Two Journeys

In August 2000, I began two journeys—the adoption of children into our family and the writing of this textbook. Although very different, these two journeys shared a common thread of language and communication.

The first journey was the adoption of two beautiful children, Minh and Lien (ages 8 and 9), who joined our family from an orphanage in Vietnam in 2001. This journey of adoption involved completing much paperwork and research, learning a new language and culture, and traveling to an exotic land.

For many months prior to the adoption, nearly everything I did on a day-to-day basis was, in some way, affected by the decision to adopt. I purchased Vietnamese language study aids and began to spend an hour each day studying. A Vietnamese-American friend tutored me, teaching me Vietnamese phrases and laughed with me when I unknowingly said something I didn’t intend to say. My studies were rewarded, however, when I was able to communicate with my new daughters, even as they quickly learned to speak English.

The second journey was the process of writing this textbook. This journey also involved paperwork and research, but I did not need to learn a new language or culture. Because of my many years of experience in the healthcare field, I already understood medical language and culture.

I did, however, need to determine the best way to convey that knowledge to each student who studies this textbook. And so, as I wrote, I drew on my own efforts and struggles to learn a new language during the adoption process. Those insights helped me identify with students who are learning medical language for the first time and enabled me to include textbook features that would support and strengthen students’ efforts as they learned.

As I write this page in late 2015, I am ever-mindful of the many children in this country and overseas who are in need of help, food, and homes.

DID YOU KNOW?
The royalties from this textbook are given to provide ongoing financial support to orphanages and read-and-read school programs for destitute children in several countries, as well as help poor and homeless children in the United States.