The Development of the Ten-Year English Textbook Series for Vietnamese Schools under the National Foreign Language 2020 Project: A Cross-Cultural Collaborative Experience

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Abstract

This paper attempts to give an account of the cross-cultural collaborative project between Vietnamese textbook writers and those of MacMillan Education and Pearson Education – two leading international second/foreign language textbook publishers – in producing the ten-year English textbook series.
The formation of the national English language, or Standard English, is considered to date from the period between the 15th and 17th centuries. After that time the language continued to change, yet, henceforth one can speak of the evolution of Standard English instead of trading the similar or different trends in the history of its dialects. Other historical events, such as the increased foreign contacts, produced a more specific kind of influence on the language: they affected the word stock. The 15th and 16th centuries saw striking changes in the life of the country. The first book in the English language was printed in the year 1476 by the first English printer William Caxton (his own translation of the Story of Troy), Recuyell of the Histories of Troy. The English national language has developed on the basis of the dialect of London. After the Norman conquest London became the political and cultural centre of England. As London was situated on both banks of the Thames, its dialect had both Southern and East Midland elements. But gradually the East Midland dialect took the upper hand. The prestige of the dialect was great because East Midland was the most populated and the most developed district. It was the seat of the two universities: Oxford and Cambridge. The influence of the first printers in fixing and spreading the written form of English... As for the English national language it developed on the basis of the London dialect- the dialect of the economical, political and cultural centre of the country. In 1439 teaching in French was substituted by teaching in English. It was of great significance for the circulation of the London dialect. The formation of a national language was greatly fostered by two events of the late 15th century. The most significant event of the period was the Wars of the Roses (1455-1485) which marked the decay of feudalism and the birth of a new social order. They came to an end in the battle of Bosworth, when Richard III was defeated by Henry Tudor, who became king of England. The result of this prolonged struggle was the rise of an absolute monarchy. Keywords: Cross-cultural collaborative experience, textbook development, 2020 Project, three pilot English curricula, VNFLPF, CEFR, 20-step workflow.

1. Introduction

1. linguistics gained from Australia, particularly series for Vietnamese schools under the National Foreign Language 2020 Project. The paper is organized around three parts. Part one provides backgrounds to and bases for developing the textbook series. Part two describes in some detail the cross-cultural textbook development process the Vietnamese textbook writers and their collaborative colleagues of MacMillan Education and Pearson Education have been undertaking in developing the textbook series. Part three gives a résumé of what has been discussed, points out the advantages of the cross-cultural collaboration in producing the textbook series, and argues for a close collaboration between local textbook writers and writers who speak English as their mother tongue in producing high quality English textbooks that are suited to the general educational system of Vietnam.

Keywords: Cross-cultural collaborative experience, textbook development, 2020 Project, three pilot English curricula, VNFLPF, CEFR, 20-step workflow.