

Indo-European Loanwords in Vietnamese Dictionaries in 18th And 19th Centuries

Trần Hương Thục

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ABSTRACT: *This research explores Indo-European loanwords in 18th and 19th-century Vietnamese dictionaries, focusing on three key sources: Vocabularium Anamitico Latinum (compiled in 1772-1773), Dictionarium Anamitico-Latium (published in 1838), and Dictionarium Annamiticum Latinum (published in 1877). It reveals that Indo-European loanwords, primarily from Portuguese, French, and Latin, enriched the Vietnamese language during this period. The study identifies two main categories of loanwords: 1) religious terms, including names of dignitaries, saints, and Catholic rituals, and 2) words from European society, such as cacao, coffee, sausages, liqueur, and mangosteen. These loanwords underwent phonetic adaptations to fit Vietnamese pronunciation, and some were directly translated into Vietnamese. This early integration of Indo-European words, especially those related to Christianity, played a vital role in expanding the Vietnamese lexicon, even before the extensive influence of French since 1858.*

KEY WORD: Indo-European, Vietnamese, loanwords, Vietnamese linguistics

INTRODUCTION

Vietnamese linguists generally agree that the two largest blocks of loanwords in Vietnamese vocabulary are words borrowed from Chinese (Sino-Vietnamese) and words borrowed from Indo-European languages (mostly French and, to some extent, English). The Sino-Vietnamese block was deeply incorporated into the recipient language due to the historically extensive and consecutive influence of Chinese administrations. While loans from Indo-European languages were borrowed in a short and recent period, mainly since Vietnamese had extensive contact with French after the official invasion of the latter on the former in 1858.

Regarding the Indo-European-originated loanwords in Vietnamese, previous studies provided some initial statistics. For example, Le Trung Hoa (2006) identified 1248 words originated from French, Vuong Toan (1992) 1860 words. French loanwords in Vietnamese are mainly in the fields of traffic, transportation, machinery, weapons, learning tools,

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healthcare, art, units of measurement, house components, household appliances, food, costumes, games, and some common conversational words.

The results from Vu Duc Nghieu (2011) showed that there are no Indo-European words in the glossary of A. de Rhodes' *Dictionarivm Annamiticvm, Lusitanvm et Latinvm* (Vietnamese - Portuguese - Latin Dictionary, 1651) - the first comparative dictionary with Vietnamese part written in Quoc Ngu script (alphabetical writing system invented by Western missionaries). However, this study also showed that three texts by Bento Thien and forty-two letters (from laymen and monks) written between 1687 and 1825, excluding Christian holy names, have some words with Indo-European origins, such as *arpilis* (April - tháng Tư), *bullla* (bulla - thánh thư), *curút* (crux - dấu câu rú), *decembêrê* (December - tháng chạp), *evan* (bible - Kinh thánh), *may* (May - tháng Năm), etc.

In this study, we investigate the occurrence of Indo-European words recorded in three dictionaries appearing between 1772-1877, namely: a) *Vocabularium Anamitico Latinum* of P. De Béhaine, commonly known with the Vietnamese name of *Từ điển Việt-La*, compiled in 1772-1773; b) *Dictionarium Anamitico-Latium* (Vietnamese name *Nam Việt Dương Hiệp tự vị*) by J. L. Taberd, published in 1838; and c) *Dictionarium Annamiticum-Latinum* by J. S. Theurel, published in 1877.

This study aims at contributing, through specifically investigating these three data sources, to the understanding of the initiation and development of an important component of Vietnamese vocabulary.

Data and methodology

Data sources

The reason for choosing the three above-mentioned dictionaries for this study is their important positions in the course of Vietnamese orthographic development. In particular, they are landmarks of consecutive periods in which Indo-European influence on the Vietnamese language proceeded: first through missionaries, then merchants, expeditionary troops (France), books, documents, newspapers, etc.

In 1651, in Rome, A. de Rhodes published *Dictionarium Annamiticum- Lusitanum et Latium*, the first Vietnamese dictionary using Quốc ngữ, an alphabetic writing system developed by Western missionaries.

In September 1772, Pigneaux de Béhaine had started to compose *Vocabularium Anamitico Latinum*, also known as *Từ điển Việt - La*, or *Tự vị An Nam - La tinh* and completed this dictionary in June 1773. The original version of this dictionary is believed to have been burned in a fire in Cà Mau Province. A manuscript of the dictionary has been found in the Seminary Archives of the Séminaire des Missions Étrangères in Paris, coded as V16. This dictionary shows us the relative appearance of Vietnamese in the 18th century.

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To Béhaine's *Dictionnarium Anamitico-Latium* (1772-1773), Taberd provided corrections and additions, which resulted in *Vocabularium Anamitico Latinum* (1838). This dictionary is a typical source of information and an influential book for later dictionaries.

Also based on *Dictionnarium Anamitico-Latinum* (1772-1773), Theurel supplemented and revised to publish his *Dictionarium Annamiticum-Latinum* in 1877.

Thus, on the basis of the first manuscript of Pigneaux de Béhaine (1772-1773), there were two successive dictionaries published over a period of more than 100 years. All these three dictionaries reflect the updated appearance of Vietnamese vocabulary at a relevant time, reflecting lexical changes in the Vietnamese language when there were exchanges with Indo-European languages in the process of Vietnamese people's contact with Europeans through trade and mission.

METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate the Indo-European loans in Vietnamese in the 18th and 19th centuries, we proceeded with the following procedure:

First, we collect entries of words with Indo-European origins that appeared in three dictionaries.

Words of Indo-European origin are understood and identified as words borrowed from European languages in terms of both form and meaning to enrich Vietnamese vocabulary. When borrowed and then incorporated into Vietnamese, they are subject to change to be in accordance with phonetic, and semantic characteristics, and the writing system of the recipient language.

The concept of *origin* here is only relative (the direct source from donor languages being borrowed), because if we trace to their ultimate origin, many words in question are also borrowed from another language. For example, the Vietnamese word *cà phê* was directly borrowed from the French word *café*, but French, in turn, may have borrowed this from other languages.

Then, we make a list and, to some extent, describe and analyze the origin of the loanwords, the developments shown in the dictionary (to reflect the manifestations of the process of Vietnamese accepting foreign words at that time) in the late 18th and 19th centuries.

RESULTS

Number and subgroups of entries

Through our survey, we collected the following words of Indo-European origin in the three dictionaries.

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Vocabularium Anamitico Latinum (1772-1773) has 14 entries: *A dong, Bê Na Đô, cu rút, Chúa Dêu, Ju dêu, chúa Gi su, Da tô, đạo Da tô, Dêu, lâm bô, đức thánh Pha pha* (appeared twice), *Hoa Lang* (twice), *lễ misa, Ma cao*.

Dictionnarium Anamitico- Latium (1838) has 23 entries: *A dong, cà cao, cà phe, câu rút, cây câu rút, Chúa Dêu, Giu dêu, chúa gi giu, Da tô, đạo Da tô, Da tô tả đạo, gác trên cây câu rút, Dêu, lâm bô, đức thánh Pha pha* (twice), *Hoa Lang* (twice), *đạo Hoa Lang, lễ Đức Chúa Xiphiritô Sang tô hiện xuống, lễ missa, Ma cao, Ma ria, Ro ma, trái măng cụt*.

Dictionarium Annamiticum-Latinum (1877) has 31 entries: *A dong, Bảo Lộc, Đức thánh An giô bản mệnh, ảnh câu rút, ảnh Indu, cà phe, Ma cao, Da tô, đạo Da tô, Dêu, chúa Dêu, Ju dêu, đức thánh Phapha, đức Vítvô, ga ra sa, ơn ga ra sa, gác trên cây câu rút, lễ đức chúa phiritô sangtô hiện xuống, hoa lang, đạo hoa lang, Maria, Rô ma, Ma cao, đức thánh Pha pha, rượu li cô, câu rút, cây câu rút, Da tô tả đạo, xúc xích, lâm bô, lễ misa*.

Because these are dictionaries for teaching and learning a language, Vietnamese, we collected and listed here not just lexical items but also phrases (noun, verb phrases), places and names. In the list above, we have gathered all those units, which have not been extracted for evaluation by their grammatical function. Therefore, *Chúa Dêu, Giu dêu, chúa gi giu, Da tô, đạo Da tô, Da tô tả đạo* (Jesus) are considered separate lexical items and listed accordingly.

If we exclude entries that appear to be duplicates and combine all three lists above, the list of Indo-European entries (including proper names) appearing in the sources includes *A dong, (Đức thánh) An giô (bản mệnh), Bảo Lộc, Bê Na Đô, cà cao, cà phe, cu rút/ câu rút, (Chúa) Dêu, ga ra sa, (chúa) Gi giu, Gi su, Ju dêu, Da tô, lâm bô, (đức thánh) Pha pha, Giu dêu, Hoa Lang, (ảnh) Indu, (lễ đức chúa) phiritô sangtô (hiện xuống)/ (lễ Đức Chúa) Xiphiritô Sang tô, (lễ) missa/ misa, Ma cao*.

It can be seen that the number of words of Indo-European origin included in the three dictionaries is not numerous. These words can be subgrouped according to their denotation as follows:

- Religious hierarchies, dignitaries, things, names of saints, Catholic feasts and rituals: *Dêu, Chúa Dêu, Dêu, Gi giu, Gi su, Ju dêu* (Jesus), *Pha Pha* (Papa), *Xiphiritô Sang tô* (Petecostes), *Missa/misa* (misa), *cu rút/câu rút* (crux), *Indu* (indulgentiis), *ga ra sa* (Graca/ Grace), *Vítvô* (Bispo), *A dong* (Adão), *An giô* (, *Bảo Lộc*(Paulo), *Bê Na Đô*(, *Maria* (Maria), *Ro ma* (Roma), *Macao*(Macao)
- Things in European society just appeared in Vietnamese society: *cà cao* (cacao), *cà phe* (coffee), *măng cụt* (mangosteen), *xúc xích* (sausage), *rượu licô* (liqueur)...

In terms of part of speech, the Indo-European words collected in all three dictionaries are nouns but not other types such as verbs, adjectives, etc. They are words denoting things

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and phenomena that had never been presented in Vietnamese society before or had not had a Vietnamese correspondence. Examples includes *cà cao*, *cà phe*, *cu rút/ câu rút*, *Xiphiritô Sang tô*, *Pha pha*, etc.

Accounting for a majority of the observed entries are words that refer to religious rituals, rules, hierarchies, organizations, dignitaries, and ritual tools, which are things and phenomena that were not yet popular in Vietnam at that time and the Vietnamese had no native word to name them yet. Vietnamese Catholics and foreign missionaries in Vietnam urgently borrowed words from Indo-European languages to meet the need to make up for the shortfall in Vietnamese vocabulary.

Origins

In terms of origin, the Indo-European loanwords in the three surveyed sources are mainly from Portuguese, French, and Latin. This is understandable, because the merchants and missionaries who came to Vietnam, at the time the dictionaries were compiled, were mainly Portuguese. According to Đỗ Quang Chính (1972), statistics of the Jesuits missionary personnel in Vietnam from 1615–1788 showed that there were 145 monks of 17 nationalities, including 74 Portuguese, 30 Italian, 10 German, 8 Japanese, 5 French, 4 Spaniards, and 2 Chinese. Catholic documents and books during this period were mainly written in Nôm (a Vietnamese writing system based on Chinese scripts), Latin, and Portuguese.

Portuguese loans

Portuguese had a great influence and become a strong language of European traders in Vietnam, as evidenced by the fact that many places in Vietnam are transliterated (written and read) in Portuguese, such as *Cacham* (Kẻ Chàm), *Faifo* (Hải Phố), *CochinChina* or *Cochinechina* (Đàng Trong), *Tonkin* or *Tonquim* (Đông Kinh), *Turaõ* or *Turãõ*, *Turam* (Đà Nẵng)... (Vũ Văn Khương, 2020, p.52).

Loans from Portuguese in the three dictionaries includes: *Angiô* (Anjo); *Bảo Lộc* (Paulo); *câu rút / cây câu rút* (Cruz); *Dêu, chúa Dêu* (Deus: God); *Xiphiritô Sang tô* (Spirito Santo); *ga ra sa* (Graça); *Giu dêu/ Ju dêu* (Judeu); *A dong* (Adão - According to the Old Testament, God created the first man - Adão); *Bê Na Đô* (Bernardo); *Gi giu/ Gi su* (Jesus); *lâm bô* (the word is transcribed through the Sino-Vietnamese reading of *limbo*), *Vítvồ* (Bispo).

The word *misa* as in the celebration *misa* (the offering of Jesus Christ for the salvation of mankind) is originally the word "*missa*" in the Latin phrase "*Ite, missa est*" that is pronounced at the end of the ceremony. In Portuguese, it is called *misa*. In terms of etymology, it is acceptable to say that the word "mi sa / lễ (ceremony) mi sa" in Vietnamese has either Latin or Portuguese origin.

The name *Dêu* (God) in Vietnamese is derived from Portuguese, not directly borrowed from *Deus* in Latin. Latin "d" is pronounced like "đ" (bilabial implosive) in Vietnamese, so if *Deus* was borrowed into Vietnamese, it should have had the pronunciation of [dê ut]

instead). In contrast, Portuguese reads "d" as [j], so Deus is read as [zew] as in Vietnamese "Dêu". Therefore, it could be safely said that *Dêu* is not a transliteration of Deus [de.us] in Latin, but of Deus [zeu] in Portuguese (Vu Van Khuong, 2020, p.54).

Latin loans

The appearance of words of Latin origin is also natural because Latin is the common ancestor of many Indo-European languages, including Portuguese, French, among other ones. Latin loanwords in the surveyed sources include the following cases.

ânh Indu: the shortened transliteration form of *Indulgentiis*

Pha Pha is the transliteration of Papa (*Pope Francis*). In Latin, the word *papa* means pope, transliterated into Vietnamese as *Pha Pha*, translated as *Đức thánh cha (Holy Father)*, *giáo hoàng Rô ma (Roman Pope)*.

Da tô is the name of Christianity after the name of the Patriarch *Jesus*. In Greek, His name is written as "Ἰησοῦς Χριστός" (Iēsoús Christós) and called Christos. In Vietnam at that time, the Europeans called him Christianisme. The Chinese also call Christianity after the Patriarch's name, Jesus, or Kilisitu after the name Christos.

The name *Jesus* is transliterated and read according to Sino-Vietnamese sound into *Da tô* or *Gia tô*, which is recorded in the dictionary. The name *Kilisitu* was transliterated and read according to Sino-Vietnamese pronunciation into *Cơ lợi tư đốc (Cơ đốc for short)* and was also recorded. Particularly in Vietnam, the name Christos is transliterated and read as *Khirixitô* or (religious) *Kirixitô*, *Ki tô* for short.

French loans

French loanwords exist in the dictionaries because French missionaries gradually replaced their Portuguese colleagues in charge of missionary work in Vietnam. In addition, the editors of the three dictionaries are all French. The French loanwords appearing in the three dictionaries include *Ma Cao (Ma Cao in Portuguese and Macao in French)*, *cà phe* (coffee), *cà cao* (cacao) and *mãng cụt* (mangosteen), *xúc xích* (saucisse), and *rượu li cô* (liqueur).

In P. de Behaine's dictionary, the only French loan is *Ma cao*. Taberd added to his later dictionary the following: *cà phe*, *cà cao*, and *mãng cụt*. Theurel removed two entries: *cà cao* and *mãng cụt*, and added two entries *xúc xích* and *rượu li cô* to his *Dictionarium Annamiticum-Latinum* (1877).

Taberd explains in Latin the three words *cà phe*, *cà cao*, and *mãng cụt* as follows: *Ca phe*: coffea, ae; *Cà cao*: Theobroma; (trái) *mãng cụt*: garcinia mangoustan. These three words are all pronounced according to the French pronunciation.

Cà phe in French is written as *café* and reads as [ka.fe]¹.

Cà cao is written as *cacao* in French and reads as [ka.kao], which is the name of a plant that produces fruit/seeds.

Mãng cụt is a fruit tree, originating in Malaysia with the Latin name *Garcinia mangostana*, French name *mangoustan*, and English name *mangosteen*. There are several theories about this crop's name and its path into Vietnam. Some consider it as travelling through Thailand and therefore the Thai name *mãng khút* was imported into Vietnam. Some claim that it is through Cambodia and therefore the Khmer name *mengkhoot*. However, most believe that missionaries brought this tree and its name into Vietnam, transliterated and read in the Vietnamese way as *mãng cụt*².

Borrowing methods

At the time when the earliest of the three dictionaries mentioned above was compiled, Christianity had been introduced to Vietnam for over one hundred years. With the latter two books, Christianity has been transmitted in Vietnam for more than two hundred years, along with the ups and downs due to the policies of each feudal dynasty governing the country at that time. Words of Indo-European origin, especially Christian jargon, were introduced, spread and initially, some words were recorded in the dictionaries. Those are the initial steps of a partial process for developing and enriching Vietnamese vocabulary.

In addition to those transliterated words, Indo-European words that are not directly borrowed but translated into Vietnamese, are also a very important channel for enriching the recipient language's vocabulary. This is another method used to meet communication needs, especially, of the Catholic and Christian communities and then the Vietnamese community as well as the Vietnamese language.

In the three dictionaries, there are a series of words formed and recorded through direct translation or mimicking Indo-European words: *phép bí tích* (Sacramentum), *xức dầu thánh* (Sacramentum unctio Infirmorum), *phép cắt bì* (Circumcisio), *Đức thánh thiên*

¹ The recorded information about the time coffee and cocoa trees presenting in Vietnam are mostly later than 1838. The arabica coffee is the first coffee variety introduced into Vietnam since 1857, by a number of French missionary priests. The first is experimentally planted in Catholic churches in some provinces in the Northern region. The time when this plant was widely planted and became a plantation is later in 1888. In the documents collected by Vương Toàn (2011, p.32), *cà phê/ ca-fê* appeared in books and newspapers at the latest in 1919].

² Vương Hồng Sển affirmed that the mangosteen tree "gets seeds from Malaysia, brought back by Da To priests, it is said to be from Ba Da Loc (Vietnamese name of Pigneaux de Béhaine - THT) or priest Taberd" (2009, p.423). Writer Sơn Nam cited additional evidence to agree with the above opinion: "According to Melleret, the first mangosteen tree from Malaysia brought to the South was planted in Lai Thieu, and at the parish church of Lai Thieu" (1991 p.334). Đỗ Tất Lợi in his book *Vietnamese medicinal plants and herbs* said that the mangosteen tree originated in Malaysia, Indonesia, and was immigrated to South Vietnam by Catholic missionaries.

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thân (Angelus), *Đức giáo tông* (Summus pontifex), *ăn năn tội* (Contriti), *chúa ba ngôi* (Trinitas), *bảy mối tội đầu* (Septem peccata capitali), *rước mình thánh chúa* (Sacramentum Eucharistiae), *hòm bia truyền* (Arca foederis), *thánh tổ tông* (Sancti Patriarcha), *tòa phán xét* (Tribunal Iudicialis), *tòa giải tội* (Confessionis), *thánh viện tu* (Prior), *bỏ đạo* (Abiectio), *giải tội* (Reconciliatio), *kiêng thịt* (carne abstinentia), *kẻ liệt* (Aeger, Aegrotus), *thông công* (communio), *lễ lá* (festum palmarum)... These are the initial steps for the later development of the so-called Christian vocabulary, which we can now easily see in the scriptures and religious life of the Christianity people such as:

– Words refer to the Catholic hierarchy and community: *Giáo hoàng* (Pope), *Giám mục* (Cardinal), *Hồng y* (Bishop), *Linh mục* (Priest), *giáo dân* (laity), *giáo hội* (church), *giáo phận* (diocese), and *giáo xứ* (parish).

– Words for the scriptures: *Kinh thánh/thánh kinh* (Bible), *Cựu ước* (Old Testament), *Tân ước* (New Testament), *điều răn* (commandment)...

– Liturgical terms: *bí tích* (sacrament), *bí tích rửa tội* (baptême), *bí tích thêm sức* (confirmation), *bí tích thánh thể* (Saint Sacrament), *bí tích giải tội* (Pénitence), *bí tích xức dầu bệnh nhân* (Sacramento des malades), *bí tích truyền chức thánh* (Ordre)...

– Words for seasonal liturgies: *mùa vọng* (Avent), *mùa chay* (Carême), *mùa phục sinh* (Pâque)...

– Words for feasts: *lễ trọng* (Solemnite), *lễ vọng* (vigile), *lễ kính* (Fête), *lễ nhớ bắt buộc* (Mémoire), *lễ nhớ không bắt buộc* (Notif), *lễ riêng* (Propre), *lễ lá* (Dominica Palmarum), *lễ tro* (Feria Quarta Cinerum)...

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Indo-European loanwords in the research corpus, like any foreign word borrowed into Vietnamese, have phonetic changes to suit the Vietnamese phonetic system. At the time of compilation, the authors of the surveyed dictionaries had a solution in transcribing words of Indo-European origin into Vietnamese. This includes different strategies, such as:

– Adding tones: *café* > *cà phe*, *cacao* > *cà cao*, *crux* > *câu rút*, *mangousta* > *mãng cụt*, etc.

– Syllabicizing consonant clusters, for example, *Spirito Santo* > *Xiphiritô Sang tô*.

– Switching to consonants available in the Vietnamese sound system: *Papa* > *Pha pha* (/p/ > /p/f/).

The research results also show that the scope and field of Indo-European loanwords in these three dictionaries are mainly composed of holy names and some words belonging to the Christian community. From the Taberd's dictionary, for the first time, we have possibly the earliest recorded words in the field of everyday life, although not many of them: *cà cao*, *cà phe*, and *mãng cụt*. Later on, the *Dictionarium Annamiticum-Latinum* (1877)

further recorded *xúc xích* and (*ruợu*) *li cô*. Thus, it is not the case that only after 1858 onwards that everyday words of Indo-European origin appeared in the Vietnamese language, but they were present in the language quite early, although still very few. This also shows that the language contact and exchange between Vietnamese and Indo-European languages and its reception of these other languages' vocabulary are quite "open".

Words of Indo-European origin were received to Vietnamese in different forms: 1) Keeping the same form: *lễ missa, Roma, Maria...* 2) Transliterating: *câu rút, cà phe, cà cao, chúa Dêu, Da tô, lâm bô, Ma Cao, Xiphiritô Sang tô, Giu dêu, đức thánh Pha pha, xúc xích, Bảo Lộc* etc.

Therefore, the three corpus sources investigated in the recent study show the initial traces of language contact and loanwords between Vietnamese and Indo-European languages, in particular French, Portuguese, and Latin. This partly reflects the dynamism of language contacts in general, and between Vietnam and Indo-European contacts in particular, and can be seen as a prelude to a larger Indo-European -Vietnamese contact in the later period.

The movement of a language, first of all, its vocabulary, is associated with the movement of the social life of the language community. In the opposite direction, we can partly see the changes and movements of society through its language and vocabulary. The words of Indo-European origin, especially the Christian word groups introduced into and developed in Vietnamese vocabulary from the time the three dictionaries were born, have clearly confirmed this.

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