

Learning Vietnamese for Love, Identity, Business, Travel, and Cultural Harmony

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“I love Vietnamese food and the Vietnamese community in Denmark. Before travelling to Vietnam, I want to learn about the language and culture.”

“My son works in Saigon and is engaged to a Vietnamese girl. I want to visit her family and speak with them in Vietnamese.”

“My husband works in Vietnam, and I will join him there, so I need to learn the language.”

“I am learning Vietnamese so I can speak with my sweetheart’s family.”

“Vietnamese feels like part of who I am, so I want to speak it.”

“I speak Vietnamese with my parents at home, but I struggle to understand people in Vietnam and cannot write the language.”

“Language can be a barrier to doing business in Vietnam, so I am eager to learn Vietnamese.”

“I work for a Vietnamese company in Denmark and want to learn the language to better understand Vietnamese business culture.”

“I was born in a very impoverished place in Vietnam and raised by a Danish family. I want to visit the place where I let out a cry upon being born and talk to the people there.”

“My parents and grandparents were boat people. When I visited their homeland, I found kind people, warm hospitality, delicious food, and beautiful landscapes. But why did they have to leave? They never spoke about it; they only wanted their children to enjoy a happy life in Denmark. So, I am learning Vietnamese language and culture to better understand the country.”

My learners have shared these and other motivations, ranging from practical to deeply personal. I have come to see that they study Vietnamese to foster their cultural harmony and pursue life-long learning, which has deepened my affection for them.

I previously taught Vietnamese language and culture, including legal Vietnamese, to non-Vietnamese learners in Vietnam and Honduras. After settling in Denmark, I joined FOF (Folkeligt Oplysningsforbund) while working as a researcher at Copenhagen Business School. I saw FOF as an opportunity to better understand and integrate into Danish society while contributing to life-long learning and liberal arts education. To my surprise, enrolment has grown steadily; in 2026, it was 200 per cent higher than the previous year. Demand for Vietnamese courses continues to rise.

Among Denmark’s roughly 6,000 descendants of about 11,000 Vietnamese immigrants, many are now reaching adulthood and seeking a deeper sense of identity beyond what they learned at home. As adults, they may find learning Vietnamese independently more engaging and enjoyable than practising it with family.

Around 1,500 people of Vietnamese origin have been adopted into Danish families. Many want to explore their identity and speak Vietnamese with relatives in Vietnam.

Many Danes form romantic relationships, marriages, or friendships with Vietnamese people and their descendants.

More than 150 Danish companies operate in Vietnam, and over 500 actively export goods and services there. Some Vietnamese companies also operate in Denmark, alongside many Danish businesses owned by Vietnamese Danes. As a result, many Danish businesspeople need to understand Vietnam’s business environment and may also wish to speak Vietnamese.

Many Danes are curious and willing to invest in life-long learning, so they often take a Vietnamese course before travelling to Vietnam, including on adventurous trips.

Teaching Vietnamese language, culture, and business allows me to support learners connect with Vietnam, and for their love, identity, business, travel, and cultural harmony. I do not yet know who else will join my future classes, but I hope learners find joy, gain knowledge, and build connections with one another.