เสียงวรรณยุกต์ในภาษาเวียดนามของคนไทยเชื้อสายเวียดนาม (เวียดเกี่ยว) ในจังหวัดมุกดาหาร[*]

พัชรพงษ์ ภูเบศรพีรวัส[**]

บทคัดย่อ

        จังหวัดมุกดาหารเป็นหนึ่งจังหวัดที่มีชาวไทยเชื้อสายเวียดนามอาศัยอยู่เป็นจำนวนมาก นอกจากนี้ จังหวัดมุกดาหารยังตั้งอยู่ในจุดยุทธศาสตร์ที่สำคัญในภูมิภาคอาเซียนและอนุภูมิภาคลุ่มน้ำโขง ส่งผลให้จังหวัดมุกดาหารมีความหลากหลายทางชาติพันธุ์และความหลากหลายทางด้านภาษา ภาษาเวียดนามเป็นหนึ่งในภาษาที่ถูกใช้กันอย่างกว้างขวาง โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งในเขตเทศเมืองมุกดาหารซึ่งมีชาวไทยเชื้อสายเวียดนามอาศัยอยู่ ทั้งนี้ ชาวเวียดนาม (เวียด เกี่ยว) เข้ามาตั้งถิ่นฐานในจังหวัดมุกดาหารตั้งแต่ช่วงกลางศตวรรษที่ 20 ถึงแม้จะผ่านมาแล้วกว่า 70 ปีแต่ชาวไทยเชื้อสายเวียดนามจังหวัดมุกดาหารยังคงรักษาอัตลักษณ์ความเป็นเวียดนามไว้ได้อย่างเหนียวแน่น โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งการใช้ภาษาเวียดนาม บทความมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาระบบเสียงวรรณยุกต์ในภาษาเวียดนามของคนไทยเชื้อสายเวียดนาม (เวียด เกี่ยว) ในจังหวัดมุกดาหาร โดยเก็บข้อมูลจากการบันทึกเสียงจากผู้บอกภาษาจำนวน 16 คน ซึ่งผู้บอกภาษาจะอ่านคำศัพท์ที่ปรากฏวรรณยุกต์ในภาษาเวียดนาม ผ่านโครงสร้างของพยางค์ทั้ง 4 รูปแบบ ได้แก่ พยางค์เปิด พยางค์กึ่งเปิด พยางค์กึ่งปิด และพยางค์ปิด จากนั้นวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลด้วยโปรแกรม Praat ผลการศึกษาพบว่าระบบเสียงวรรณยุกต์ในภาษาเวียดนามของคนไทยเชื้อสายเวียดนาม (เวียด เกี่ยว) ในจังหวัดมุกดาหารปรากฏเสียงวรรณยุกต์ทั้งสิ้น 5 หน่วยเสียง ได้แก่ (1) Ngang [34] (2) Huyền [32] (3) Ngã [325] (4) Sắc [25] และ (5) Nặng [31]. ขณะเดียวกัน จากผลการเปรียบเทียบกับระบบเสียงวรรณยุกต์ในภาษาเวียดนาม (สำเนียงฮานอย) ซึ่งปรากฏหน่วยเสียงวรรณยุกต์ 6 เสียงพบว่า ในระบบเสียงวรรณยุกต์ภาษาเวียดนามที่จังหวัดมุกดาหารไม่ปรากฏหน่วยเสียงวรรณยุกต์ Hỏi เสียงวรรณยุกต์ Hỏิ ที่จังหวัดมุกดาหารมีลักษณะเดียวกับหน่วยเสียงวรรณยุกต์ Nặng [31]

        คำสำคัญ: วรรณยุกต์ภาษาเวียดนาม, ภาษาเวียดนาม, ภาษาเวียดนามมุกดาหาร

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    [*]บทความนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของงานวิจัยเรื่องเสียงวรรณยุกต์ในภาษาเวียดนามของคนไทยเชื้อสายเวียดนาม (เวียดเกี่ยว) ในจังหวัดมุกดาหาร สาขาภาษาศาสตร์สาขาวิชาภาษาศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยสังคมศาสตร์และมนุษยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยแห่งชาติ ณ กรุงฮานอย ประเทศเวียดนาม .

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Vietnamese Tones Syetem of The Viet Kieu in Mukdahan, Thailand.

Phatcharaphong Phubetpeerawat[*]

Abstract

Mukdahan is a province in Thailand where the numerous number of Vietnamese-Thai people live in. Plus, Mukdahan' s location is a reginal (considering Asean and Greater Mekong Subregion) strategic area so, the varieties of ethnic and language are located in this province. Vietnamese language is a spoken-wide language in this province especially in the municipality area where the Vietnamese-Thai people largely reside. In this regard, Viet Kieu people migrated to Mukdahan province since the mid of CD 20. Despite 70 years of residence, they remain their identity tightly especially their language. This article aims to study the tones system of Vietnamese language spoken by the Vietnamese-Thai people (Viet Kieu) in Mukdahan province. The data was collected by recording voices from 16 participants who read the provided Vietnamese vocabularies containing tone marks with 4 different patterns of syllable including: opened-syllable, semi-opened syllable, semi-closed syllable and closed syllable. Analyzation by using Praat. The findings present that there are 5 tones spoken among the Vietnamese-Thai people in Mukdahan province including: (1) Ngang [34] (2) Huyền [32] (3) Ngã [325] (4) Sắc [25] and (5) Nặng [31]. In the meantime, comparing with Vietnamese language tones (Hanoi dialect) containing 6 tones, Hỏi tone is not existsted among the Vietnamese-Thai people in Mukdahan province since it is changed to Nặng [31] sound.

Keywords: Vietnamese tones, Vietnamese, Vietnamese in Mukdahan.

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1. Introduction

Mukdahan province is one of the places with the largest Viet Kieu community in Thailand. Most of the Viet Kieu herein have come from the central provinces of Vietnam, especially from Thua Thien Hue, Quang Tri and Quang Binh. In the years of 1945-1946, due to the foreign invaders' cruelty which made millions of Vietnamese people suffer from starvation, a large number of Vietnamese people had to emigrate to foreign countries to save their lives, especially emigrating to Laos and the Northeastern Thailand. After settling in a new land, from the very beginning, the Viet Kieu gathered together to share and help each other. The Viet Kieu in Thailand have established a Vietnamese language education system with many subjects in the Viet Kieu community throughout Thailand. This event was a part of the Mass Education Movement and followed the illiteracy elimination campaign of the President Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam after Vietnam was established. This had a positive impact not only in the country but also in all the Viet Kieu communities in foreign countries, especially in Laos and Thailand in general and Mukdahan province in particular, which helped Vietnamese language exist in foreign countries until now. Therefore, the Viet Kieu community in Mukdahan is considered one of the bilingual communities in Thailand and a dialect group of Vietnamese language.

Vietnamese language is a member of the Isolating Language Group. The characteristics of the isolating language are that syllable is a unit with a very large role, the tone of a word can change its meaning, the pronunciation is separate, the writing is also separate due to the separation of syllables. Therefore, tones are an important component in Vietnamese syllables because its variation will change the meaning of word. Vietnamese tones are a metaphysical unit and have their own characteristics, and the study of the tone system in Vietnamese language of the Viet Kieu is a matter of concern because it is faced with impact and influence of other linguistic communities to survive.

The syllable structure in Vietnamese has 3 main components including beginning consonants, tones and rhymes. According to the viewpoint of Prof. Cao Xuan Hao, "The tones are a metaphysical unit with two distinctive features including the pitch (high and low, also known as treble and bass) and intonation (flat and non-flat) [Cao Xuan Hao, 2003, p.35]. Similarly, Prof. Doan Thien Thuat also said that "The tones are a metaphysical phoneme in the whole syllable, or more accurately in the whole tonal part of syllable (including beginning sound, middle sound, main sound and ending sound) [Doan Thien Thuat, 2016, p.73]. At the same time, Prof. Hoang Thi Chau also had a view on the function of tones in Vietnamese language that "The tones are a metaphysical unit which covers the whole syllable or at least the rhyme of the syllable. The tones in Southeast Asian languages have phonological functions, and are used to distinguish meanings" (Hoang Thi Chau, 2008, p.201).

Therefore, based on the above viewpoints, it can be summarized that the tones are a metaphysical unit whose important function is to distinguish the meaning of a syllable. For example, the meaning of "Ta" is different from that of "Tả" and "Tạ" thanks to the appearance of "thanh hỏi" and "thanh nặng" that change the meaning of the syllable.

2. The criteria for differentiating the characteristics of tones in Vietnamese language   In

the past, to classify and differentiate the characteristics in Vietnamese, traditional linguists often based on two criteria: *intonation* and *pitch*.

Intonation is the variation of a variable contour of frequency during the pronunciation of a syllable (F0 value). The variable contour of tones in Vietnamese is divided into two groups which are known with the terms: "Flat/ Bằng" and "Non-flat/ Trắc". The tones belonging to the flat intonation have a variable contour which is flat from beginning to ending when pronouncing a syllable, including "Flat, high tone" (thanh ngang) and "Flat, low tone" (thanh huyền). In contrast, the tones belonging to the non-flat intonation have a non-flat variable contour when pronouncing a syllable, including "Non-flat, low falling-raising tone" (thanh hỏi), "Non-flat, high falling-raising tone" (thanh ngã), "Non-flat, high raising tone" (thanh sắc), and "Non-flat, low falling tone" (thanh nặng). Sometimes, the variable contour is broken during the pronunciation, for example, "Non-flat, low falling-raising tone" (thanh hỏi) and "Non-flat, high falling-raising tone" (thanh ngã) are the most obvious examples of a broken variable contour. And the other tones which have the non-broken variable contours when pronounced are "Non-flat, high raising tone" (thanh sắc) and "Non-flat, low falling tone" (thanh nặng).

Pitch is the pitch of the process of pronouncing the tone of a syllable. Different pitches make the difference among the tones. The pitch can be divided into two groups: The high pitch, also called the treble, consists of "Flat, high tone" (thanh ngang), "Non-flat, high falling-raising tone" (thanh ngã), and "Non-flat, high raising tone" (thanh sắc). The low pitch, also called the bass, includes "Flat, low tone" (thanh huyền), "Non-flat, low falling-raising tone" (thanh hỏi) and "Non-flat, low falling tone" (thanh nặng).

Based on the criteria for differentiating the tones in Vietnamese, it is possible to make a diagram to differentiate the tones in Vietnamese as follows:
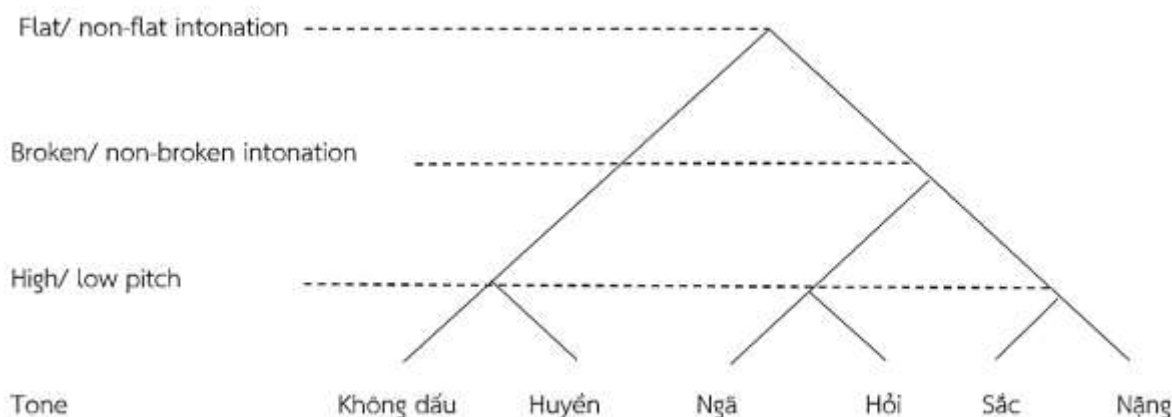

Figure 1. Diagram of criteria for differentiating the tones in Vietnamese (Doan Thien Thuat, 2016, p.76).

At the same time, according to the traditional phonics, the tones are divided in more detail, that is, there are two more tones: "Joining and non-flat, high raising tone" (sắc nhập) and "Joining and non-flat, low falling tone" (nặng nhập) based on two criteria: (1) The distribution of tones in the rhymes in the traditional genres of poetry in Vietnamese and the reduplicative word formation in Vietnamese; (2) The variation of tone contours. For "Joining and non-flat, high raising tone" (sắc nhập) and "Joining and non-flat, low falling tone" (nặng nhập), their contour at the end when pronouncing a syllable will end suddenly, which makes the syllable shortened, and often occur when the syllable ends with the voiceless plosive ending consonants /-p, -t, -k/.

Intonation / Pitch	Flat	Non-flat		
		Ascending (Thượng)	Removing (Khứ)	Joining (Nhập)
Treble/ High	Flat - high "Flat, high tone" (thanh ngang)	Ascending - high "Non-flat, low falling-raising tone" (thanh hỏi)	Removing - High "Non-flat, high raising tone" (thanh sắc)	Joining – high "Joining and non-flat, high raising tone" (thanh sắc nhập) Voiceless ending consonant
Bass/ Low	Flat - low "Flat, low tone" (thanh huyền)	Ascending – low "Non-flat, high falling-raising tone" (thanh ngã)	Removing - Low "Non-flat, low falling tone" (thanh nặng)	Joining – low "Joining and non-flat, low falling tone" (thanh nặng nhập) Voiceless ending consonant

Table 1. Classification of tones in Vietnamese according to traditional phonics (Ta Thanh Tan, 2014, p.96)

Prof. Nguyen Van Loi and Edmondson (1997) carried out a research on intonation, pitch and voice quality of the tone system in Vietnamese (Northern dialect) by using the speech analysis program called CECIL for Windows. Based on the research results, Prof. Nguyen Van Loi and Edmondson said that "Voice quality is the result of configuration of speaker's vocal cord during the speech production" [Ta Thanh Tan, 2014, p.101]. Therefore, voice quality is also one of the important criteria used for analyzing tones in Vietnamese, in addition to analyzing by intonation and pitch.

Voice quality: each tone brings different characteristics of voice quality. According to the research results of Thompson (1985), **"thanh ngang"** is a gentle tone without any stress when pronounced; **"thanh huyền"** is often accompanied by breathing sounds when pronounced; **"thanh hỏi"** is the tone which has a

short ending when pronounced and is difficult to grasp in a quick speech; "**thanh ngã**" has a tense and vibrating sound of vocal cords, and while paying attention when pronounced, the voice will be interrupted abruptly (glottal stop); "**thanh sắc**" is the highest tone and is stressed most strongly in the pronunciation process; and "**thanh nặng**" is the tone that ends nearly similar to thanh huyền but does not have a sigh when pronounced like thanh huyền, and ends with glottal stop [Thompson, 1985, p.40-41].

Therefore, according to the new research direction, identifying and classifying the tones in Vietnamese must be based on three criteria:

(1) **Contour is the variation of F0 value (Pitch)** during the syllable-pronouncing process.

(2) **Voice quality** is a concept of perceptive aspect, corresponding to the concept of vocalization type, that is, vibration form of vocal cords to create different types of voice quality.

(3) **Pitch Level** is the pitch area in which a tone appears, calculated from the lowest point to the highest point. The appearance of tones is within the scale of five pitch levels as divided by the International Phonetic Association, including: Low pitch is recorded [1]; Slightly-low pitch is recorded [2]; Medium pitch is recorded [3]; Slightly-high pitch is recorded [4]; High pitch is recorded [5].
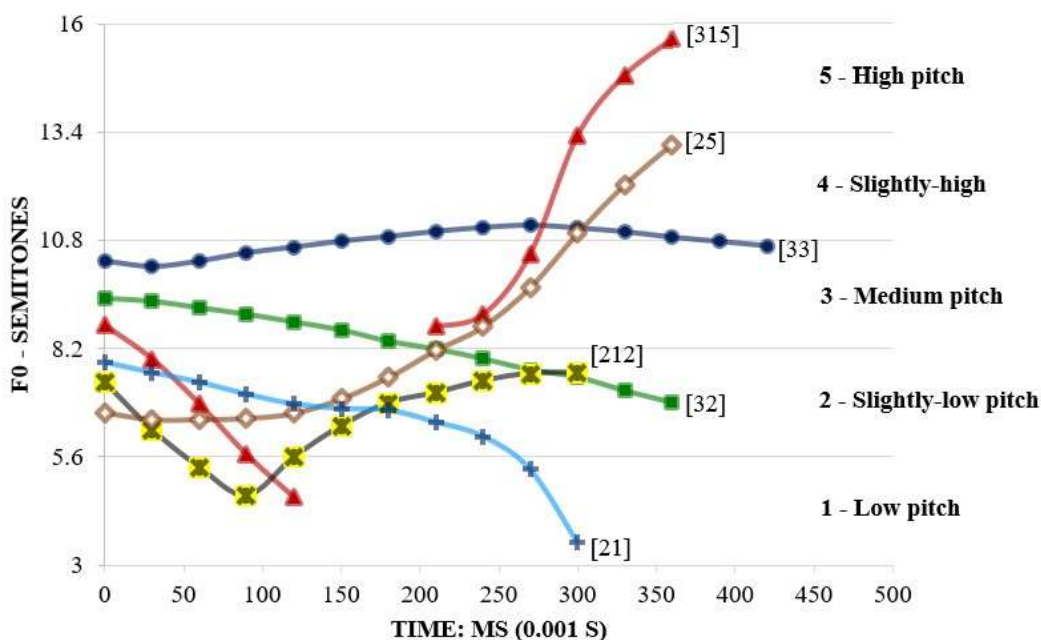

Figure 2. The appearance of 6 tones in Hanoi dialect is within the scale of five pitch levels as divided by the IPA.

3. The researches on the tone system of Vietnamese language in Thailand

Phatcharaphong Phubetpeerawat (2014) carried out a research on Vietnamese phonetics in the master's course with the topic *"Surveying the Vietnamese phonetic system of Thai people of Vietnamese descent in Muang district, Nakhon Phanom province (related to Vietnamese language in Vietnam)"*. The

research results showed that Vietnamese language of Thai people of Vietnamese descent in Muang district, Nakhon Phanom province, Thailand had 6 tones: *thanh ngang, thanh huyền, thanh ngã, thanh hỏi, thanh sắc* and *thanh nặng*. The results of comparing the Vietnamese phonetic system in Muang district, Nakhon Phanom province with the Vietnamese language in Vietnam (Hanoi dialect and Nghe Tinh dialect) showed that most of the phonetic features in the Nghe Tinh dialect appeared in the Vietnamese phonetic system in Muang district, Nakhon Phanom province. The elderly people speaking the Central dialect pronounced *Thanh ngã* coincided with *Thanh nặng*, while the middle-aged people and the young people tended to pronounce *Thanh ngã* coincided with *Thanh sắc*.

Chalermchai Chaichompoo (2005) studied the variation of Vietnamese language in Thailand with the topic "*Varation of Vietnamese in the Northeast of Thailand*". The research results of Chalermchai showed that the Vietnamese language used in the Northeast of Thailand included two dialects: The Northern dialect and the Central dialect. The number of people speaking the Central dialect was more than the ones speaking the Northern dialect. Elderly people speaking the Northern dialect still pronounced correctly the characteristics of 6 tones in Vietnamese language while the speakers of the Central dialect only pronounced 5 tones, *Thanh ngã* coincided with *Thanh hỏi*.

Woraya Som-Indra (2003) carried out a research on Vietnamese language in Nakhon Phanom province in her master's thesis at Mahidol University with the topic: "*A Phonological study of the Vietnamese dialect as spoken at Na Jok village, Nong Yat subdistrict, Muang district, Nakhon Phanom Province*". The research results showed that the beginning consonants in Vietnamese language in Na Jok village had 5 tones including *thanh ngang, thanh huyền, thanh sắc, thanh hỏi* and *thanh nặng*. The results compared with the Vietnamese phonetic system in Vietnam showed that the phonetic system here was completely similar to Vietnamese language in Vietnam, and Na Jok voice was more similar to the Vietnamese pronunciation in Watsrithep community and the Southern dialect than other dialects.

4. Research purpose

The research purpose of this paper to describe the Vietnamese tone system in Mukdahan, Thailand.

5. Research subject

The research subject of this scientific paper is the Vietnamese tone system in Mukdahan, Thailand.

6. Research methods

This research paper has used the following research methods in the research process:

(1) Method of searching and summarizing documents related to the research topic. Then create a word list for recording with all the tones in Vietnamese through 4 types of syllables: open syllables, half-open syllables, half-closed syllables and closed syllables.

(2) Fieldwork method for direct recording from the participants who are the Viet Kieu in Mukdahan, Thailand: a total of 16 participants are divided into 4 groups by age: Group I: the elderly (60 years old and older). Group II: middle-aged people (40-59 years old). Group III: the youth (20-39 years old). Group IV: teenagers (under 20 years old). Each group consists of 4 participants (2 men and 2 women). During the recording process, ZOOM H2 audio recorder with high quality has been used, the recording file has the sample size of 22,050 Hz, 16-bits with the WAV file format, then is analyzed with Praat program (version: 6.0.50).

(3) Descriptive method is to describe the characteristics of tones in Vietnamese of the Viet Kieu in Mukdahan, Thailand.

7. Research results

The Vietnamese language of the Viet Kieu in Mukdahan, Thailand appears 5 tones including; thanh ngang [34], thanh huyền [32], thanh ngã [325], thanh sắc [25] and thanh nặng [31]. Each tone has the following characteristics:

***Thanh ngang* [34]** Thanh ngang in the Vietnamese language of the Viet Kieu in Mukdahan, especially in the Group I and Group II, has the same variable contour, i.e., the contour is flat but goes up slightly when ending. In the Group III and Group IV, the intonation of thanh ngang is quite flat and unchanged until the end, which is different from Group I and Group II. It can be said that thanh ngang in Vietnamese herein is a high-pitched tone, rising contour (in Group I & II) /level contour (in Group III & IV), has a modal voice quality, sound spectrums and sound waves with regular cycles and average volume. Thanh ngang in Group I and Group II is recorded [34], but in Group III and Group IV is recorded [33], according to the tone division in the 5-level scale of the International Phonetic Association.
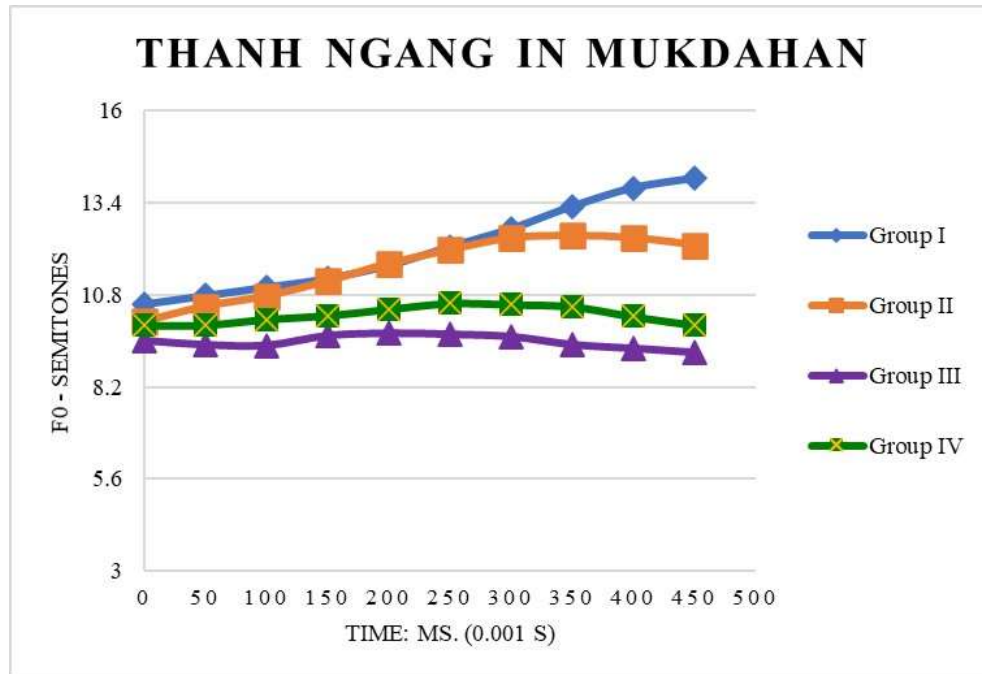
Figure 3. F0 chart of "thanh ngang" in Mukdahan.

Thanh huyền) **[32]** Thanh huyền in the Vietnamese tones system in Mukdahan is low-pitched tone, falling contour and has a slack voice quality. Thanh huyền of the Viet Kieu starts from the medium pitch level. Its contour slightly goes down and ends at a low pitch level. Thanh huyền has a common characteristic among the participant groups as described, and is recorded [32] according to the tone classification in the 5-level scale of the International Phonetic Association.
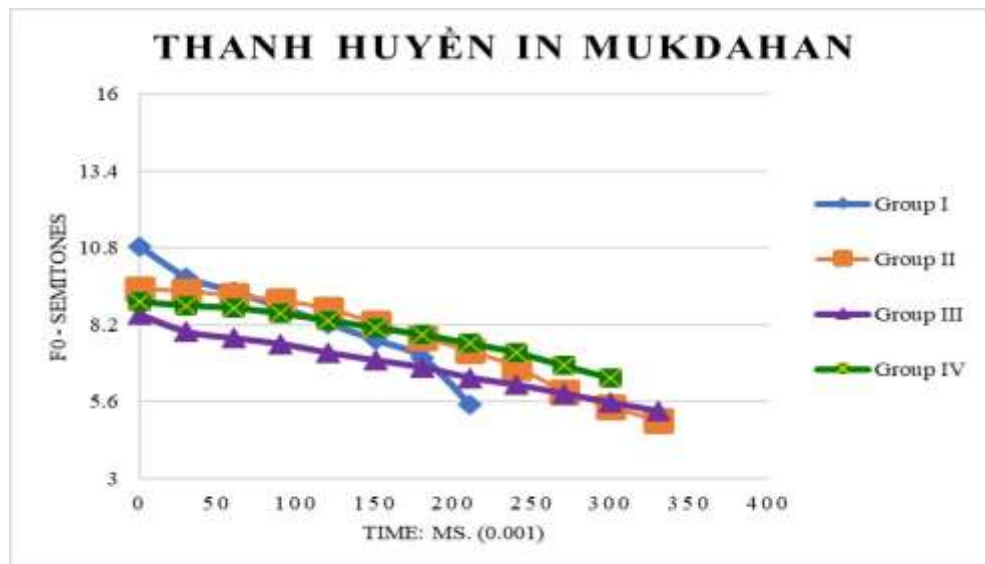

Figure 4. F0 chart of "Flat, low tone" (thanh huyền) in Mukdahan.

Thanh ngã **[325]**

Thanh ngã is high-pitched tone, falling-raising contour and has creaky voice quality. Thanh ngã starts from the medium pitch level, then falls down strongly, has the creaky sound in the middle of the syllable which makes the contour broken. Then it raises high and ends at the highest pitch level, and is recorded [325] according to the tone classification in the 5-level scale of the International Phonetic Association. The creaky sound is considered the criteria to differentiate the characteristics between thanh ngã and thanh sắc.
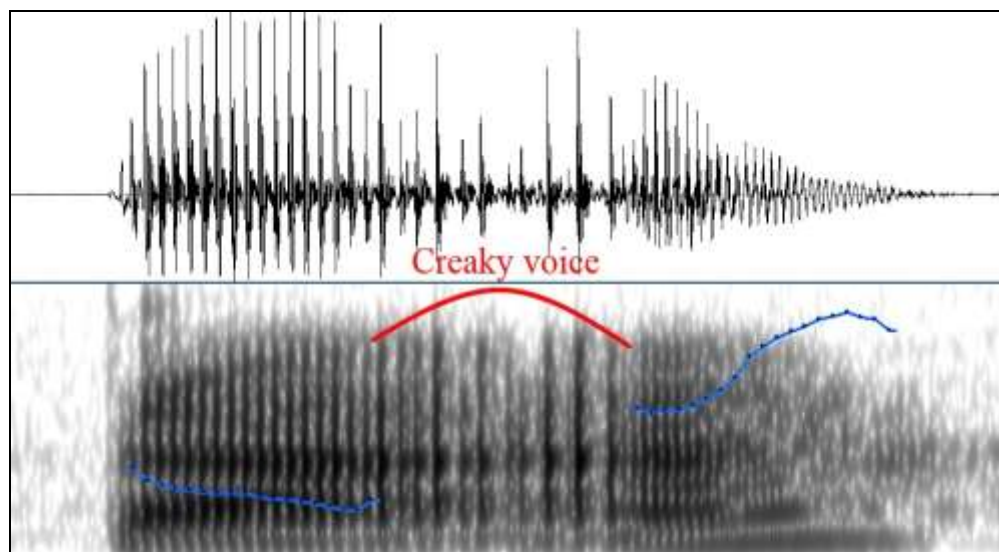

Figure 5. Spectrum and pitch contour of "thanh ngã" in Mukdahan.

However, in the Group III and Group IV, representing the youth and teenagers, there is a pronunciation trend turning thanh ngã into thanh sắc. Because thanh ngã is a tone difficult to pronounce, and Vietnamese language for the young generation is not their mother tongue; therefore, when they pronounce, thanh ngã is simplified and turned into thanh sắc. In the future, this trend may increase especially in the new generation of Viet Kieu.
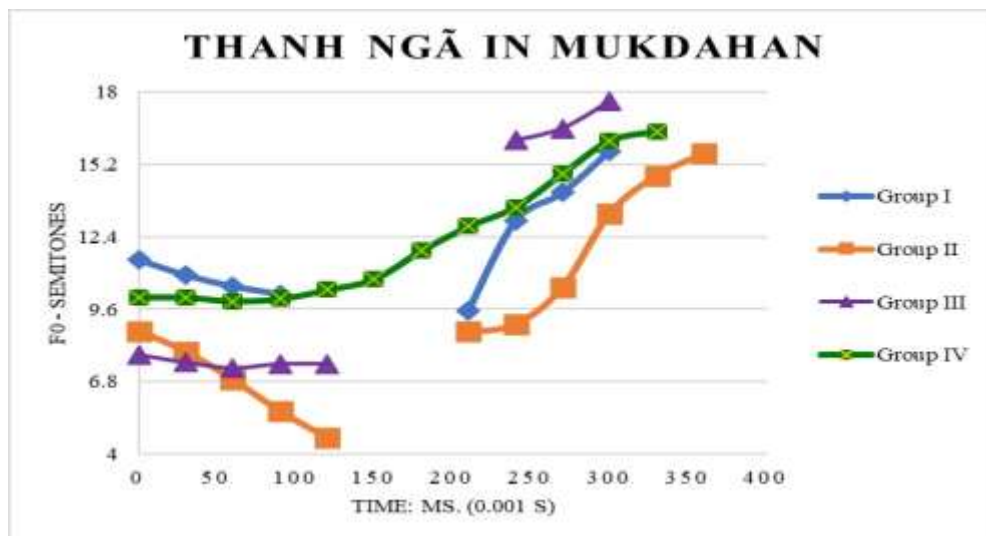
Figure 6. F0 chart of "Non-flat, high falling-raising tone" (thanh ngã) in Mukdahan.

Thanh sắc [25]

In the Vietnamese language of the Viet Kieu in Mukdahan, thanh sắc has common characteristics among the participant groups. Thanh sắc starts at the lowest pitch level compared to the starting point of the other tones. Its variable contour is equal in a short distance of about ¼ syllable, then smoothly goes up and ends at the high pitch level like thanh ngã. Thanh sắc in Mukdahan is high-pitched tone, raising contour and has modal voice quality. According to the tone classification in the 5-level scale of the International Phonetic Association, thanh sắc in Mudahan is recorded [25].
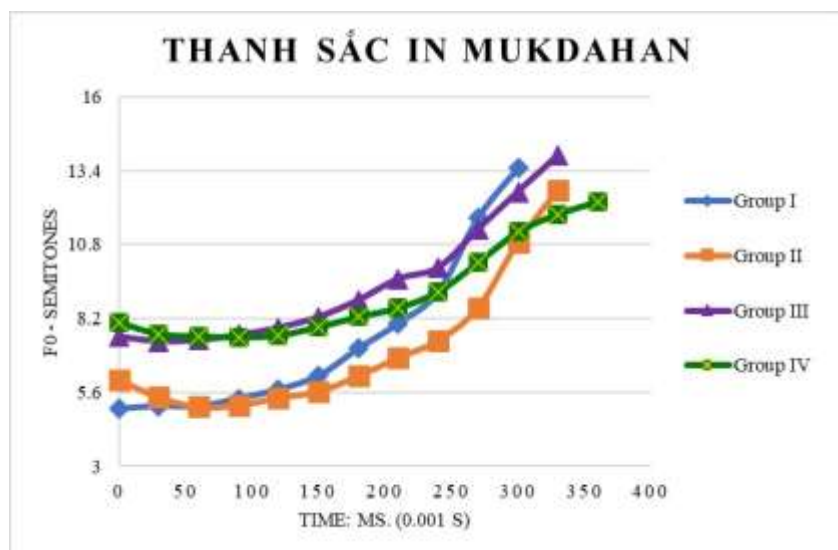

Figure 7. F0 chart of "Non-flat, high raising tone" (thanh sắc) in Mukdahan.

Thanh nặng [31]

Thanh nặng is a low-pitched tone, falling contour and has glottal stop voice quality. Thanh nặng starts at medium pitch level; its contour goes down slightly or goes flatly, then slopes down sharply at the ending part of the syllable, and ends at the low pitch level with the phenomenon of glottal stop at the end of the syllable. Thus, thanh nặng is different from thanh huyền in voice quality. According to the tone classification in the 5-level scale of the International Phonetic Association, thanh nặng in Mudahan is recorded [31].
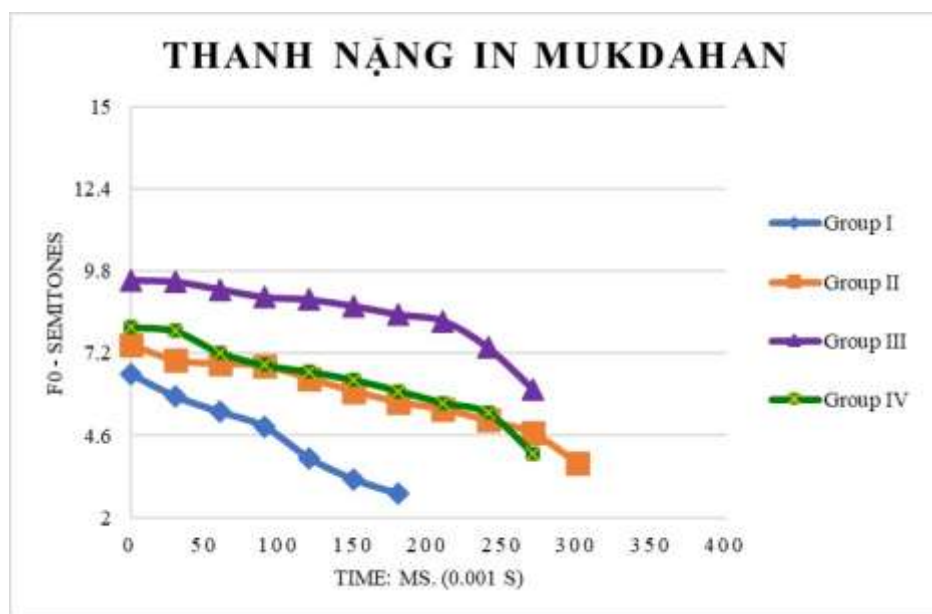

Figure 8. F0 chart of "Non-flat, low falling tone" (thanh nặng) in Mukdahan.

For thanh hỏi is one of the tones that has the complicated movements and is paid attention when analyzing and studying the phonetic system of a certain dialect in Vietnamese. Thanh hỏi is a low-pitched tone, falling-raising contour and has creaky voice quality. Thanh hỏi in Hanoi dialect has a low falling contour right from the starting point. In the middle of the syllable, its direction changes to raise high and ends at the same pitch as the starting point. In Hanoi tones, is recorded [323].

But in Vietnamese tones in Mukdahan, thanh hỏi starts at the medium pitch level. Its variable contour falling down and ends at the lowest pitch; at the end of the syllable, there is a glottal stop sound like thanh nặng, and it is recorded [31] according to the tone classification in the 5-level scale of the International Phonetic Association. It is possible to say thanh hỏi is turned into thanh nặng is clearly showed in Vietnamese in Mukdahan.
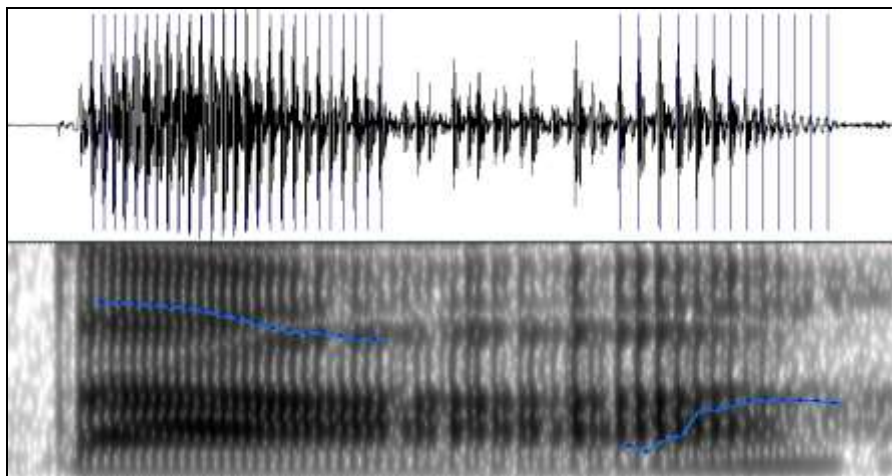
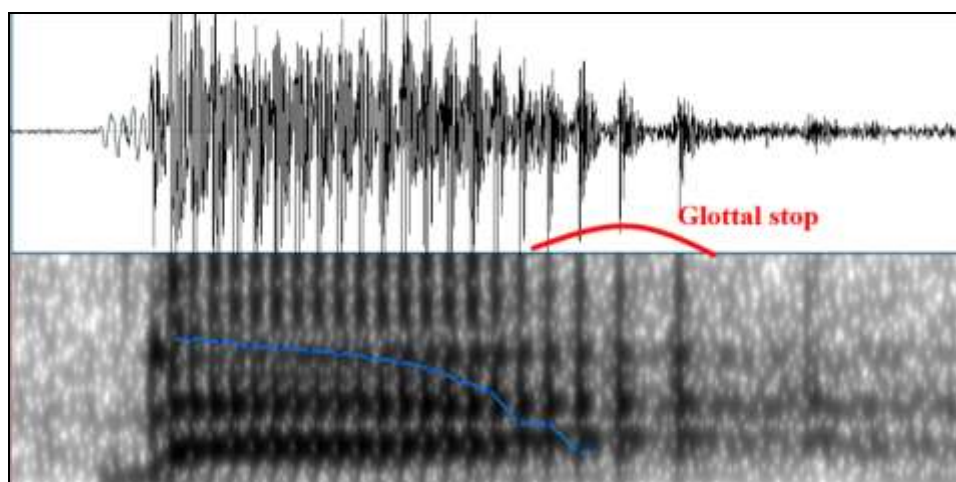**Figure 9.** Spectrum and pitch contour of "thanh hỏi" in Hanoi dialect.

Figure 10. Spectrum and pitch contour of "thanh hỏi" in Mukdahan.
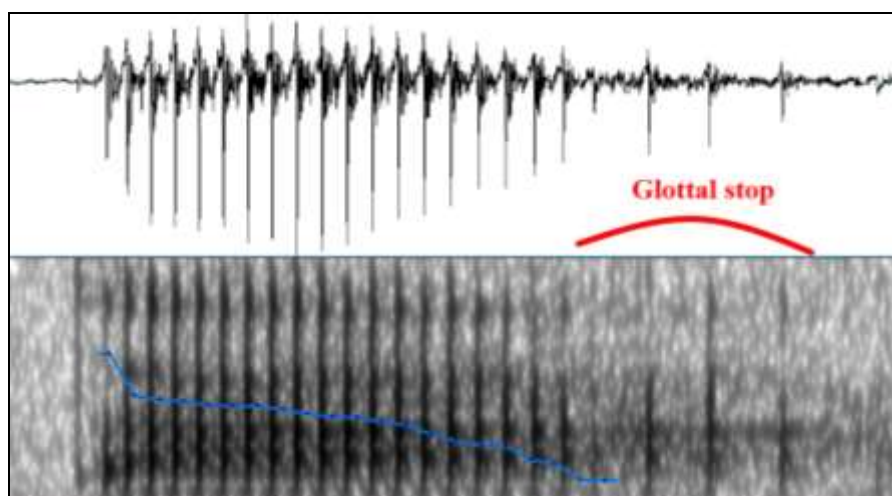

Figure 11. Spectrum and pitch contour of "thanh nặng" in Mukdahan.

However, some participants of Group III and Group IV are able to correctly pronounce the characteristics of thanh hỏi, which makes the characteristics of thanh hỏi different from those of Group I and Group II. Although the youth and teenagers know and learn Vietnamese in accordance with the standards of all-people Vietnamese (Hanoi dialect), the local dialect of their parents and grandparents still has a great impact on them. Therefore, some of the youth and teenagers still pronounce thanh hỏi like the pronunciation of their parents and grandparents due to the influence of the local dialect. Some of them pronounce thanh hỏi under the standards of all-people Vietnamese language (Hanoi dialect) due to their exposure through literary language. Therefore, it can be said that in the generation of the youth and teenagers, thanh hỏi has a trend to integrate with the characteristics of thanh hỏi in all-people Vietnamese language (Hanoi dialect).
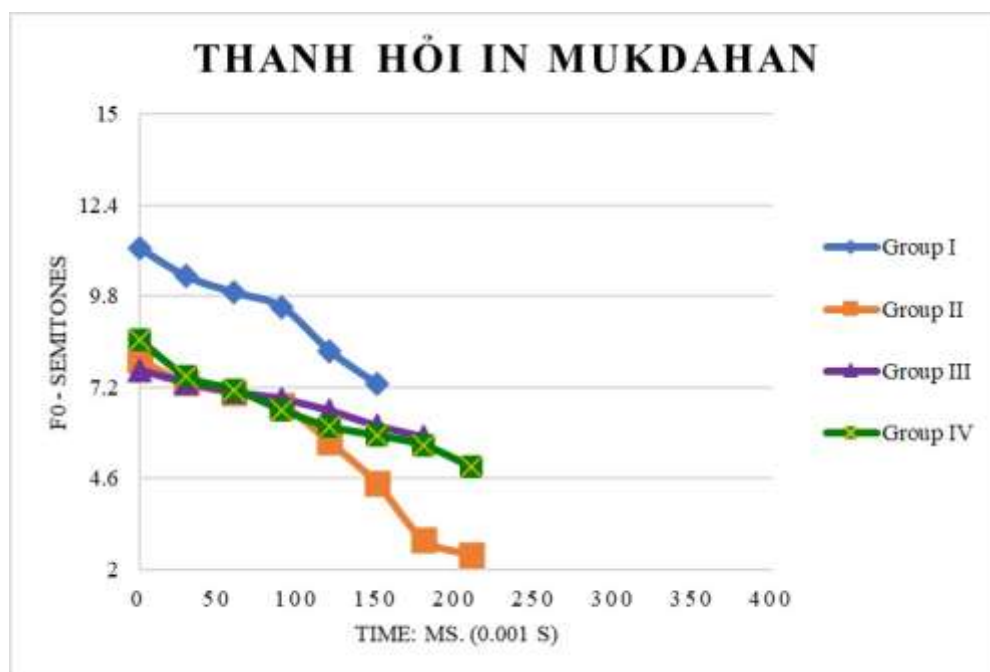

Figure 12. F0 chart of thanh hỏi in Mukdahan.

Regarding the criteria of pitch, there is an opposition between high-pitched tones and low-pitched tones. The high-pitched tones consist of *thanh ngang, thanh ngã, thanh sắc.* The low-pitched tones include *thanh huyền, thanh nặng*.

The voice quality is the criteria to identify and differentiate the characteristics of tones. (1) Modal voice quality often appears in *thanh ngang* and *thanh sắc*. (2) Slack voice quality appears in *thanh huyền*. (3) Creaky voice quality appears in *thanh ngã*, and differentiates the characteristics between thanh ngã and thanh sắc. (4) Voice quality of glottal stop at the end of the syllable is shown in *thanh nặng*.

Tones	Pitch		Voice quality	Recorded in the 5-level scale
	Contour	Pitch level		
"Ngang"	Level	High	Modal	34
"Huyền"	Falling	Low	Slack	32
"Ngã"	Falling-raising	High	Creaky	325
"Sắc"	Raising	High	Modal	25
"Nặng & Hỏi"	Falling	Low	Glottal stop	31

Table 2. Phonological characteristics of Vietnamese tone system of the Viet Kieu in Mukdahan, Thailand.
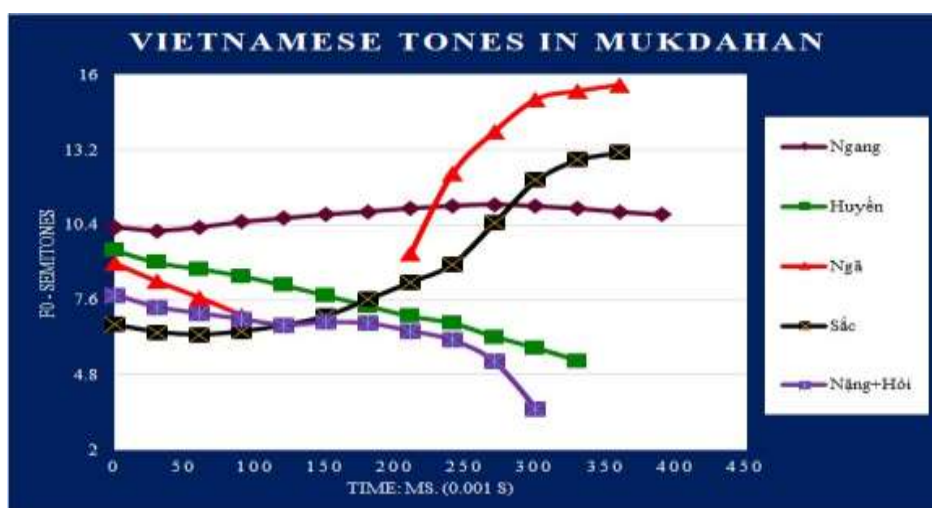

Figure 13. F0 chart of Vietnamese tones in Mukdahan.

8. Discussion and conclusion

James P. Kirby (2011) in his research on "Vietnamese (Hanoi Vietnamese)" said that the tones system in the Hanoi dialect had 6 tones including: *A1-Ngang* is level tone, has modal voice quality. *A2-Huyền* is mid falling tone, breathy voice quality. *C2-Ngã* is broken tone, glottalized voice quality. *C1-Hỏi* is low falling tone, glottalized voice quality. *B1-Sắc* is rising tone, modal voice quality. *B2-Nặng* low glottalized, glottal stop voice quality.

Similarly, the results describing the tone system by Prof. Nguyen Van Loi (1998) in "Tones and Voice Quality in Modern Northern Vietnamese: Instrumental Case Studies" showed that the tones system in the Hanoi dialect had 6 tones as follows:

"Thanh Ngang" starts at the medium pitch level, has level contour, ends at the medium pitch, and is recorded [33].

"Thanh Huyền" starts at the medium pitch level, its contour falling down flatly and ends at a slightly low pitch level, and is recorded [32].

"Thanh Hỏi" starts at the medium pitch level. Its contour falling down to the lowest pitch, then raising and ends at a slightly low pitch level, and is recorded [312].

"Thanh Ngã" starts at the medium pitch. Its contour falling down, then raising and ends at the highest pitch level, and is recorded [325].

"Thanh Sắc" starts at the medium pitch. Its contour raising and ends at the highest pitch level, and is recorded [35].

"Thanh Nặng" starts at the medium pitch. Its contour falling down and ends suddenly. It has a short field, and is recorded [32].

From the results of comparing the Vietnamese tones system in Mukdahan with the tones system of the Hanoi dialect, it can be seen that the Vietnamese language in Mukdahan only appears 5 tones while the Hanoi dialect has 6 tones. The Vietnamese language in Mukdahan does not have "thanh hỏi", "thanh hỏi" here has the same characteristics as "thanh nặng" described in the figure 9-11. In addition, "thanh ngang" in Mukdahan is different from "thanh ngang" of the Hanoi dialect, because "thanh ngang" in Mukdahan is the tone whose contour raising up at the end of syllable, and is recorded [34]. Meanwhile, in the Hanoi dialect, it has flat contour and is recorded [33]. The other tones in Mukdahan have similar characteristics with the tones of the Hanoi dialect.

At the same time, Hoang Thi Chau (2008) described the tone system of the Central dialect in the book of "Phương ngữ học tiếng Việt" [Vietnamese dialectology] as follows:

Thanh ngang is the only tone at the high pitch because *Thanh ngang* in the Central dialect starts at the point higher than the average pitch of speech. Its variable contour gradually goes up with a rather large slope.

Thanh huyền is the tone whose pitch is behind *Thanh ngang*. *Thanh huyền* in the Central dialect is below the average pitch of speech, so *Thanh huyền* is a low tone. Its variable contour is similar to *Thanh huyền* in the Northern dialect.

Thanh hỏi is a low tone. Its variable contour goes down flatly like *Thanh huyền*, but does not have a going-up segment like in the Northern dialect. The intonation of *Thanh hỏi* in the Central dialect is similar to *Thanh huyền*; however, it has the pitch lower than *Thanh huyền*, and has a strong larynx nation phenomenon.

Thanh sắc in the Central dialect is the tone at the low pitch because it starts at the lowest point compared to the tones in the Central dialect. The variable contour of *Thanh sắc* goes down slightly to about 1/3 of the tone, then soars up and ends at the pitch of *Thanh ngang*.

Thanh nặng is the tone whose intonation and pitch are nearly similar to *Thanh huyền* and *Thanh hỏi*. Its variable contour starts at the pitch lower than that of *Thanh huyền*, the ending segment of intonation slopes down due to the phenomenon of glottal stop to end the pronunciation process.

Thanh ngã in the Central dialect has the same characteristics as *Thanh nặng* and *Thanh hỏi*, which makes the tone system of the Central dialect only have 5 tones as mentioned above. In the Nghe Tinh dialect, *Thanh ngã* coincides with *Thanh nặng*. In the Binh Tri Thien dialect, *Thanh ngã* coincides with *Thanh hỏi*. Although *Thanh hỏi* in the Nghe Tinh dialect and Binh Tri Thien dialect have similar characteristics of phonetic properties, but they are different in phonological values. *Thanh hỏi* in the Nghe Tinh dialect has the

same value as *Thanh hỏi* in the Northern dialect while *Thanh hỏi* in the Binh Tri Thien dialect has the same phonological value as *Thanh hỏi* and *Thanh ngã* in the Northern dialect. This is the reason that makes the tone system in the Central dialect only have 5 tones.

Compared with the Central dialect, Thanh ngang, Thanh huyền, Thanh sắc and Thanh nặng in Mukdahan have the characteristics similar to Thanh ngang, Thanh huyền, Thanh sắc and Thanh nặng in the Central dialect. Most especially, Thanh ngang in Mukdahan has an upward contour like Thanh ngang in the Central dialect. However, the Central dialect does not appear Thanh ngã, Thanh ngã in the Central dialect coincides with Thanh nặng. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese language in Mukdahan appears Thanh ngã, which makes the Vietnamese language in Mukdahan different from the Central dialect. In addition, in the Vietnamese language in Mukdahan, Thanh hỏi coincides with Thanh nặng as described in the item 7, and is completely different from Thanh hỏi in the Central dialect.

Thus, it can be seen that the Vietnamese tone system in Mukdahan has the characteristics similar to both the Northern dialect (based on the appearance of *Thanh ngã*) and the Central dialect (based on on the appearance of *Thanh ngang*). However, *Thanh hỏi* of the Vietnamese language in Mukdahan differs from that of the Northern dialect and the Central dialect. *Thanh hỏi* in Mukdahan has the same characteristics as *Thanh nặng*, and is different from the characteristics of *Thanh hỏi* in the Northern dialect and the Central dialect.

Therefore, these characteristics create a feature in the Vietnamese phonetic system in Mukdahan in general and in the Vietnamese tones system in Mukdahan in particular. In the future, the Vietnamese language here will become one of the languages in danger of disappearing and increasingly losing the characteristics of their native dialect. This statement is consistent with the viewpoint of Hoang Thi Chau (2008) that "The dialectic drift to another country has always been accompanied by the language contact which is considered as a condition to form a dialect and maybe a new language. This dialect will have a life separate from the original language and be increasingly impacted by the language of the new homeland" (Hoang Thi Chau, 2008, p.245).

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