



Research Article

**2018 LITERATURE PROGRAM – AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE
IN THE HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT
OF HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM IN VIETNAM***Do Ngoc Thong**The Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences**Corresponding author: Do Ngoc Thong – Email: thongdongoc@yahoo.com**Received: March 13, 2019; Revised: April 26, 2019; Accepted: May 10, 2019***ABSTRACT**

The design of previous literature programs was mainly based on the content approach; The teaching methods remained the same for a long time, including discussing, lecturing, and analyzing the works. The 2018 Literature program has many innovations, different from the previous ones – has been designed using competence-based approaches. Specifically, the program focuses on forming and developing linguistic and literacy competence; open design; switching from content transmitting to teaching reading; ways of creating documents; competence-based assessment and evaluation. It can be seen as an important milestone in the history of developing a literature curriculum in Vietnam.

Keywords: curriculum, literature, competence-based approach, content program.

Preamble

Studying the history of subject curriculum is part of the science of literacy teaching methods; it has an important theoretical and practical significance. Studying the process of formation, development, make positive contributions to the curriculum of Literature subject as well as its limitations in each phase of the history assist readers, firstly, have an overview on traditional method of teaching literature, and then, inherit, apply its positives in the present. The process of innovation and development of teaching subjects in high schools always requires inheriting the essence of tradition. The Literature curriculum 2018, newly published and deployed, is designed to reflect this point clearly, which marks an important development step in all aspects from the goal, approach to curriculum content. To see that, it is a must to look back and review the previous curriculum of the subject Literature¹

1. Overview of history of literature subjects**1.1. Feudal Literature program**

The concept of *the subject program* in feudal times has not been set, especially in the

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¹ *Ngữ văn* mentioned here was understood as the study of Vietnamese, literature in high schools.

full sense like the present. However, it is possible to describe the curriculum content through the textbook system and the requirements of the exams (Hương, Hội, Đình). For a long time, studying and examination in feudal schools are mainly learnt about the history of literature, rather than the literary philosophy (indecision), and later there are other contents such as *law, study of fate...* until the time when the Ho dynasty was established, *Mathematics* was introduced to study and test. The remaining main content of the exams are focused on: *sutra, literature, thi, phú, chiếu, chế, biểu*.

The feudal faculties of each dynasty have different rules, but in general, the students who want to become a mandarin have to pass the exams (Hương, Hội, Đình), and do some “documents” following the regulations of that time such as: sentences of verses, poems, riches, sutras, books of literature, screenings, speeches, and so on. Compared to later, feudal schools pay more attention to teach learners to do both types of “composing” documents such as poetry and *phú*, and also the types of documents that continue to be absorbed and developed by the schools, especially the text of discourse (sutras, texts, screenings, speeches, essays, and so on, is the medieval discourse).

1.2. French Literature Curriculum (before 1945)

The high school program includes two levels: Primary college² and Baccalaureate. The requirements of the Vietnamese Literature Program for all who choose study 4 years at elementary schools (from grades 6 to 9), *khoa giảng nghĩa bài* and *học Quốc văn* are: selecting essays or excerpting from the poetries and old story books, or from the contemporary literature; interpretations of *do thiên nhập tâm*: first select common texts, and then improve to higher and higher texts later.

For high school levels (Baccalaureate), *Chương trình Việt văn - Vietnamese Program - for Vietnamese High Schools (Phap Viet)* applied before 1940 (Duong Quang Ham, 2005), including three years. For example, curriculums for the first year (grade 10) includes popular literature; The influence of China; The regimes of learning and examination; Texts; French influences; Language problems.

In general, the French colonial schools introduced several new documents compared to the feudal texts. These types of documents, though not very well known in theory “*In the French and Vietnamese literature hours, the professors only gave the beginning of the paper, sometimes making a brief outline and leaving us to manipulate*” (Nguyen Dang Thu, 1953), but these are very important documents, which become the core for teaching the text for Vietnamese schools after 1945.

1.3. Literature curriculum since the revolution in August 1945

1.3.1. From 1945 to 1954

Basically, the curriculum of teaching and learning at high schools throughout the country (from the free zone to the national area) from 1945 to 1953, used the Hoàng Xuân Hãn’s Curriculum, although it was modified a little (Nguyen Q. Thang, 2005). The main

² Primary college: equivalent to secondary school nowadays; Baccalaureate: equivalent to high school.

content of the National Literature (Secondary School) of Hoang Xuan Han's Curriculum consists of three major circuits: Spelling and grammar; Comment; Lecture.

High school specialties include the Chinese Department, and Science Department A, B and language. For example, Curriculum for grade 10, Han Department includes Learning texts; Dharma; Words; Poetry; Chữ Nôm; An overview of historical literature; Teaching and memorizing; Practicing, analyzing the dharma; Adaptation, transformation, composition; Translate; so on.

1.3.2. Vietnamese Language in the South 1955 - 1975

a) Vietnamese language Curriculum in 1957

This program is compiled according to “*The national philosophy of teaching is to let students understand their mother tongue fluently and fully, speak and write fluently, transparently, accurately, elegantly and purely; After all, thanks to that language, people can train their character and aesthetic appeal*” (Ministry of Education, 1957). The structure of the curriculum consists of the majority: *Opening* introduces the purpose of the lecture; and shows how to choose the works. Curriculum's structure also mentioned to Reference books. After the outline of the generalization, it is necessary to specify the specific contents for each class with two items: *Works* and *Prose*, only naming the text.

b) The new curriculum from 1970 to 1971

Curriculum in 1970, the National subject replaced for Vietnamese Language (Curriculum in 1957). The national content structure (1970) has some notable points as follows:

“The purpose of the lecture is to let students understand the value of the form and content of a work or a passage so that their temperament and soul can be cultivated, the knowledge of literature can be expanded and some useful things for practicing can be acquired”. After that, giving notes about metal texts and ancient parts, and instructing students to read books. The specific content for each class is briefly stated. From grade 6 to grade 9 structure was divided into two parts: I. Prosody and II. Rhythmic prose - ancient stories. From grade 8, there had an additional literary section and grade 9 had a literary section. Up to high school level (second grade), this subject was compiled that every board has both (CD) and (AB) for each class. Specific contents include Literary history; Literature and teaching (lectures). National high school curriculum (Grade 11 and 12) follows the historical process, from ancient times to the present (1945). Because the less hours A and B studied, the less works and literature they have did, in combination with C and D.

The general high school curriculum was drafted in 1971 with the basic principles guiding: humanity, ethnicity, liberation, pragmatism and mass. With National Literature, “The main point is to help students know how to listen, speak, read, write, enjoy literature to promote aesthetic appeal, enrich feelings, and understand the general outline of the national literature's background in terms of words, art and thought” (Ministry of Education, 1971). After the goal is the content for each class.

1.3.3. Northern Literature Curriculum from 1955 – 1975

In the war against France, the general education program consisted of nine years, but in 1957 it was raised to 10 years. The 10-year program lasted until Education Curriculum in 1982. Since this Curriculum, high school curriculum has increased to 12 years until now.

a) Literature program (secondary school and high school), 1961

Grade II (Secondary School): The curriculum consists of some major parts: lecture, writing essays and grammar. For example, the content of class V, consists of: I. People's orally transferred literature including: Old stories; Jokes; Fables; folk song and folk music. II. Modern poetries after the August Revolution, works are quoted according to the themes.

Grade III (High School) grade VIII stipulates: Semester 1: Basic concepts of literary theory. Word of mouth literature (folk songs, folk music, proverbs, old life stories, funny stories). Semester II: Han and Nom literature (from the XIII to XVII centuries)

b) Literature Program (secondary school and high school), 1965

In 1965, because of the damages in the North caused by American aggression, the Ministry of Education had the adjustment to match with the regions and the war conditions. Specifically, teaching was organized according to curriculum for two different regions: Zone A: normal defense zone; Area B: The area was directly threatened. Example Literature curriculum for class VII (Junior High School, 1965) learnt the following major contents: I. Classical poetry II. Patriotic and revolutionary poetry during the French colonial period 1930 - 1945; III. Critical literary poetic performance 1930 - 1945; IV. Modern poetry after the August Revolution; V. Summary of literature and Vietnam.

1.3.4. Literature Curriculum from 1975 to 2006

In 1975, the country was united, but it was not until 1980 that the implementation of Education Curriculum began to unify many issues including general education. The Education program for Vietnamese at the Primary level has been compiled and implemented from 1980 - 1985, in 1986 at the secondary levels, this course has been compiled two separate programs: *Secondary Vietnamese Language Program* (including writing essay) and *High School Literacy Program*, both programs have only draft documents. In 1989, the program of *Vietnamese language* and *High School Literature* were compiled. Although the subject's name was the same and printed with the same text, it was still separated into two parts: the *Vietnamese High School* and the *High School Literature Program* (Ministry of Education, 1989). Both programs are compiled by the Institute of Educational Sciences in 1986, recorded as a draft, but all documents were implemented officially. The program of *Vietnamese Language* and *Literature for high schools* in 1989 continued with subject curriculum in Vietnamese and junior high schools (1986). The text of this program was presented in two subjects: 1) Vietnamese curriculum and 2) Literature Curriculum. In 1993, ***Literature High School curriculum was drafted and piloted. Both Curriculum in 1989 and the pilot Curriculum in 1993 ended in 2000.***

1.3.5. Literature Curriculum 2006 (at the present)

This is the innovation program implemented under The Resolution 40 of the National Assembly X (2000). In primary level, it is called Vietnamese subject, from secondary school to high school, it is called Literature. Due to the different historical circumstances, the three

levels of curriculum are compiled at three different times, many points are needed to be unified. 2005 - 2006 Ministry of Education and Training conducted a review and unified that all three-level curriculum were unified in general education system including standard knowledge, and skills for each subject (Ministry of Education and Training, 2006 a).

2. 2018 language program - a important step

2.1. *Change goals and how to design the program*

The subject objectives of the previous Literature courses focused on equipping students with the knowledge and what students need to know? Literature curriculum objectives 2018 focuses on the competency, the guidance to help students know what to do from the knowledge they have? That orientation requires teaching and learning Literature to pay attention to the necessary of applying what they have learned to practice and solve problems associated with life; read, write and listen fluently. The nature of Literature in the 2018 curriculum is defined as the instrumentality and aesthetics-humanity. Calculate tools aims to the requirements of formation and capacity development (reading, writing, speaking and listening). Aesthetics - humanity aims to the requirements of aesthetic education, formation and quality development.

Until the construction of the latest curriculum in 2006, the design of the Literature program is still basically a content-oriented design, following the content. The construction process is mainly based on the experience, the current curriculum, teaching adjustment. Literature curriculum 2018 changes goals and how to design curriculum. Specifically, starting from the requirements of society and country in the new context to determine the requirements of the quality and capacity for high school students; then from these general requirements determine the capacities that Language Arts undertakes (linguistic competence and literary competence); From these two capacities, the content of teaching Vietnamese and literature is determined. In this direction, only the knowledge of Vietnamese language and literature serves effectively for new language competencies and literary competencies into the content of teaching.

Designing Curriculum is an open way for most obvious step of curriculum in 2018. Previous Literature courses are mostly close-curriculums, strictly regulating the content and specific works to be taught, knowledge units and Specific skills for class are not allowed to change. The Literature Program in 2018 only stipulates some knowledge of Vietnamese, compulsory core literature and some remaining important works of text for authors and teachers to choose and promote autonomy and creativity in selecting teaching text to suit the subject. And the selection of text must be based on the criteria of curriculum.

2.2. *Change in content*

2.2.1. *About the content of teaching Vietnamese*

a) Teaching Vietnamese students read, speak, listen and write. However, the viewpoint of teaching Vietnamese every time is different; The previous program, especially in the North during the resistance period against the US and the Vietnamese-literature program, especially the Literature and Vietnamese curriculum, the experimental place

(1993 - 2000) took the main goal of teaching Vietnamese is “*Providing students with basic knowledge, relatively systematic in Vietnamese*”, so the content of teaching Vietnamese is quite heavy, less attention to the ability to practice Vietnamese language. This language since 2000, from elementary school to high school has made a clear change in determining teaching objectives “*formation and development of students with the ability to use Vietnamese*” (Ministry of Education and Training, 2006 b). The nature of the institute in Vietnamese language has initially been overcome.

In the Literature Program 2018, Vietnamese language only serves as a tool to help students read, write, listen and speak effectively. Vietnamese knowledge is no longer the goal of curriculum, using Vietnamese to practice communication skills is the determination of this curriculum. Vietnamese knowledge is formed through reading, writing, listening and speaking activities.

b) About creating documents: curriculum teaches to create text, up to now it not only caring about the final writing product of students but not paying enough attention to teach the writing process and writing for learners (similarly not paying attention to teach how to read text). Textbook curriculum 2018 guidelines for creating based on the process of producing text. Teaching the process of writing is really teaching about thinking and how to do it, teaching in the direction of capacity development.

Creating documents according to the process help students overcome the limitations of teaching which just pays attention to the final results. That situation can lead to the fact that many students only know the theory, do not have the creation skills, deploy and develop ideas; do not take advantage of personal experience; and in some cases, there is no need to think because the samples are available.

2.2.2. The curriculum's content

- a) Most of the previous literature curriculums focus on the following main ideas:
- Provide students with a huge knowledge of literary works through historical periods from folklore to medieval literature and modern literature. From Vietnamese literature to foreign literature.
 - Initially help students have knowledge about some big features of the history of the country's literature.
 - Initially provide students with some issues and concepts of literary theory.

Literature Curriculum 2018 focuses on the requirement for quality development and competence. Quality is the requirement to inherit the previous programs while the capacity is a new requirement. Literature Subject make a considerable contribution to the development of general competencies and specific competencies, including linguistic competence and literary competence. The qualities and competencies are formed and developed through reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities, linked to the content of the documents in order to “*educate students about the beautiful values of culture and literature. and national language; develop students' healthy emotions, humanistic sentiments, compassionate, altruistic lifestyles and so on, forming and developing good*

qualities as well as some core competencies help students live and work effectively, learn for life” (Ministry of Education and Training, 2018).

b) Through curriculum’s documents of different periods, the concept of teaching about works of traditional curriculum can be seen clearly

- In general, the literary program before 2000, was basically known as a lecture program. It introduced the method of teach *“Explain, analyze, criticize a work or a paragraph that announce the intention of author wants to express clearly in the lecture, to be able to comprehend it profoundly, feel subtly what the author's thoughts and feelings vibrate in the passage; After all, readers can enjoy and imitate, recognize the bad part to avoid. It is the purpose of the lecturing department”*(Ministry of Education, 1957). The programs differ only in the selection of choosing works, paragraph, and the author only.

- After 1975 when the construction of Literature of the Education curriculum period have paid attention, especially Literature curriculum at the High Schools (1989), although it was still a lecture, there are some differences in the selection of works; the authentic literary works have been appreciated. As a result, the series of political illustrations in the previous works have been replaced by good and artistic literary works.

- Until 2000, Literature curriculum took a new step to change the concept of teaching lecture to reading comprehension. Teaching literature teaches how to read and understand texts, helps students have a method of reading texts, gradually they can read the texts by themselves. The concept of literary texts was also expanded, not only literary and fictional texts but also artistic and non-fiction (nonfiction) texts. Unlike lectures with the goal that teachers explain, students listen and see the beauty of a literary work; Reading comprehension aims to guide students how they can discover the beauty of the works by themselves.

- Curriculum of Literature 2018 inherits the thought of teaching reading comprehension texts in 2006, and completing by specifying the requirements of reading comprehension texts, uniting those requirements from elementary to high school according to the increasing levels. In parallel with the necessary of reading comprehension, the introduction of orientation of reading comprehension method is divided into three types: literary text, dissertation text and information text. Reading comprehension and multi-modal texts are new requirements that have not appeared in the previous programs.

It is possible to say that the Vietnamese Literature Curriculum 2018 has completely shifted from teaching literature to reading comprehension and restraining limitations in comparison with one in 2006, which has only raised the ideological orientation and have not applied to any schools.

c) Literature course 2018 has completely shifted to the concept of reading comprehension and has not followed the history of literature and literary theory. Previous programs, including 2006 program, have been aimed at teaching reading comprehension by categories but still followed the literary history, especially secondary and high school levels. Curriculum 2006 has still learnt the heavy academic and institutional literature, and lack of practical. With the Literature Curriculum 2018, the understanding of literary history

and literary theory is installed in reading comprehension activities, in a contact request, historical context knowledge and external factors to help students understand texts. At the end of junior high school and new high school, there are many forms to help students systematize big features of literary history and some understanding of 3 famous authors: Nguyen Trai, Nguyen Du and Ho Chi Minh.

d) One of the major changes in the curriculum after 2000, is the development and compilation of the curriculum towards integration. If the program before 2000 separated into Literature and Vietnamese, the program since 2000 marked a big step.

For the primary level, students focus on learning Vietnamese mainly, while literature only makes corpus language to teach language. It means we have taught in the principles of integration, but the integration here is based on four basic skills: *listening, speaking, reading and writing*. At the secondary level, the integration principle is still implemented, but the integration axis will be *the type of text with basic forms* such as narrative; description; arguments; presentation. At the high school level, this subject should be taught and studied according to the history of literature but still applied the principle of integration. Integrated axes are *the categories of works* laid out at each stage of literary history.

Integration is a big step of Literature curriculum since 2000, however, it is not consistent in determining the integration axis from primary to high school, because there is still no clear delimitation of the main task, sometimes the principles of integration in the textbook have limitations, many of them are not well-received and forced. The integration of cross-disciplinary fields has not been properly paid attention.

The Literature Curriculum 2018 inherits the requirement of current integration, and enhances and completes one step: the curriculum from elementary to high school, only integrated axis is the language skills. The taking of reading, writing, speaking and listening skills clearly demonstrates through the need for capacity development. The requirement integrates not only in content and skills but also in teaching methods; not only integrating the subject but also implementing interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary integration.

In conclusion

It can be said that although Literature has a long history of development, breakthrough changes in curriculum development are not much. The times of curriculum reform or innovation are mainly changes in teaching goals and contents. The design of the program from the past to the present is mainly based on the content approach; teaching methods have hardly changed, mostly in the direction of writing, lecturing, analyzing works... The Literature program 2018 has many innovations, different from ones before, designed for the development of learner capacity. Specifically, the program focuses on forming and developing linguistic competence and literary competence; opening program design; switching from content cramming to teaching reading; how to create documents; assessing results according to competency... It is an important step forward in the history of developing the Philology curriculum in Vietnam.

❖ **Conflict of Interest:** Author have no conflict of interest to declare.

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CHƯƠNG TRÌNH NGỮ VĂN 2018 – MỘT BƯỚC TIẾN QUAN TRỌNG TRONG LỊCH SỬ PHÁT TRIỂN CHƯƠNG TRÌNH GIÁO DỤC PHỔ THÔNG VIỆT NAM

Đỗ Ngọc Thống

Viện Khoa học Giáo dục Việt Nam

Tác giả liên hệ: Đỗ Ngọc Thống – Email: thongdongoc@yahoo.com

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TÓM TẮT

Việc thiết kế chương trình từ trước đến nay chủ yếu theo hướng tiếp cận nội dung; phương pháp dạy học hầu như ít thay đổi, hầu hết là theo hướng bình văn, giảng văn, phân tích tác phẩm... Chương trình Ngữ văn 2018 có nhiều đổi mới, khác biệt so với trước đó - thiết kế theo yêu cầu phát triển năng lực người học. Cụ thể là chương trình tập trung hình thành, phát triển năng lực ngôn ngữ và năng lực văn học; thiết kế chương trình mở; chuyển từ phương pháp nhồi nhét nội dung sang dạy cách đọc văn; cách tạo lập văn bản; đánh giá kết quả theo năng lực... Có thể xem đó là một bước tiến quan trọng trong lịch sử phát triển chương trình môn học Ngữ văn ở Việt Nam.

Từ khóa: chương trình, môn Ngữ văn, phát triển năng lực, chương trình nội dung.