

To cite this article: Zhongyu Hu and Yi Zuo (2023). AN ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL FACTORS IN THE ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR JUNIOR MIDDLE SCHOOL IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEW CURRICULUM STANDARDS", International Journal of Education and Social Science Research (IJESSR) 6 (2): 52-62 Article No. 748, Sub Id 1191

AN ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL FACTORS IN THE ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR JUNIOR MIDDLE SCHOOL IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEW CURRICULUM STANDARDS

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37500/IJESSR.2023.6205>

ABSTRACT

Under the trend of global integration, English, as the most widely used language in the world, is an important carrier of international communication and scientific, technological, and cultural exchanges, and English teaching has also received more attention. English teaching should not only develop students' language skills, but also impart different cultural knowledge, promote students' identification and understanding of different cultures, and effectively communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds. While learning the language, is also learning culture. As an important medium for language learners to learn the language, the selection and application of cultural content in foreign language textbooks have become particularly important. To some extent, it guides the way students think in language and the value orientation of multiculturalism. Therefore, this paper selects the foreign research version of a junior high school English textbook as the research object, attempts to analyze the selection of cultural content in the textbook reading materials, points out the problems in the selection of cultural content in the textbook, and puts forward suggestions for improvement, providing reference basis for the future use and compilation of the textbook.

KEYWORDS: foreign research textbook; Junior high school English; Cultural content

1. INTRODUCTION

The English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education issued by the Ministry of Education of China puts forward that the discussion of culture in the new curriculum standard is not limited to a certain culture, but is based on multiple cultures at home and abroad, and defines the nature of curriculum from a cross-cultural perspective. Teachers should guide students to understand the customs, culture, and history of different countries, as well as the outstanding achievements in science and technology, art, and other aspects, carry out the comparative analysis of Chinese and foreign cultures, help students expand their horizons, make them more sensitive to the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign cultures, and improve their intercultural communication skills. It can be seen that the cultural value orientation in the textbooks has become the compilation concept and research object that cannot be ignored. Any theme expressed in the content of the

textbook will convey a series of social and cultural values contained in itself (Cunningsworth, 2002).[1] The middle school stage is a period to lay the foundation for future development. The study of western culture helps to cultivate students' sense of globalization and understanding of English.

Chinese students have learned English since the third grade of primary school, and have mastered some simple words and sentence patterns. This is the initial stage of learning English. By junior high school, it can be said that it is the key period of learning English. The amount of English vocabulary that students need to master is increased gradually. At the same time, students begin to systematically learn English grammar and contact English writing, which requires students to develop and improve their reading comprehension and writing ability. At the stage of English learning, the selection of cultural values and ways of thinking guided by textbooks plays an essential role in guiding students' ideological values. The author selects the foreign research version of the junior high school English textbook, analyzes the cultural content in the textbook, and puts forward suggestions for improvement, to better understand and implement the curriculum objectives, and provide theoretical and practical guidance for future English teachers and students engaged in English education.

2. Research object and method

This paper selects the textbook of Compulsory Education Textbook, which is published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, as the research object. The author mainly uses the text analysis method to analyze the selection of the cultural content of the textbook.

3. Research results and analysis

English curriculum standards under compulsory education include language ability objectives, cultural awareness objectives, thinking quality objectives and learning ability objectives. Among them, the cultural content of junior high school English teaching involves the theme content in the goal of cultural awareness, including human and self, human and society, and human and nature. [2] Therefore, when analyzing the cultural content in the textbook, we should pay attention to the analysis from three aspects: human and self, human and society, and human and nature.

3.1 Vocabulary sorting

In English learning, vocabulary is the cornerstone of connecting semantics and forming idioms to convey in-depth information and cultural meaning to the outside world. Therefore, before analyzing the cultural content in junior high school English textbooks, it is necessary to analyze the number of words that junior high school English textbooks require students to master.

Grade	Vocabulary
The first semester of Grade 7	462
The second semester of Grade 7	441
The first semester of Grade 8	318
The second semester of Grade 8	266
The first semester of Grade 9	380
The second semester of Grade 9	128

According to the foreign research edition figure, the number of words in Grade 7 is 903, accounting for 45% of the whole junior middle school English vocabulary learning. The number of words in Grade 8 is 584, accounting for 30% of the entire junior middle school English vocabulary learning. The number of words in Grade 9 is 508, accounting for 25% of the whole junior middle school English vocabulary learning. Therefore, this data set shows that the number of English words in Grade 7 accounts for the highest proportion in the whole junior middle school English vocabulary learning. It also shows that the textbook of junior one attaches great importance to the foundation of discourse and cultural teaching. The English (new standard) textbook for the first semester of Grade 7 has fully considered the actual situation of primary school English teaching and has prepared sufficient transitional content for students.

To a great extent, the external research edition's junior middle school English textbook has achieved the pre-conceived effect of words and idioms or fixed collocations in the English curriculum standards for compulsory education. The whole set of books embodies the principle of efficiency in terms of vocabulary.

3.2 Cultural content sorting

Cultural type	The first semester of Grade 7	The second semester of Grade 7	The first semester of Grade 8	The second semester of Grade 8	The first semester of Grade 9	The second semester of Grade 9	Proportion
Target language culture	Module5	Module1 Module6 Module7 Module9	Module1 Module2 Module8 Module10	Module6 Module7 Module10	Module1 Module2 Module3 Module5 Module7 Module10	Module2 Module6 Module7	33%
Native culture	Module3 Module10	Module2	Module5	Module8	Module4 Module6 Module8 Module11	Module3	15%
Comparative culture	Module8 Module9	Module3 Module10 Module11	Module11	Module1 Module4 Module5	Module9	Module1 Module8	19%
World culture		Module12	Module9	Module2			5%
Shared culture	Module1 Module2 Module4 Module6 Module7	Module4 Module5 Module8	Module3 Module4 Module6 Module7 Module12	Module3 Module9	Module12	Module4 Module5	28%

It can be seen from the above table that the textbook of the first semester of the seventh grade of the foreign research edition focuses on the common culture, less on the target language culture, local culture, and comparative culture, and there is no content about world culture. The textbook for the second semester of Grade 7 focuses on the slogan culture, followed by a shared culture and comparative culture, with less reference to local culture and world culture. The eighth-grade textbooks focus on the target language, close, and shared cultures. The teaching materials of grade 9 involve more target language and local culture. The foreign research edition of junior high school English textbooks generally involves more target language culture and shared culture, followed by local and comparative culture, and rarely requires world culture.

Based on the above analysis, when using the foreign research version of junior high school English textbooks, we should compare the cultural part of the textbook content. In the initial English learning, students should try to understand different cultural backgrounds to reduce the obstacles to cross-cultural communication. When compiling textbooks, editors should consider the diversity of textbook contents and further balance the proportion of various cultures. They should increase the reading

materials on world culture and local culture so that students can use English to understand the world and the world to understand China.[3]

3.3 Topic sorting

The new curriculum standard stipulates that in the study of compulsory education, cultural knowledge includes not only the understanding of material cultures such as diet, clothing, architecture, transportation, and related inventions and creations, but also the knowledge of intangible cultures such as philosophy, science, history, language, literature, art and education, as well as values, moral cultivation, aesthetic taste, labor consciousness, social conventions, and customs. Learning cultural knowledge is not limited to understanding and memorizing specific knowledge points but, more importantly, discovering and judging their attitudes and values. Knowing and understanding the culture of English-speaking countries is conducive to English learning and application.[4] Therefore, in junior high school English teaching, the most important thing is to pay attention to whether the topic of cultural content in textbooks can guide students to form correct attitudes and values towards cultural heritage.

The first semester of Grade 7	Module 1	Personal information
	Module 2	Family and relatives
	Module 3	School information
	Module 4	Food and drink
	Module 5	School and school life
	Module 6	Animals
	Module 7	Using the internet
	Module 8	Personal preference
	Module 9	Daily routines and culture
	Module 10	Festivals; holidays and celebrations
The second semester of Grade 7	Module 1	School life
	Module 2	Personal background
	Module 3	Plans and arrangements
	Module 4	School; living environment
	Module 5	Shopping
	Module 6	Living environment; travel
	Module 7	Personal background
	Module 8	Stories
	Module 9	Writers
	Module 10	Travel and transport
	Module 11	Body language
	Module 12	Recreation
	Module 1	Language learning strategies
	Module 2	Living environment
	Module 3	Sports
	Module 4	Modes of transportation

The first semester of Grade 8	Module 5	Recreation: plays and films
	Module 6	Animal
	Module 7	Stories
	Module 8	Accidents
	Module 9	Population
	Module 10	Weather
	Module 11	Social behaviour/custom
	Module 12	Safety and first aid
The second semester of Grade 8	Module 1	Feelings and moods
	Module 2	Personal experiences
	Module 3	The universe
	Module 4	Hygiene and health
	Module 5	Recreation: cartoons
	Module 6	Hobbies
	Module 7	Language learning
	Module 8	Tourism and nature
	Module 9	Interpersonal communication
	Module 10	Jobs and careers
The first semester of Grade 9	Module 1	Nature and travel
	Module 2	Festivals: holidays and celebrations
	Module 3	Famous people
	Module 4	Life at home
	Module 5	Public rules and map reading
	Module 6	Interpersonal communication
	Module 7	Stories, poems, plays and writers
	Module 8	Sports and matches
	Module 9	Inventions and technological advances
	Module 10	Countries and nationalities
	Module 11	School life
	Module 12	Environmental protection
The second semester of Grade 9	Module 1	Travel
	Module 2	School life
	Module 3	Community
	Module 4	Safety rules
	Module 5	First aid and exercise
	Module 6	Eating customs
	Module 7	Language culture
	Module 8	School life and friends

Sort out the above data to get the following table:

Grade	Man and Self	Man and Society	Man and Nature	Sum
The first semester of Grade 7	5	4	1	10
The second semester of Grade 7	5	6	1	12
The first semester of Grade 8	1	8	3	12
The second semester of Grade 8	4	4	2	10
The first semester of Grade 9	2	8	2	12
The second semester of Grade 9	2	6	0	8
Sum	19	36	9	64

It can see from the table that in the seventh grade, the topic of cultural content accounts for a large proportion in the distribution of people and self, people and society, and less in the distribution of people and nature. The topic of textbooks in the first semester of Grade 7 accounts for the most significant proportion of the part of people and self, and the issue of texts in the second semester of Grade 7 accounts for a more substantial proportion of the number of people and society. Analysis of the reasons: as students enter the junior high school from primary school, it is when children start puberty that they need to carry out awakening education activities to cultivate and stimulate consciously, so in the first stage, the distribution of topics about people and self is relatively concentrated. By paying attention to people and self, learning to pay attention to life and learning, and learning to be a person and do things, we can shape the correct three outlooks for students' lifelong growth. Thus, in the follow-up study, as students grow, they gradually expand their horizons of looking at problems. Naturally, introduce the content of people and society, understand social value orientation on the part of people and society, and learn to abide by social laws—finally, transition to the amount of human and nature. Although man and nature are more extensive than man and self and man and society, the topic of man and nature permeates all aspects of man and society. It can say that it is a

process from recognition to practice and then from course to reflection after the "awakening" of students' self-consciousness.

In the second semester of the seventh grade, the number of topics in the human and self part remained at five, and in the human and social part increased to six, while the number of issues in the human and nature part remained unchanged. Analysis of the reason: after a semester of study in the first semester of Grade seven, students have a particular foundation for this stage of learning. In terms of people and self, students still need to continue to study and think to shape a positive three outlooks, and then pay more attention to people and society, people and nature, which is the embodiment of the textbook based on the lifelong development of students. Learning English in Grade eight mainly focuses on people and themselves and people and society; The topic of learning English in Grade nine primarily focuses on people and culture.

In general, textbooks help students cultivate a certain sense and ability of cross-cultural communication to a great extent. Students are very concerned about cultural phenomena and cultural background knowledge in books and exercises and pay attention to accumulation. They believe that the collection of cultural knowledge plays a positive role in improving cross-cultural communication ability, deepening the understanding of their own culture, and improving their total score in English: for students, the method of learning cross-cultural knowledge is mainly based on the explanation of textbooks by teachers in class, and pay attention to the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign cultures, It meets the requirements of cross-cultural communication for Grade 8 students in the schedule, that is, it can pay attention to the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign cultures in learning, life, and daily communication: the "listening and speaking" part, the "oral" part "All over the world "Some of them arouse students' interest in cross-cultural communication to a great extent and mobilize students' enthusiasm for learning. The problem with the textbook is that the content of some module topics in the book is too old. Students will not be interested in learning, so they need to update some of them: the textbook should appropriately add the introduction to national cultural traditions, festivals, customs, etc., enrich students' knowledge reserves, and compare the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign cultures. Teachers should make flexible and effective use of the textbook content and help students create relevant cross-cultural communication situations. [5] And create similar cross-cultural communication situations in a class by using textbook activities to improve students' cross-cultural communication ability significantly.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

4.1 Main findings

According to the survey results, the cultural types of the reading part of this set of textbooks are relatively rich, but there are still some minor deficiencies in some aspects. According to the research questions in this study, the author summarizes the following conclusions: Through this study, the author believes that the cultural types included in the foreign research version of junior high school English textbooks include interpersonal communication, clothing, diet, natural phenomena,

entertainment and sports, and festival culture. In addition, other cultural types also include lifestyle, code of conduct, values, etc. At the same time, the author also believes that the cultural types of the reading part of the foreign research version of junior high school English textbooks can meet the cultural learning needs of students and the cultural teaching needs of teachers. From the analysis of the art-type text of the reading part of the foreign research edition of junior high school English textbooks, the cultural content of the reading part of this set of books is relatively rich, especially history, holidays, natural phenomena, entertainment, and sports culture. In addition, the reading part of this textbook pays more attention to the culture of the target language countries. In the process of learning English, students can not only learn English-related knowledge, but also have a deep understanding of the culture of the target language country, to make preparations for students to properly communicate with others in cross-cultural communication in the future, and also enhance students' awareness and ability of cross-cultural communication.

4.2 Suggestions for teachers and textbook writers

Based on the above analysis, some implications are put forward for textbook writers and teachers.

(1) Suggestions for textbook writers :

When compiling textbooks, writers need to further balance the proportion of different cultures and should increase the reading materials of world culture and local culture, so that students can use English to understand the world and also let the world understand China. For example, in addition to the Spring Festival, Yuanxiao (Filled round balls made of glutinous rice flour for the Lantern Festival) Festival, Mid Autumn Festival, and Dragon Boat Festival, the introduction of Chinese festivals can also cover the Qingming Festival, Double Ninth Festival, and Winter Solstice Festival. In addition, all ethnic minorities in China also maintain their traditional festivals, such as the torch festival of the Yi nationality and the flower jumping festival of the Miao nationality; Patriotic festivals include the Party Building Day on July 1 and the Army Building Day on August 1, which are respectively the anniversary of the birth of the CPC and the founding of the PLA. The Chinese culture of these festivals is rich and far-reaching, which helps enhance students' sense of cultural identity, national pride, and patriotism, and learn to tell Chinese stories in English.

Public figures who have made significant achievements in various fields such as economy, politics, science and technology, and art often play the role of role model, especially for junior high school students whose world outlook, outlook on life, and values are about to be formed. Therefore, when selecting materials, textbook writers should first pay attention to the character of celebrities, and then their achievements. Guide students to form positive values by praising positive celebrities such as scientists and doctors in China.

Among the scientific and technological invention projects mentioned in the textbook, most are the world's major inventions in history. It is suggested that the authors add some new epoch-making inventions, such as the great inventions of the Chinese people, such as introducing China's "four new

inventions" high-speed railway, Alipay, bike sharing and online shopping in English, and Tu Youyou's artemisinin, artificial insulin, etc. By adding such materials, students' cultural self-confidence and national pride will be enhanced.

(2) Suggestions for English teacher :

When using the foreign research version of junior high school English textbooks, teachers should have the awareness and sensitivity to excavate the cultural connotation of the textbooks and the ideological and political aspects of the curriculum, so that teachers can play an important role in cultural teaching. We should pay attention to cultural comparison. Through the comparison between different cultures, students can understand different cultural backgrounds, thus reducing the barriers to cross-cultural communication.

At the same time, teachers should attach importance to the expansion of culture, hold cultural lectures regularly, systematically introduce the customs and customs of English-speaking countries, and improve students' cultural awareness.

Teachers should use teaching materials flexibly, that is, adjust the learning of cultural content according to students' knowledge background, adjust the teaching order, or expand the breadth and depth of cultural items according to students' cognitive level and psychological characteristics, so as to promote cultural teaching. In particular, China is a country with a long history and 56 ethnic groups have different cultures. Teachers should consciously integrate more Chinese culture or local culture into language teaching so that students have a full understanding of the local ethnic culture and have the ability to express their local culture in English.

Teachers should make full use of authentic cultural materials (films, music, cartoons, documents, etc.) to enrich students' cultural input. In addition, teachers should try their best to let students participate in more communication activities, such as discussion, debate, and role play, to promote cultural understanding and communication ability, and promote students' cultural output.

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Fund projects

This thesis is based on the phased achievements of the Sichuan Higher Education Talent Training Quality and Teaching Reform Project from 2021-2023, the project name: Research and Practice on the Effective Integration of Chinese Excellent Cultural Education into Foreign Language Education and Teaching (project number: JG2021-1058).