

East meets West: Exploring the Integration of Chinese Culture in PEP Senior High English Textbooks (2019 Edition) in China

Xiuli Sun^{1,2}, Xialan Dong^{1,3,*}, Fenghua Zhao^{1,4}, Jiefeng Wei^{1,5}

¹College of Education, De La Salle University-Dasmarinas, Dasmarinas, Cavite, Philippines

²HuaiBei Normal University, Huaibei, Anhui, China

³Huanggang Normal University, Huanggang, Hubei, China

⁴Zhengzhou Normal University, Zhengzhou, Henan, China

⁵Guangxi Baise University, Baise, Guangxi, China

*Corresponding Author.

Abstract: Under the background of globalization, culture teaching is becoming more and more important. English textbook is the main carrier of culture teaching. In order to integrate the Chinese culture better, this paper analyzed the elements of Chinese culture in the textbooks and found that the textbooks emphasize material culture rather than spiritual culture, value cultural input rather than cultural output, and lack of deep culture and revolutionary culture. Therefore, distribution of Chinese theme culture should be balanced in New Senior High English Textbooks, the structure of Chinese culture should be adjusted and optimized, and Chinese culture should be strengthened as the main multi-cultural input and harmonious ecological culture output, only in this way, can we realize the organic integration of Chinese culture and middle school textbooks better.

Keywords: Chinese Culture; Integration; NSEFC (2019); English Textbooks

1. Introduction

In recent years, many non-English speaking countries have realized that their own cultures may be in danger of being overwhelmed by foreign cultures. In China, more and more experts also realize that many Chinese students cannot express Chinese culture and customs in English. With the coming of the new era, telling Chinese stories well was proposed, which is consistent with the external expression goal of cultural consciousness mentioned in the New Curriculum Standard of English. However, in terms of cultural education, both Chinese English teaching and English textbooks

have emphasized the "target language" culture and paid little attention to the important role of "mother tongue" culture (i.e. Chinese culture) for a long time. Yu Juan, Guo Yuanxiang pointed out that Chinese English education at present emphasizes language knowledge, lacks input of cultural background, cultural value and cultivation of cultural consciousness [1]. Senior high school is a crucial period for the formation of outlook on life and values, so it is more important to cultivate cultural awareness and strengthen cultural confidence in senior high school English textbooks. Therefore, how to fully and deeply integrate Chinese culture into senior high school English textbooks has become one of the most urgent problems that foreign language education face.

2. The Presentation of Chinese Culture Elements in NSEFC (2019 Edition)

The English Curriculum Standards for Senior High School (2017) pointed out that the general goal of senior high school English courses is to fully implement the educational policy of China, implement moral cultivation and cultivate people, practice core values, and cultivate talents with unique feelings of home and country, broad international vision and excellent cross-cultural communication ability. This also highlights the instrumental, humanistic and epochal nature of English. As one of the four core qualities, the cultivation of cultural awareness is helpful for students to enhance national identity and feelings, strengthen cultural confidence, strengthen patriotism, and give play to the function of culture casting soul and educating people [2].

2.1 The Proportion of Chinese Culture in NSEFC (2007) and NSEFC (2019)

According to the classification of regional culture, culture can be divided into mother language culture, target language culture and international culture, also known as world culture. For learners who learn English as a foreign language or a second language, "mother tongue culture" refers to the culture of their own country or their own language. The mother tongue culture in this study is Chinese culture. "Target language culture" refers to the culture of English-speaking countries around the world, such as Britain and the United States. "World culture" refers to other cultures except mother tongue culture and target language culture. In this study, it refers to the cultures of countries other than Chinese culture and English culture, such as Germany, Russia and other countries. The proportion of these three cultures in NSEFC (2007) (English textbooks Module 1- 5) and NSEFC (2019) (English textbooks Module 1- 3) is shown in Figure 1:

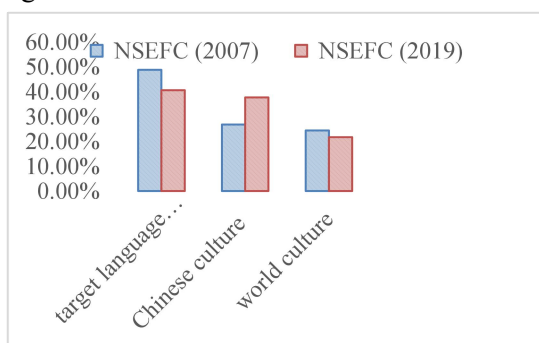


Figure 1. Distribution of Three Types of Culture in NSEFC (2007) and NSEFC (2019)

According to statistics, the author found that in NSEFC (2007), target language culture accounted for 48.8%, mother tongue culture accounted for 26.8%, and world culture accounted for 24.4% [3]. In NSEFC (2019), the proportion of these three types of culture is 40.60%, 37.70%, and 21.70% respectively. In NSEFC (2019), Chinese culture has increased by nearly 11%, and the proportion of mother tongue culture and target language culture is nearly the same. After careful and in-depth study, it is found that in NSEFC (2019), Chinese culture is not only greatly improved in terms of total amount, but also rich and diverse in cultural types, which reflects distinct characteristics and implements the China's educational policy. For example, the

introduction of China International Rescue Team in Module 1, the call for human to protect wild animals and plants in the reading part of Module 2, the praise of Lin Qiaozhi, the first gynecologist in China, and other Chinese cultural materials in the reading and listening part of Module 3. It can be seen that NSEFC (2019) basically realizes the overall quality and quantitative goals of the New Curriculum Standards in the selection of native language culture, presenting them in a multi-modal form such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and reading, to cultivate students' comprehensive language skills and establish their own cultural confidence [4].

2.2 Presentation of Relevant Chinese Cultural Content in NSEFC (2019)

This study analyzes the Chinese cultural content of listening, speaking, reading, writing and reading (listening, speaking, reading and writing and short videos) in the textbooks of NSEFC (2019). According to the elements of culture, Niu Xinsheng divided culture into five categories: material culture, spiritual culture, social culture, behavioral culture and concept culture. Material culture refers to the objects manufactured by human labor, such as architecture, technological products, tools, and spiritual culture is highly reflected of human civilization, such as literature, art, etc.; social culture, the embodiment of social relations and social structure, covering all kinds of organizations and institutions; behavior culture (such as norms) and non-interpersonal behavior (customs, etc.); concept culture, involving values, thinking mode ethics, religion and aesthetics[5]. Statistical results show that in NSEFC (2019), the distribution of Chinese cultural elements is shown in Table 1.

3. Analysis of Chinese Cultural Elements in NSEFC (2019)

3.1 Analysis of the Types of Chinese Culture Presentation

There are a large number of Chinese cultural elements in the textbooks. This paper shows that NSEFC (2019) has a variety of Chinese culture, involving almost every aspect of life. As for material culture ,it is as high as 32%, especially focusing on ancient architecture and scientific and technological achievements, such as the Great Wall, Confucius Temple and

quantum satellite; Behavior culture involves the customs of all nationalities, such as the Lantern Festival, the Mongolian Nadam Festival; Concept culture mainly involves calling for the protection of wildlife; Spiritual culture involves the development of Chinese characters and the high spirit of unity of the Chinese people in the two major earthquakes

of this century. These cultural themes are all close to the students' life, which can deepen the understanding and identification of students' mother tongue culture and promote tolerance of world culture[6]. The statistics of the five types of Chinese culture are shown in Figure 2.

Table 1. Distribution of Chinese Cultural Elements in English Textbooks Module 1-3 NSEFC (2019)

| Theme | Section | Elements | Types |
|----------------------------|-----------|---|--------------------|
| Traveling Around | Reading | Terracotta Army | behavioral culture |
| | Speaking | Lijiang | behavioral culture |
| Sports and Fitness | Listening | sports event | social culture |
| | Reading | Langping | social culture |
| | Video | Karsts of China | material culture |
| Natural and Disasters | Speaking | earthquake Wenchuan | spiritual culture |
| | Reading | Earthquake Tangshan | spiritual culture |
| | Expanding | China's rescue | social culture |
| Languages Around the World | Reading | Chinese Writing System | spiritual culture |
| | Video | Chinese Character | spiritual culture |
| Cultural Heritage | Listening | Mount Tai | material culture |
| | Writing | Mogao Caves | material culture |
| | Reading | Han Dynasty Horse Chariots | material culture |
| | Expanding | Imperial Tombs | material culture |
| Wildlife Protection | Video | The Great Wall | material culture |
| | Reading | Chiru | conceptual culture |
| | Reading | Milu Deer | conceptual culture |
| History and Traditions | Writing | South China tiger and Yangtze River Dolphin | conceptual culture |
| | Listening | Temple of Confucius | material culture |
| Festivals and Celebrations | Listening | ancient city of Pingyao | material culture |
| | Listening | The Lantern Festival | behavioral culture |
| | Speaking | The Spring Festival | behavioral culture |
| | Reading | The Nadam Festival | behavioral culture |
| Morals and Virtues | Video | The Lantern Festival | behavioral culture |
| | Listening | Lin Qiaozhi's great deeds | conceptual culture |
| | Reading | Confucius and his virtues | conceptual culture |
| | Expanding | Lin Qiaozhi | behavioral culture |
| Diverse Cultures | Video | Confucius and Ren | behavioral culture |
| | Listening | ethnic minority cultures | behavioral culture |
| | Reading | Chinatown | material culture |
| Space Exploration | Listening | ethnic minority cultures | behavioral culture |
| | Listening | Yang Liwei | social culture |
| | Reading | China's space programme | material culture |
| | Expanding | China's FAST | material culture |

As can be seen from Figure 2, the proportion of material culture in the whole textbook is as high as 32.35%, which belongs to surface culture. Behavioral culture is 29.41%, conceptual culture for 14.71%, social culture for 11.77%, while spiritual culture only accounts for 11.76%. Spiritual culture covers literature and history, art, music and so on. The material culture of NSEFC (2019) mainly refers to modern scientific and technological

achievements, ancient architecture, etc. In Unit 4 of Module 3, China's space program, telescope and quantum satellite are introduced, highlighting China's scientific and technological strength and enhancing students' national confidence and pride. The textbook selects representative beauty spots and historic sites such as the Great Wall and the Confucius Temple, which can effectively improve students' ability to "tell Chinese stories well"

in English, enhance national cohesion and sense of identity, and strengthen their cultural confidence. Finally, the exercise book of Unit 1 of Module 2 introduces the four-wheeled carriage of the Han Dynasty, which is the only Chinese culture related to the tools in this textbook. Compared with the Greek bronze spear, it is conducive to training students to view Chinese and Western cultures from multiple perspectives.

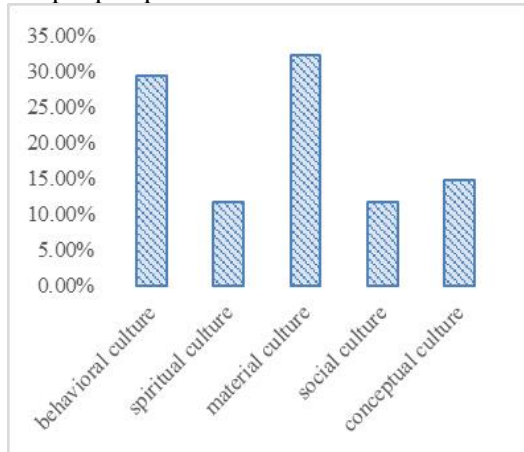


Figure 2. Distribution of Five Types of Chinese Culture in NSEFC (2019)

Social culture reflects various real relationships between people. The NSEFC (2019) textbook covers little social culture content, such as the introduction of Chinese sports events and Chinese athlete Lang Ping, the introduction of the Chinese international rescue team and the interview with the Chinese astronaut Yang Liwei. Youth's understanding of great people. However, the family structure closely related to adolescents is a necessary part of social culture, which is not involved in NSEFC (2019). Rich behavioral culture is involved, such as the introduction of traditional festivals Spring Festival and Lantern Festival, ethnic minority festival Nadam Festival and Confucianism. If the differences between Chinese and Western interpersonal communication methods can be presented in the textbooks or integrated into the deep Chinese culture. Concept culture includes values, social and cultural psychology, way of thinking, historical and cultural tradition, aesthetic taste and national cultural character. NSEFC (2019) textbooks involves little conceptual culture. The change of human life style to protect and save Chiru is advocated in Reading, and protection of wild animals is appealed by making posters about the

protection of South China tiger and dolphin in writing. Lin Qiaozhi's selfless dedication of life is introduced in Module 3, which guides students to establish a correct outlook on life, world outlook and values. The spiritual culture topics involved in this textbook are mainly characters and geography: the article in Reading expounds the evolution history of the system of Chinese character writing, belongs to the culture of writing. Reading in Unit 4 introduces the Tangshan earthquake and Wenchuan earthquake respectively, so students can learn the relevant earthquake knowledge, which belongs to the geographical culture. In terms of spiritual culture, there is a lack of spiritual culture related to literature. Five thousand years history of China is also a history of national liberation revolutionary cultures such as the War of Resistance against Japanese aggression, the founding of the New China and classical literary works such as *Tang Poetry* and *Journey to the West* should be integrated into textbooks, which can strengthen cultural confidence.

In short, NSEFC (2019) covers various Chinese culture. However, there are also some problems in the distribution of Chinese culture types in NSEFC (2019). There is a serious imbalance in the proportion of the five types of cultural elements, and spiritual culture, concept culture and social culture is relatively less.

3.2 Analysis of the Presentation Mode of Chinese Culture

The presentation of Chinese culture in NSEFC (2019) accounts for 67% of Chinese culture in the form of language output (reading, listening and watching video), while in the form of output (speaking and writing) accounts for a relatively small proportion, with a total of 15%. As shown in Figure 3:

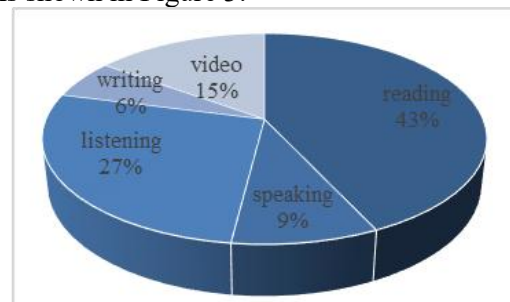


Figure 3. Distribution of Chinese Culture in Module 1-3 of NSEFC (2019)

Chinese culture in the textbooks includes Tangshan Earthquake, Nadam Festival, the

deeds of Lin Qiaozhi, etc. Most of them are about natural scenery, festivals, celebrity deeds and life values, providing students with a large number of rich materials related to Chinese cultural elements. However, most of these cultures need effective guidance from teachers, so that students can enhance their cultural comparative awareness and deepen their cultural understanding ability. It can be seen from the figure above that speaking and writing about Chinese culture is insufficient. Speaking and writing account for 9% and 6% respectively. There are only two articles in the NSEFC (2019) textbook covering Chinese cultural elements. One is a news report on the protection of China's cultural heritage, and the other is a poster about the South China Tiger and the dolphin. The Chinese cultural elements in NSEFC (2019) are not evenly distributed, mainly in the reading and listening sections. Listening, speaking, reading, writing and reading are the basic skills to cultivate students' language ability, among which listening, speaking and watching are the way to input language information. Reading and listening account for 70% of Chinese culture, while speaking and writing are the way to output language information, only accounting for 15%. Compared with the previous version of the textbooks, the number of Chinese cultures in NSEFC (2019) version has increased much. However, the serious absence of language output is bound to restrict students' expression of Chinese culture, which is not conducive to the dissemination of national excellent culture.

4. Recommendations on Integrating Chinese Culture into NSEFC (2019)

4.1 Equal Distribution of Different Types of Chinese Culture

The presentation above shows the distribution of Chinese culture is unbalanced. Spiritual culture can be appropriately added. For example, Chinese classical Musical Instruments, traditional family concepts and other topics. In unit 4, for example, when talking about the ancient city of Pingyao and Qiao courtyard, Chinese traditional family concepts can be added to the textbooks. Four or five generations lived together. This is the traditional family lifestyle of Chinese people, which is in contrast with the independent

family life in the West. If textbooks can explore the curve of the Chinese way of thinking, and compared with the western linear way of thinking, so Chinese people's unique excellent national spirit, national character and profound culture will be more prominent. It is suggested the textbooks present the similarities and differences of English expression in terms of national character, ideological belief, value orientation, etiquette and customs, thinking mode and family mode. In the sense that learners engage in two cultural perspectives which can establish cultural awareness [7].

4.2 Chinese Cultural Structure in the Textbook Should be Adjusted

The Chinese cultural content selected in NSEFC (2019) can be optimized and adjusted. First of all, the content of Chinese culture is not systematic and scattered distributed in various sections of the textbook. Teachers should reconstruct or weigh the Chinese culture according to the content of the textbook and the actual situation of the students [8]. The selection of Chinese culture should not only reflect the typical Chinese culture, but also the regional culture and local culture [9]. Secondly, the textbooks focus more on traditional culture, lacking modern culture." Revolutionary Culture" and "Chinese Dream" can be integrated into textbooks to encourage and stimulate students' patriotic enthusiasm and establish confidence in national culture. Thirdly, Chinese culture in this version of textbooks is mainly presented through reading and listening [10]. But we cannot ignore speaking and writing. Too less speaking and writing is inconsistent with the current national "telling Chinese stories well" advocated in English and is not conducive to the promotion of excellent Chinese culture.

5. Conclusions

The findings of present study show that the distribution and structure of Chinese culture is unbalanced in NSEFC (2019) textbook. Firstly, there is too much material culture and behavioral culture, while spiritual culture and social culture are less. Secondly, compared with NSEFC (2007), although the proportion of Chinese culture has increased, the content of Chinese culture is not systematic and scattered distributed in various sections of the textbook. Compared with the target language culture, the

depth and position of Chinese culture is in a weak position, which is reflected in the lack of systematic and deep culture. More traditional culture is involved in textbooks and there is little modern Chinese culture, especially "Revolutionary Culture" and "Chinese Dream". In addition, Chinese culture in the textbooks is mainly presented through reading and listening. There is less Chinese culture presented through writing and speaking.

However, this study is not without limitation. Our analysis in this study is only based on the presentation of Chinese culture in the English textbooks of PEP (2019 Edition), but there are more than ten different versions of senior high English textbooks in China. The further analysis needs to be tested and validated by empirical data.

Therefore, future study on this issue may focus on adopting the mixed research method: quantitative and qualitative methods to gather relative data and provide empirical evidence for further study. Future research can focus on more other versions of senior high English textbooks in China, such as Oxford edition. Future study will expand the scope of this issue.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the 2021 Philosophy and Social Science Research Project of Hubei Provincial Department of Education: Research on the Heterogeneity of Quality Evaluation of Primary and Secondary Education in Hubei Province (21Y220), and 2023 Huanggang Educational Science Planning Project: Research on the Heterogeneity of Quality Evaluation in Primary and Secondary Education--Taking Huanggang City as an Example (2023JB01).

References

[1] Yu Juan and Guo Yuanxiang. On the Cultural Response Teaching of Foreign

Language Curriculum. *Global Education Outlook*, 2011, (3): 76-81.

[2] Ministry of Education of PRC. *English Curriculum Standards for General High Schools (2017 edition)*. Beijing: People's Education Publisher, 2018.

[3] Tang Shuang (2021). Comparative analysis of the cultural content of the old and new high school English teaching materials. *Journal of Southwest University (Social Science Edition)*. 2021(S1).

[4] Tang Rongna. Comparative study of Chinese culture content in human Education Edition high School English textbooks--Take the 2007 and 2019 editions as examples. Huangshi: Hubei Normal University press, 2022.

[5] Niu Xinsheng. Culture teaching in foreign language teaching. *Journal of Ningbo University (Education Science edition)*. 2002(12): 80-81.

[6] He Lifen. Analysis of the Integration of Chinese Culture in high school English textbooks. *Teaching and Management*, 2018 (12): 84-87.

[7] Byram, M. *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. England: Multilingual Matters Ltd, 1997.

[8] Wu Nian and Xiao Yan, On the Importance of Embedding Learners' Native Language Culture in ESL Curriculum Design. *Chinese Foreign Language*, 2006 (02): 68-71.

[9] Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford University Press.

[10] Wang Wanzhen. Practice Exploration of Integrating Chinese Traditional Culture into High School English Teaching. *English Teacher*, 2020, 20 (06): 22-24 + 29