

LANGUAGE REPORT – OVERSEAS TRAINING AND EDUCATION

UNCLASSIFIED VERSION

Aim

1. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, paragraph 59, the aim of this language report for the Manager Languages-Army (MLA) is to cover any major changes to language, attitudes and social life observed in both the major population centres and the rural sectors during the LST undertaken by MAJ Brooker from 05 -21 August 2018 to Vietnam.

Summary of programme

2. As detailed in the Post Activity Report (PAR), the LST consisted of four days study at EDUCAP in Hanoi, sightseeing and field trips around Hanoi, and visits to Hoi An and Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC).

Language observations

3. The new key words I learnt at EDUCAP, relating to the study of wartime propaganda leaflets and the associated use of older style language and the southern dialect, are as follows:

- a. **Chieu Hoi Quan** – which were the ‘return centres’ used in the Vietnam War for Viet Cong to surrender / defect to the South, and then encourage others to also defect.
- b. **Phat Giac** – means ‘discover’, this is old language / southern dialect used on ADF/USA propaganda leaflets.
- c. **Tieu cu’c** and **tich cu’c** – mean ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ respectively. Used these words quite a lot with respect to propaganda.
- d. **Hu’u Co’** – means ‘organic’, there has been a notable increase in organic, healthy, hygienic food across Vietnam since my last LST. The Vietnamese seem to have finally realised the detrimental effects of using excessive pesticides / herbicides and there are now numerous large organic greenhouses developed in the Mekong Delta area. One local also told me they dislike importing fruit, vegetables and meat produce from China as they still use excessive sprays and hormones.
- e. **Tra Sen** – Special ‘Lotus Flower tea’, which I was served at my Tutor’s family’s house. It is very expensive and a Hanoi-only specialty.
- f. **Doi Quan Nghien Ngap** – means ‘Army of Addicts’, relating to a news article I translated regarding the levels of narcotics, stimulants and pharmaceutical pain relief used by the US forces during the Vietnam War, to both prepare for battle and increase aggression, as well as to counter physical and mental pain experienced afterwards.
- g. **Dong Bao** – means ‘citizens’ or ‘people’ – this is old language used on Northern propaganda posters.
- h. **Co Gai Mo’ Du’o’ng** – the women who opened / kept open / conducted traffic control on the secret mountain roads during the war, they featured on numerous

propaganda posters during the French Resistance and American War. Their contribution was also celebrated in the Women's Museum.

- i. **Thau thue, cu'o'ng bach, tai thu'o'ng, tu'o'ng thu'o'ng** – mean 'tax collection', 'force/compel', 'transport' and 'reward' respectively, according to my tutor all these terms are old / southern language, which were used on US / Australian propaganda leaflets that we translated together.
4. Contemporary words learnt during the LST related to activities in the South China Sea, as follows:
 - a. **"Thua nuoc duc tha cau"** – literally means "good fishing in troubled waters", which relates to Chinese activities to undermine stability in Vietnam, through a chain of various incidents, so that no-one realises their true intent / extent of their expansionist activities in the South China Sea – ie: a deflection tactic of sorts.
 - b. **Trung Hoa Dan Quoc** – is the ancient name for China.

Societal observations

5. As discussed in my Language Report of 2014, the relaxing of censorship, with everybody now freely using Facebook and other social media, was still prevalent. However, young people are still being arrested if they are seen criticising the government on social media.
6. Of note however, was the recent uprising and protests that occurred after the Chinese Government tried to convince the Vietnamese Government to block Google, Facebook and other social media sites in Vietnam.
7. My tutor informed me that numerous YouTube news videos are being created and posted from Viet Kieu living in USA, which she called "fake news" and added these videos were influenced by the Chinese. The videos have anti-government messaging and encourage criticism of Vietnamese policies and for Vietnamese citizens to migrate to the USA.
8. Compared to 2014, during this LST I noticed an increase in graffiti in both the north and south of Vietnam. Graffiti was previously rarely seen in the north and demonstrates the 'Westernisation' of younger people's attitudes and behaviours.
9. Hanoi has undergone an extensive makeover since my last LST in 2014. The road from airport was brand new and, along with the Old Quarter, had been cleaned up and there were numerous new tree plantings, gardens and green spaces. As part of the clean-up in the Old Quarter, much of the wire pollution had been removed, there were less beggars and country people allowed to come in during the day, and the government are moving residents out to reduce the demand on the infrastructure and to restore the historical buildings, repair the plumbing etc. The harassment gauntlet for tourists walking around the Old Quarter in days past was almost non-existent now. As mentioned, healthy/organic food options, food preparation and hygiene have also improved vastly through education and awareness.
10. The traffic also seem less congested and safer driving practices were observed. As mentioned in my PAR, the taxi industry had also been revamped with the use of the 'Grab' App and with Taxi and Xe Om drivers' use of GPS.
11. Unfortunately, Hoi An was unrecognisable from when I last visited in 2010. Numerous golf resorts have been developed along the coast between Da Nang and Hoi An,

predominantly by Korea, Japan and China. As a result, hundreds of tourists are bussed into Hoi An's old town every afternoon. Every street is lined with tourist buses and there is barely any room to walk down the streets for the people. These Asian tourists also pay top dollar and do not barter, which has created a high tourist economy, but on the bright side their presence has enforced the requirement for better food hygiene, cleanliness, and improved facilities.

12. On Wednesday, 08 Aug 18, I met my tutor's uncle, COL Long Nguyen (Retd,) who had written numerous strategy & history books as an army officer and political staffer. After the American War, he had deployed to Cambodia and the Northern Border region with China and had also studied for four years in the USSR between 1984-1988. During this meeting, he discussed the reasons why he thought the US Forces had lost the war in Vietnam, such as drug use, unfamiliarity with jungle warfare, no strategy, not well trained, and not as good as the Vietnamese in fighting at night time.

13. On 18 Aug 18, I met with Robert Stevens, an ex RAAF helicopter crewman Vietnam Veteran, who now lives in Vung Tau. He passed on a couple of maps and some business cards showing the new ferry terminals, ferry booking details, and other local businesses of interest to any ADF or NZDF members or veterans planning a trip to the ANZAC battlefield locations around Long Tan, Nui Dat, Ba Ria etc. These products are attached at Annex A.

14. **Location and Type of accommodation:** Accommodation was a variety of three or four star hotels throughout Vietnam, IAW the itinerary contained at Annex B and within the expenditure guidelines of the LST. Most of the hotels were of good quality and service with only a few minor issues such as; an unpalatable, unhygienic breakfast service in Hoi An and extortionate laundry prices in Hanoi and HCMC. The locations of the accommodation were as follows:

- a. **Hanoi:** Hanoi Lenid Hotel, 54 Tho Nhuom Street, Hoan Kiem District.
- b. **Hoi An:** Royal Riverside Hotel, 40 Nguyen Du Street, Cam Pho.
- c. **HCMC:** Paradise Saigon Boutique Hotel, 288 Le Thanh Thon Street, District 1.

15. **Movements.** Movements were conducted throughout Vietnam IAW the itinerary. Daily travel to and from Educap was made either by taxi or private vehicle provided by EDUCAP to attend the field trips. Vietnam has significantly cleaned up its taxi and xe om services since 2014. All drivers now have GPS and, using a local sim card, everybody now uses the 'Grab' app, which books you either a taxi or xe om driver (like Uber), with an agreed fare before they pick you up. Unlike Uber, you can still pay the Grab drivers in cash at the end of your journey, instead of providing credit card details. I booked one internal domestic flight from Hanoi to Hoi An in order to save time, money and ensure my safety. My international flights with Singapore Airlines, booked by ITS, were all significantly late, suffered breakdowns and served disgusting food.

16. **Communications.** I opted instead to use global roaming on my Australian phone for AUD\$5 per day. This service was invaluable for: checking GPS locations and routes, researching Vietnamese news, planning and booking activities, for translation assistance, and because most Vietnamese prefer WhatsApp or Facebook chat for messaging. I did not purchase a Vietnamese SIM card for this LST, so had to rely on friends or locals to book me rides using the Grab app.

17. Recommendations

- a. The use of my travel agent, Mrs Phuong Nguyen of Custom Vietnam Travel, is highly recommended for Vietnamese LST members. Her team are able to book all aspects of domestic flights, surface travel, accommodation, and tours with the most competitive prices, flexible conditions, using reputable suppliers and with the provision of up-to-date travel and security advice. She is also able to combine accommodation and travel costs into individual invoices (in AUD) for Defence MasterCard payment, for ease of acquittals.
- b. Members should avoid using WIFI in Vietnam on their personal devices.
- c. Purchase of a Vietnamese SIM card is recommended so members can access the 'Grab' App.

Conclusion

18. Overall, the LST was a worthwhile experience in refreshing my practical language skills, cultural understanding and assisted me greatly in assessing wartime propaganda effectiveness for my research next year. However, this year I felt I could not immerse into the language and culture in as much detail, due to the shortened time of LST and an inexperienced tutor, compared with 2014. For the most part, I found the locals open, friendly, and willing to discuss a wide range of topics, which are unable to be learnt by formal means.

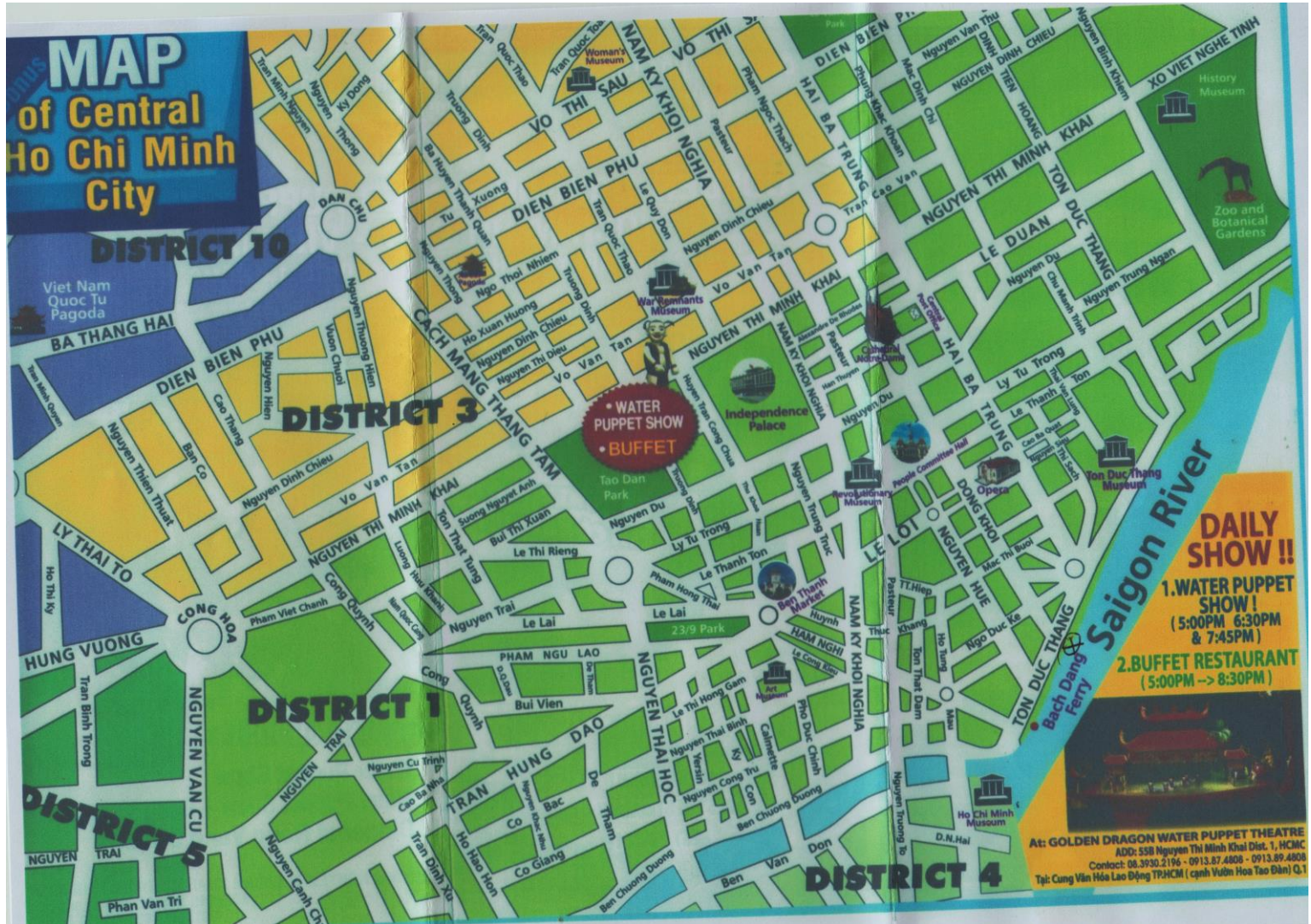
CLB

10 September 2018

ANNEX A TO
LST LANGUAGE REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2018



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SEPTEMBER 2018



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LST LANGUAGE REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2018

GIỜ KHỞI HÀNH

TP.HCM - Vũng Tàu : 8:00 - 9:00 - 10:00 - 11:00 - 12:00 - 14:00 - 16:00
 Vũng Tàu - TP.HCM : 8:00 - 10:00 - 11:00 - 12:00 - 13:00 - 14:00 - 15:00 - 16:00
 TP.HCM - Cần Giờ : 8:00 - 12:00
 Cần Giờ - TP.HCM : 8:30 - 14:30
 Cần Giờ - Vũng Tàu : 9:30 - 13:30
 Vũng Tàu - Cần Giờ : 8:00 - 14:00
 Vũng Tàu - Bến Tre : 15:30
 Bến Tre - Vũng Tàu : 7:00

* Lịch tàu có thể thay đổi tùy theo điều kiện thời tiết

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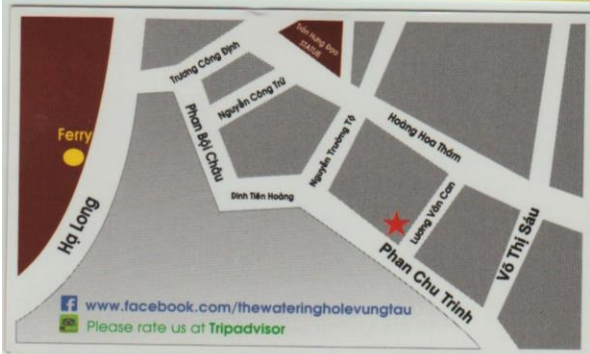
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