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TEXTBOOK DEVELOPMENT AS A CYCLICAL PROCESS

Improvement in the education sector requires not only expansion of facilities, training and recruitment of staff, but also development of materials that are relevant and useful to today's learner. In an English-medium instructional environment such as Kenya's, the English language textbook gains importance not only as a resource for the subject but also as a vehicle through which learners can improve their capacity to express themselves and engage with other subjects in the curriculum. In my study, I explore the process of developing English language textbooks for secondary school learners.

In this presentation, I explain the effects of textbook market liberalization (1998) and a new syllabus (2002) on the English textbook in an environment that had previously tended to be dominated by a parastatal publisher. I then compare and contrast perceptions of producers (editors and authors) and consumers (teachers and learners) of one of the textbooks currently in popular use. These two sub-components represent the human face within a tri-component model, adopted from Gray (2006). The model encompasses production/regulation, representation/identity and consumption. It is based on du Gay et al's (1997) *Circuit of Culture*.

I suggest that the perceptions from participants within these sub-components gain increased significance if textbook development is viewed as a cyclical process, with the textbook lessons from the 2002-2011 curriculum cycle feeding into the forthcoming cycle and thereby informing and reshaping textbook representation/identity.

References

- Du Gay et al (1997). *Doing cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman*. London: Sage Publications.
- Gray, J. (2006). *A study of cultural content in the British ELT global course book: A cultural studies approach*. London: University of London.