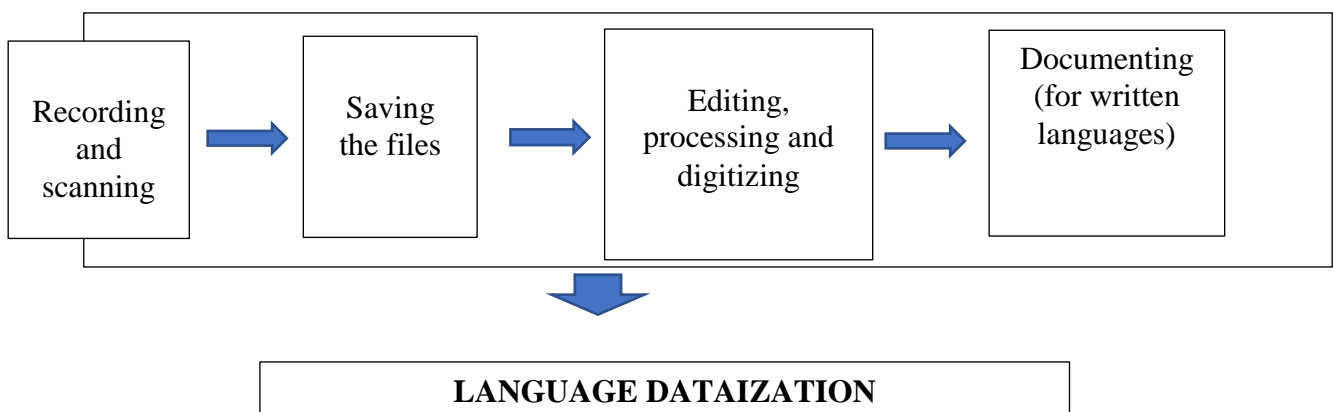
After that, the data was processed and digitized using the phonetic analysis programs Praat, Speech Analyzer, and WinCecil.

From here, the researchers obtained some parameters such as intensity (intensity), length (duration), pitch (pitch), spectrum (spectrogram), etc. of the audio files.

After recording and obtaining an audio documentation system, the voices of ethnic minority languages were recorded in the form of text fragments. These texts consist of two parts. The first part is the language of the ethnic minorities, recorded in the international phonetic notation IPA. The second part is the Vietnamese translation written just below the ethnic minority text.

With such a system of textual documents, researchers can conduct research on grammar and build writing, and at the same time, this is also a collection of very useful contexts for the process of building electronic dictionaries and online dictionaries later.

In summary, thes language dataization includes the following steps:

| Recording and scanning | → | Saving the files | → | Editing, processing and digitizing | → | Documenting (for written languages) |

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LANGUAGE DATAIZATION

4. Research findings

Situation of 35 endangered ethnic minority languages/ dialects in Vietnam

Building a set of criteria to identify and evaluate the level of language loss

Among many solutions to preserve and develop ethnic minority languages in Vietnam today, we choose to build a set of criteria to identify and evaluate the level of language loss with the desire to provide a list with a specific level of endangerment. This will be the basis for policy makers, scientists and localities to choose the preferred language to take appropriate and effective preservation actions.
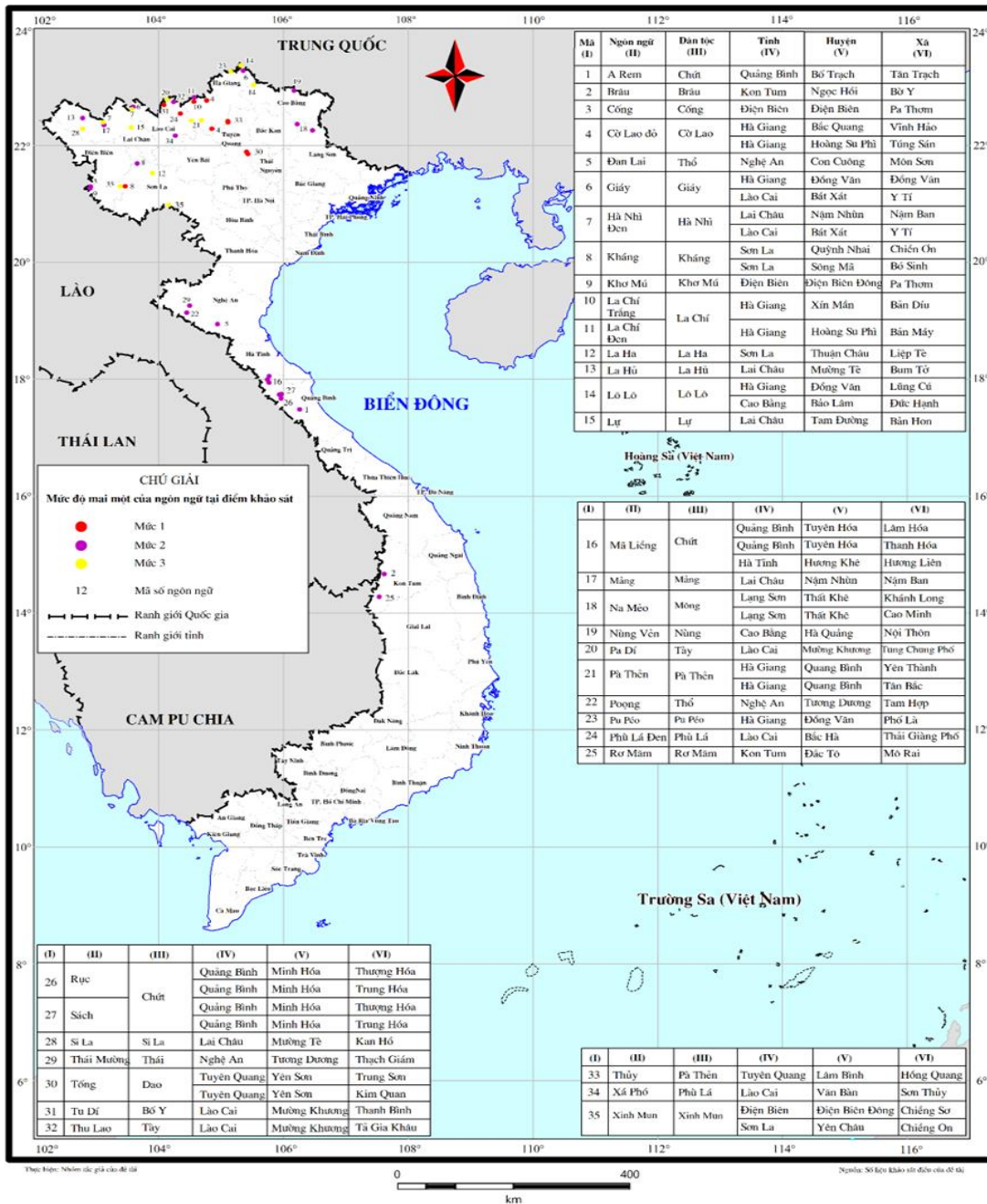
The set of criteria is built on the basis of analyzation of the advantages and disadvantages of the criteria sets in the world combined with specific language situations in Vietnam. We have drawn 07 lessons from experience to build a set of criteria appropriate to the linguistic situation in Vietnam.

The set of criteria includes 07 criteria and 18 specific indicators: Number of speakers (Number of speakers of the same ethnicity, Number of people of the same language in an ethnic group); Transmission (The next level of language use by generations, Forms of language transmission); Scope of use (Family use, community use); Language culture (Handwriting, Language storage, School use, Media use, Research); Attitudes and aspirations of native speakers (Attitudes of native speakers, Aspiration of native speakers); Language position (Position relative to Vietnamese language, Position relative to other languages in the region); The State's viewpoints, policies and solutions (the State acknowledges the existence of languages, the State has a policy of language preservation and development, the State has solutions to implement the policy of language preservation and development).

The research team followed a 5-step procedure based on a set of criteria to identify endangered ethnic minority languages, which included: 1) Examining the list of endangered languages in Vietnam identified in the research hypothesis; 2) Using a set of criteria to screen and identify endangered languages in Vietnam; 3) Comparing the list with the list in the research hypothesis and choosing the appropriate list of languages to determine the language endangerment index; 4) Determining the language endangerment index for ethnic minority languages in Vietnam using a set of criteria to identify endangered languages in conjunction with an investigation and survey of the current status of the languages; 5) Compiling a list of the 35 ethnic minority languages spoken in Vietnam and assigning a level of endangerment based on the language endangerment index.

The criteria for identifying endangered ethnic minority languages and the list of endangered ethnic minority languages in Vietnam are essential and crucial instruments for state management agencies to evaluate the level of endangerment of ethnic minority languages in Vietnam. The State can then implement the necessary regulations and measures to protect these languages or develop unique solutions for each language in line with that language's status.

Survey diagram

Mã (I)	Ngôn ngữ (II)	Dân tộc (III)	Tỉnh (IV)	Huyện (V)	Xã (VI)
1	A Rem	Chứt	Quảng Bình	Bố Trạch	Tân Trạch
2	Brâu	Brâu	Kon Tum	Ngọc Hồi	Bờ Y
3	Cống	Cống	Điện Biên	Điện Biên	Pa Thơm
4	Cờ Lao đỏ	Cờ Lao	Hà Giang	Bắc Quang	Vĩnh Hảo
			Hà Giang	Hoàng Su Phì	Túng Sán
5	Đan Lai	Thổ	Nghệ An	Con Cuông	Môn Sơn
6	Giáy	Giáy	Hà Giang	Đồng Văn	Đồng Văn
			Lào Cai	Bát Xát	Y Tí
7	Hà Nhì Đen	Hà Nhì	Lai Châu	Nậm Nhùn	Nậm Ban
			Lào Cai	Bát Xát	Y Tí
8	Kháng	Kháng	Sơn La	Quỳnh Nhai	Chiến Ơn
			Sơn La	Sông Mã	Bó Sinh
9	Khơ Mú	Khơ Mú	Điện Biên	Điện Biên Đông	Pa Thơm
10	La Chí Trắng	La Chí	Hà Giang	Xín Mần	Bản Díu
11	La Chí Đen		Hà Giang	Hoàng Su Phì	Bản Máy
12	La Ha	La Ha	Sơn La	Thuận Châu	Liệp Tè
13	La Hủ	La Hủ	Lai Châu	Mường Tè	Bum Tở
14	Lô Lô	Lô Lô	Hà Giang	Đồng Văn	Lũng Cú
			Cao Bằng	Bảo Lâm	Đức Hạnh
15	Lự	Lự	Lai Châu	Tam Đường	Bản Hon

(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)
16	Mã Liềng	Chứt	Quảng Bình	Tuyên Hóa	Lâm Hóa
			Quảng Bình	Tuyên Hóa	Thanh Hóa
			Hà Tĩnh	Hương Khê	Hương Liên
17	Măng	Măng	Lai Châu	Nậm Nhùn	Nậm Ban
18	Na Mẻo	Mông	Lạng Sơn	Thất Khê	Khánh Long
			Lạng Sơn	Thất Khê	Cao Minh
19	Nùng Vẻn	Nùng	Cao Bằng	Hà Quảng	Nội Thôn
20	Pa Dí	Tày	Lào Cai	Mường Khương	Tung Chung Phố
21	Pà Thẻn	Pà Thẻn	Hà Giang	Quang Bình	Yên Thành
			Hà Giang	Quang Bình	Tân Bắc
22	Poọng	Thổ	Nghệ An	Tương Dương	Tam Hợp
23	Pu Péo	Pu Péo	Hà Giang	Đồng Văn	Phố Là
24	Phù Lá Đen	Phù Lá	Lào Cai	Bắc Hà	Thải Giàng Phố
25	Rơ Măm	Rơ Măm	Kon Tum	Đắc Tô	Mô Rai

CHÚ GIẢI
Mức độ mai một của ngôn ngữ tại điểm khảo sát

- Mức 1
- Mức 2
- Mức 3
- 12 Mã số ngôn ngữ
- Ranh giới Quốc gia
- Ranh giới tỉnh

(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)
26	Rục	Chứt	Quảng Bình	Minh Hóa	Thượng Hóa
			Quảng Bình	Minh Hóa	Trung Hóa
27	Sách		Quảng Bình	Minh Hóa	Thượng Hóa
			Quảng Bình	Minh Hóa	Trung Hóa
28	Si La	Si La	Lai Châu	Mường Tè	Kan Hồ
29	Thái Mường	Thái	Nghệ An	Tương Dương	Thạch Giám
30	Tống	Dao	Tuyên Quang	Yên Sơn	Trung Sơn
			Tuyên Quang	Yên Sơn	Kim Quan
31	Tu Dí	Bố Y	Lào Cai	Mường Khương	Thanh Bình
32	Thu Lao	Tày	Lào Cai	Mường Khương	Tả Gia Khâu

(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)
33	Thủy	Pà Thẻn	Tuyên Quang	Lâm Bình	Hồng Quang
34	Xá Phó	Phù Lá	Lào Cai	Văn Bàn	Sơn Thủy
35	Xinh Mun	Xinh Mun	Điện Biên	Điện Biên Đông	Chiềng Sơ
			Sơn La	Yên Châu	Chiềng On

Survey results of 35 endangered ethnic minority languages/ dialects in Vietnam

Analysis of the main factors affecting the endangerment of ethnic minority languages in Vietnam

It can be affirmed that all the ethnic minority languages surveyed by our researchers are in a state of high endangerment with the following 07 characteristics:

1. The habitats are difficult such as high mountains, deep forests, rugged terrain, and harsh climates; the residence and coexistence make small languages tend to be lost and assimilated naturally.

2. The economic, cultural, and social living standards are low and backward; living conditions and enjoying policies face many shortcomings.

3. The population is small; the percentage of people who speak their mother tongue is decreasing over time and with age, from old to young.

4. The mother tongue transmission is increasingly weakened from the scope, form, extent and content of the lineage.

5. The scope of use of mother tongue is increasingly narrow, mainly in the family and for middle-aged and older children; fewer and fewer people can use it.

6. The function and position of the mother tongue compared to Vietnamese or regional dialects are increasingly limited.

7. Attitudes and aspirations of language subjects are still basically positive, but most still choose Vietnamese as priority to ensure the current needs of subsistence, integration and development.

According to our assessment, at the present, all linguistic entities of 53 ethnic minorities are in Level 4 – Definitely endangered, and higher.

For 35 ethnic minority languages that have been practically surveyed and evaluated for their level of endangerment according to the Criteria, there are 06 languages at Level 1 - Extremely endangered (*Cờ Lao Đỏ, La Chí Trắng, Phù Lá Đen, Tống, Tu Dí, Thủy*), 19 languages at Level 2 - Severely endangered (*Arem, Rơ Măm, Brâu, Đan Lai, Khơ Mú, La Chí Đen, Nùng Vẻn, Poọng, Rục, Sách, Thái Mường, Mã Liềng, Mảng, Na Mẻo, La Hủ, Thu Lao, Xá Phó, Cống, Giáy*);and 10 languages at Level 3 - Highly endangered (*Hà Nhì Đen, Kháng, Pu Péo, La Ha, Lô Lô Đen, Lự, Pa Dí, Pà Thẻn, Si La, Xinh Mun*).

Thus, the survey results show that in general, all surveyed ethnic minority languages are "minority of minority" languages, which are at a high level of endangerment and need urgent preservation.
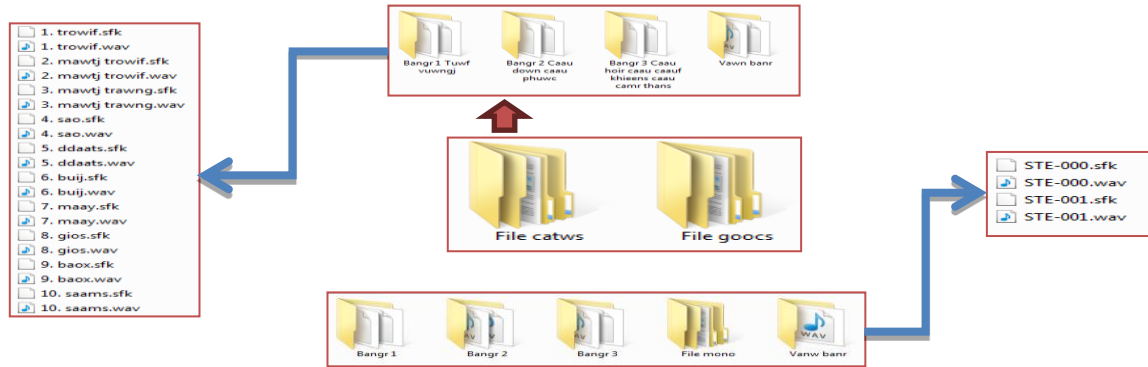
Proposals for preservation of endangered ethnic minority languages

We pay attention to 2 main groups of solutions.

Static preservation: documenting 35 ethnic minority languages

All units of Vocabulary, Grammar and Text are kept in word file and audio file with quality assurance.

Database set (including modules sound – vocabulary, grammar and text):

During the implementation of the project, the research team had the opportunity to visit and learn from the most modern culture and language preservation model such as CoEDL[24] and PARADISEC[25] at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Here, we are accesed to the paradisec archive and been shared with this documentary method.

Research and build a database for the compilation of the Red Book

In addition to the database, the project has researched and built a specific and systematic scientific basis for the compilation of *the Red Book of ethnic minority languages in Vietnam*. Hopefully, the compilation of this Red Book will come into reality soon and this is also one of the plans to preserve ethnic minority languages with multifaceted value.

Besides linguistic solutions, the dynamic conservation of endangered languages in Vietnam also needs attention: putting into use in daily life such as education, communication, culture, indigenous tourism, etc. This solution still faces many barriers that need to be removed in the coming time.

5. Discussion and conclusion

It is known that the Vietnamese government soon had a progressive and humanistic policies on the languages of ethnic minorities, namely 1) recognizing and guaranteeing the right of all ethnic groups to have their own language in the Vietnamese territory. Male; 2) legally recognizing the equal rights and free development of all ethnic languages in the territory of Vietnam; 3) creating favorable conditions for ethnic groups to use their own languages and scripts in life and in the fields of social activities; 4) encouraging ethnic minorities to study Vietnamese on the principle of voluntaryity and respect for the free and equal development of languages of other ethnic groups, creating ethnic-

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[24] Center of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language.

[25] A digital archive of records of endangered cultures in the Asia-Pacific region. By the time we arrived, there were over 1200 languages hosted.

Vietnamese bilingual status, national language, and means of means of unity, consolidation and unification of the ethnic groups in the territory of Vietnam.

However, it is undeniable that there are some shortcomings in the content and implementation of policies on languages of ethnic minorities in general, and endangered languages of ethnic minorities in particular, such as 1) lacking of plans, target programmes and specific implementation measures and organizational forms suitable for each region and each ethnic group; 2) lacking of a team of staff who are prepared in terms of knowledge and methods; 3) lacking of an inspection and evaluation regime at the central and local state levels; 4) lacking of synchronization with other policies such as economy, culture, education, staff training, facilities, especially lack of legal base, feassible plans and projects, therefore so there is a delay or inability to bring to life; 5) lacking of close coordination and synchronization sectors and levels; 6) lacking of proper attention to determine the position of languages to have suitable countermeasures.

From another perspective, although some languages have been taught in schools, broadcasted on radio, printed in books as well as some languages have been studied basically with research works such as grammar books, language lessons, dictionaries, it is worrying that these are often the languages of ethnic groups with a large number of speakers, while the languages with a small number of speakers are in danger of extinction, as the list of 35 languages we surveyed has received very little research attention. In short, from a policy perspective, it can be seen that we only have policies and solutions to preserve ethnic minority languages in general, but there are no preservation policies and solutions for specific target languages which are in danger of extinction.

The results of our research are currently limited in terms of capacity, time, and funding, so it is inevitable to have limitations. For example, the survey area is not really comprehensive, the survey subjects are incomplete, the system is not as desired, the set of criteria for building and evaluating the degradation level of 35 language/dialects entities has not been verified, etc. Sociolinguistics and linguistic structure data sets of 35 languages/dialects are almost collected in specific areas, so there are no high general comparisons. Because there are no specific policies for the preservation of endangered ethnic minority languages, the assessment and analysis of policies and policy implementation can hardly be carried out in a methodical and thorough manner as expected. We look forward to receiving experience sharing from Russian linguists.

In the future, if possible, it is necessary to continue to expand the investigation and survey of all other ethnic minority languages/dialects nationwide to be able to produce a list of endangered ethic minority languages with specific and precise clarification. In particular, according to the research results, from the database on 35 ethnic minority languages/dialects, it is possible to build *a digital data bank*. Based on the research results on building a database for the compilation of *the Red Book of*

endangered ethnic minority languages in Vietnam, it is possible to continue studying a *Red Book of ethnic miniority languages in Vietnam* which has long-term value in the journey of preservation and promotion of ethnic minorities' cultural values, contributing to the sustainable development of the country in the period of industrialization, modernization and international integration.

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