

Recent Research Papers for the Japan-China
Textbook Analysis Project

Two presentations from the Conference
At Ibaraki Christian University
February 27, 2010

I.

—Emblems of Sailboats and Passports—
The Travel Motif in Junior and Senior High School
Textbooks in Japan

Harris G. Ives—Ibaraki Christian University, Japan

II.

How Large a Vocabulary is Needed for Reading
NSE and UNICORN

ZHOU Xi—Tianjin Normal University, China

*With favoring winds, o'er sunlit seas,
We sailed for the Hesperides,
The land where golden apples grow;
But that, ah! That was long ago . . .*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Ultima Thule*¹

—Emblems of Sailboats and Passports—
The Travel Motif in Junior and Senior High School
English Language Texts in Japan

Harris G. Ives

Based on the oral presentation delivered
February 27, 2010
Ibaraki Christian University

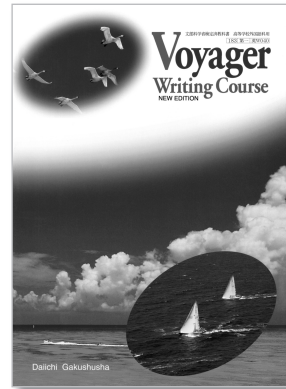
Keywords: China, Japan, English Language Texts, Travel Motif, Socialization, Specialized Vocabulary: *Homestay, Host Mother, Host Father, Host Family*

The Epigram: On a recent lecture trip to Tianjin Normal University I was able to indulge my love of literature, travel, and teaching. In sessions on American Literature, I was able to share my great appreciation of Wadsworth's *Ultima Thule*. It suggests an old, weary man thinking back on his idyllic childhood when he and a boyhood friend promised each other to set sail for great adventures "one day." That theme of travel, adventure, experience and learning is incorporated into Japanese English language texts in which publishers and educators subliminally affirm that language learning is a way to happy socialization. Beautiful glossy photos of oceans, sails, and multi-cultural groups of smiling young people carry this message forward.

Note: On the date indicated above, Professors Zhou Xi, Hiroko Semiya and I presented papers relating to English Language Education. This paper is a re-worked manuscript based on my part of the program. Recently, I have returned from a three-week visiting professorship at Tianjin Normal University where I was able to continue dialogues with my good friends and fellow researchers. Additionally, I taught a session at Number 29 Junior High School (it has become a favorite stop on my frequent trips

1 Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Ultima Thule* in *The Complete Poetical Works*, Houghton Mifflin Publishers (Boston, 1884), p. 285.

to Tianjin) where I was able to participate in and observe the teaching program there. It was another opportunity to assess *The New Standard English Textbook*. As I have indicated in the preliminary research, *The Chinese preparations for the junior high school texts*² that I analyzed involve (1) smaller print (4) more sophisticated grammar (3) higher level vocabulary in the reading selections, and (4) an emphasis on language mastery. On the other hand, the junior high school texts in Japan, from my observation, are more attractive (the big difference is that the Japanese system allows for selection from a variety of commercial publishing houses; the Chinese system relies mainly on the *New Standard English Series*), and emphasize communicative English. The dialogues are simpler, but they capitalize on the interest Japanese students have in communicating with peers who are native English speakers. Further, The Japanese English language experiences seem to rely on activities other than the textbook: travel abroad, contact with native English teachers in the Japanese classroom, and friendships formed with foreign children in Japan as well as with friendships formed while Japanese children accompany parents on working assignments abroad.



*The Voyager Writing Course * features a beautiful cover of blue skies with fluffy clouds. Note the circled insets: (1) flight of birds, and (2) sailboats. Both images support the concept of language learning as a means of going places, freedom, and socialization.

This paper focuses on a specific, attractive element in Japanese junior and senior high school texts: the inclusion of the travel motif which suggests that socialization is a major motivation for English language study in Japan. Therefore, several particular texts are scrutinized for references to travel in photographs, dialogues, and reading selections.

2 Several educators have noticed a great leap in complexity between Japanese junior and senior high school English language texts. While the lower level texts feature more white space and more liberal use of photos, the high school texts jump up to a much higher level vocabulary, often featuring readings from famous speakers such as Martin Luther King and Wangari Matthai. In a session held on the campus at Ibaraki Christian University a few years ago, English professors discussed this gap, musing that the cause for the contentment of junior high school students is that the easier approach makes language study novel and exciting (students can envision success in their studies), while we might explain the loss of interest among high school students as due to the sudden increase in vocabulary and other linguistic complications.

Introduction - The History of the Book Analysis Project

Several years ago, professors from Ibaraki Christian University approached colleagues at Tianjin Normal University in China with the idea of launching a comparative study of English textbooks in the two countries. The original Japanese committee included Professors Hiroshi Shoji, David Yoshiba, Mari LePavoux and Harris Ives. The Chinese scholars included Professors Gu Gang, Zhao Lizhu, Zhou Xi and several teachers in the public schools of Tianjin. On September 21, 2008, our textbook analysis session was placed on the agenda of the larger Academic Research Forum at Tianjin. All of the Japanese committee members were present. I read my paper on *Cultural Values as Transmitted in English Language Texts in China and Japan*.³ A related paper of similar title was published in the Academic Journal of Ibaraki Christian University.⁴ Zhou Xi and Zhao Lizhu also presented papers on their research. This year, our program continued as Zhou Xi and I presented papers related to our research at Ibaraki Christian University, February 27, 2010.

We have stressed throughout our several meetings, that the purpose of the textbook analysis project is not to determine which country has the superior program and preparation. Rather, we are interested in discussing how each country attempts to design books which best serve its needs. Interestingly, on both sides, professors and high school teachers have commented on deficiencies that they have detected in their own country's books. It is the universal hope of teachers to have texts which motivate students and encourage language development.

Overwhelmingly, English language texts prepared in Japan feature a travel motif. English as tool for international exchange is an unmistakable message in books from a variety of publishers. The Japanese student is encouraged to learn English so that he might communicate in a variety of situations: (1) conversations with exchange students from English speaking countries, (2) interaction with English language teaching assistants in the Japanese classrooms, (3) homestays⁵ with American, British, Australian and Canadian families (4) long term living abroad with parents

3 Harris G. Ives, *Cultural Values as Transmitted in English Language Texts*, Academic Journal of Tianjin Normal University, Vol.5, p.178-183, 2008.

4 Harris G. Ives, Gu Gang, Zhou Xi, Zhao Lizhu, *Joint Research Project on Textbook Analysis-Ibaraki Christian University and Tianjin Normal University*, Academic Journal of Ibaraki Christian University, Volume 42, p.25-73. My section of the research is entitled, *Cultural Values as Transmitted in English Language Texts - A Study of Two Junior High School Texts: The New Horizon English course (Japan) and New Standard English*, Macmillan (China).

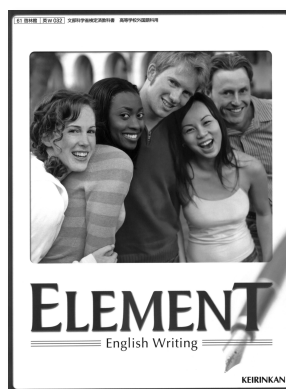
5 *Taishukan's Unabridged Dictionary -- Genius English-Japanese Dictionary*, Tokyo, p.1054. The word is presented as a single word, and the reference states that it is more commonly used in Japan than it is in America or Britain.

employed in foreign countries, and (6) class trips - some Japanese schools take the entire senior class abroad for a week or two weeks.⁶ A survey of textbooks from several different companies will convince the reader that socialization through foreign exchange and interaction is considered the methodology of second language acquisition in Japan. Textbooks are a very visible means of confirming the motivation for English study.

Junior High School

One of the standard “Warm up” questions to ask examinees at the beginning of the STEP test⁷ is “Have you ever traveled abroad” this test is opened to the public and often attracts junior high school students. Many of them have taken family excursions to Hawaii or New York. The question always occasions a smile from those who have had the experience. Students frequently answer, “Oh yes, last summer I went to London with my grandparents.” Those who have not had the experience smile with anticipation: “No, I haven’t, but I hope to go to Australia one day.”

The Columbus 21 English Course,⁸ grade 8, has a long passage in which an American girl returns to Los Angeles. She has arranged for two of her Japanese junior high school friends to accompany her. One of the Japanese, a boy



The *Elements *cover features a multi-racial, multi-national group of young people. All of them are smiling and in close body contact. This is probably a new treatment of the Peaceable Kingdom motif in art. At any rate, the idea is unmistakable: learn English and have access to a wider range of friends.

6 Of course, with the rise of China as an economic power, it can be assumed that more extensive travel for young students will become a reality. Perhaps this will create a change in Chinese textbooks. At the moment however, Japanese texts seem to rely more on the travel motivation than Chinese texts do. It is fairly common for Japanese junior high school students to have passports. In fact, several Japanese junior high school texts have illustrations of passports as well as practice dialogues for interviews students might have at immigration; “What is the purpose of your travel?” “How long will you be in the United States?” I could not have imagined such lessons in my own junior high school texts of over 50 years ago in America.

7 The Society for Testing English Proficiency test is an interview which assesses English mastery by foreign speakers. It is governed by the Mombusho (The ministry of Education), and is open to the public. The highest level of proficiency is Level One. For that particular exam, students must appear in Tokyo. For the lower levels, students are assigned to several local testing sites. An examinee for Level Pre-One might be any age. As an examiner, I have tested junior high school students as well as grandparents for this level. A major part of the Pre-One test is showing the students a series of three cartoon frames and asking them to narrate the story within two minutes. There is a similar exam in China.

Hiro, has a father working in Los Angeles. So the story blends two elements (1) the return of the American girl, and the meeting of the Japanese boy with his father who is working in Los Angeles.

The graphics accompanying the passage show (1) a photo of an immigration agent stamping the passport, (2) a drawing of a female immigration officer asking Hiro the predictable entry questions.

A dialogue in the *Birdland Junior English Text* (grade 7) features the discussion of two Japanese students. Miho is inquiring about the foreigner on her campus. The foreigner is a tall Australian. Miho is not sure if the foreigner is a teacher or a student. Takuya hastens to say that the person is a student. In fact, Jeff is doing homestay with Takuya's family.⁹ *The Sunshine English Textbook* (grade 7) contains a dialogue between a Japanese girl Yuki with a foreigner on the airplane. The foreigner greets Yuki with a statement that sends all junior high school students into ecstasy: "You speak very good English."¹⁰ Presumably, Yuki is going to America to visit her Aunt Mari and family. The socialization suggested in English language texts involves peer friendships, reuniting with family members who are scattered around the world, and adjusting to school life in another country.

A High School Sampling

*Pro-Vision English Course II*¹¹

Specific References and Acknowledgments of Travel

I. Title: *Pro-Vision*

- A. Could suggest that language provides opportunity.
- B. Could refer to the emphasis on Lance Armstrong and his achievement as a professional athlete.
- C. Could imply that our "vision" or perspective is enhanced by language study.

II. Cover

- A. The celestial sphere
- B. Armchair, eyeglasses, books suggestive of travel (and English learning as opportunity for socialization.)

8 *The Columbus 21 English Course* (Book 2 - grade 8), Mitsumura Toshio, 2009, p.19.

9 *Birdland*, P.78.

10 P.44.

11 Kihara Shoten, *Pro-Vision, New Edition*, English Course II, 2008.

- C. The travel brochure—beautiful color pictures.
 - 1. Tuvalu
 - 2. Frankfurt, Germany
 - 3. Toulouse, France
 - D. Scenes of Lance Armstrong riding his bike in exotic places.
- III. Title page
- A. Quotation from John Steinbeck: “*A journey is a person in itself.*”
 - B. Mile and distance signs indicating directions to Bluff, New Zealand; London, etc.
 - C. Lance Armstrong autobiography
 - 1. He was raised in a small town.
 - 2. Bicycling enabled him to experience the world.
 - 3. The association is unmistakable; travel occasions a broader, more exciting perspective and life. Language learning is implied as a necessary corollary to travel.
 - 4. The map of the Tour de France.
 - 5. Grammar exercise - sample sentence: *He has a daughter who lives in London.*
 - 6. Full page spread of photo of an airplane flying over Tuvalu.
 - 7. A letter from Bill to Ken, discussing volunteer tourism - Bill wants to go to underdeveloped areas and help people - obviously English will be useful in communication in foreign countries.
 - 8. A chart showing comparative sugar consumption in different countries - Japan and Cuba among them - travel and experience affords us conversation material.
 - 9. Conversation practice: asking travel questions in English: “*Pardon me, do you know when the next train for Hakata leaves?*”
 - 10. Closing photo page spread: silhouette of female cyclist against the sunset and quotation by Henry David Thoreau: “*Only that day dawns to which we are fully awake. There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star.*”
 - 11. There is no mistaking the travel motif in this book - it opens with Steinbeck’s comment on journeys and ends with Thoreau’s passage about day dawning which, accompanied by the bicycle photograph, heavily indicates that travel is an opportunity for good experiences, language learning, meeting new friends, and adventure.

Commercial Competition Results in an Array of Attractive Texts

Almost all of the textbooks set aside the first few pages as a sort of travel brochure. Beautiful color photos (on high quality, slightly plasticized paper), present enticing scenes of foreign lands. We might randomly leaf through a pile of popular texts. *Pro-Vision, English Course II (New Edition)* by Kiriwara Shoten contains a total of 165

pages. The very cover scene sets the tone which is maintained throughout - a close up of a desk and chair in an apparently well-appointed room. On the desk is an antique celestial sphere (suggestive of maritime travel), a pair of eyeglasses, an open book and a cup of tea. The large leather chair is vacant, suggesting the occupant has stepped out of the room momentarily - other attractively bound books sit on the corner of the desk. There is an ambience of travel as mind-expanding, experience-enhancing and opportunity-creating. A student holding this book might be lead to believe that he is just about to embark on a great adventure—learning English and taking advantage of the new worlds and socialization it affords. Although I cannot claim to have studied a sufficient quantity of Chinese counterpart textbooks, those that I did peruse hinted of another motivation for studying English - nation building. I would like to tentatively offer this distinction: in Japanese textbooks socialization appears to be motive and reason for studying English (and other foreign languages); nation building (and the concurrent emphasis on personal growth and good employment) seem to be the emphasis in Chinese textbooks. I tender that observation cautiously, even though I have paid considerable attention to *The New Standard English Series* in China. One of the first things noticed by our Chinese-Japanese committee (with American participants) is that many commercial companies compete in Japan to create the most desirable textbooks. My understanding is that the offerings are not so plentiful in China; in fact, *The New Standard Series* seems to have not so much competition. For the moment, let us focus on what is fairly easy to document: the travel motif in Japanese English language texts seems to put forward the idea of socialization as primary reason for English language study.

***Voyager: Writing Course, New Edition*¹²**

- I. Title: an obvious connection with the travel theme.
- II. Cover: Blue sea, sailboats, seagulls and fluffy white clouds.
- III. Inside the text:
 - A. Donald Keen's Haiku: "*Gathering seawards, The summer rains, how swift it is, the Mogami River.*" The quotation plus the accompanying photo of rapids suggests travel adventure.
 - B. The illustration of The Statue of Liberty, p.17.
 - C. Grammar exercise: *He asked me if I wanted to go to New York.*
 - D. Native English speakers comment upon Masao: "*He speaks English well,*" p.21.
 - E. Reference to the utility of a travel book on Poland, p.22.

¹² *Voyager Writing Course, New Edition*, Daiichi Gakushusha, 2008.

- F. Suggested conversation topics for speaking with the ALT (Assistant Language Teacher), p.26.
- G. Vocabulary of language-travel:
 - 1. Homestay
 - 2. Host Father
- IV. Discussing the “host father,” p.32.
 - 1. Japanese man is host father to a Westerner.
 - 2. He explains slurping while eating noodles.
- IV. Grammar exercise: “*I’ll probably try rafting when I go to Australia.*”
- V. Miscellaneous references
 - 1. Student compares her experiences with elective courses in America and in Japan.
 - 2. Western exchange student discusses her experience with the tea ceremony in Japan, p.40.
 - 3. Kenji helps exchange student with Japanese homework.
 - 4. Western exchange student discusses her host mother, p.48.
 - 5. Exchange student discusses her host family’s calm reaction to an earthquake.

The Voyager text develops the time-honored device of an on-going dialogue between an exchange student and her host family and classmates. Textbooks present this device both ways: native English speakers come to Japan and engage their newly met friends in conversation; Japanese students go abroad and explore the English speaking world. *The Voyager* text (and the title is overt in its travel emphasis) presents the case of Susan, an American, studying in Japan. This arrangement allows for the use of a specific vocabulary: *host father*, *host mother*, *host family*, *homestay*. There are not many English-English dictionaries that include the word *homestay*. There are Japanese-English dictionaries that define the term. Interestingly, the word is sometimes shown as a single word, as a double word, and as a hyphenated word.¹³

The Homestay Experience - Obvious Example of Socialization

One of the most obvious examples of the socialization aspect of Japanese language learning is the homestay phenomenon. This term refers to the arrangement for foreign students to go to a country for the specific purpose of learning a language. It is based on the idea that children learn languages easily from their families and environment. It is reasoned that others might similarly acquire facility with a language if they are immersed in a family situation. Probably it is more common for Japanese students to go abroad in this arrangement than it is for Americans to do so.

¹³ *Genius Unabridged Dictionary*, p. 1054.

However, Americans are beginning to recognize the value of such programs. *The Voyager* text shows the acculturation of Susan who learns that slurping noodles is polite in Japan, and that she has many school clubs to choose from.

Element English Writing¹⁴

I. Cover

- A. Happy photo of a multi-cultural group
- B. A black girl, a white girl, two white boys, and a Japanese girl, all smiling and leaning upon each other
- C. All of the young people are in close body contact.

II. Lesson One

- A. Judy, New Zealander writes a Japanese pen pal.
- B. Grammar: "*There are a lot of Japanese tourists in Hawaii.*"
- C. Grammar: "*My brother works for a travel agency,*" p.6.
- D. Grammar: "*The exchange student seems curious about everything in Japan,*" p.7.

III. Lesson Two

- A. Illustration: Chris and Daiki discuss how to write his name in Romanji.
- B. Chris says that he is learning Japanese.

IV. Miscellaneous references

- A. Emma and Ryota talk, p.22.
- B. Discussion of "*My host family in Chicago,*" p.32.
- C. A student is at the airport in Rome, p. 44.
- D. Grammar: "*It was when I was 17 that I went abroad to study languages,*" p.5.
- E. Ayaka asks her native English speaker teacher (photo shows a black woman - from Canada) how it feels to be a foreigner in Japan, p.50.
- F. "*My sister has been abroad, but I haven't,*" p. 95.
- G. Karl, a German, asks Saori to help him select a *furoshiki* for his mother, p.96.

Element English Writing also follows the cultural exchange implied in the ALT program (foreign teachers in the Japanese classroom). Miss Carey, a Canadian (perhaps of African descent) explains to Saori how she feels being a foreigner in Japan. Miss Carey explains that it was a little hard getting used to being stared at in Japan. She also indicates that many people assume that she is an American. Japanese texts are becoming more inclusive - there was a time when photos and illustrations of Americans were predominantly of blue eyed, blond haired Westerners. The very cover of *Element English Writing* presents a more representational photograph. Further, page 50 includes the African Canadian in the role of teacher. There are references to

14 *Element English Writing*, Keirinkan Publishers, Tokyo, 2007.

the host family as well as grammar exercises which subliminally reinforce the idea of language acquisition as socialization facilitator. There are references to international airports, and there are several dialogues in which a Japanese student and an American student compare their cultures.

Conclusion - Emblems of Sailboats and Passports

If children are born innocent and are imbued with a natural curiosity, they also are possessed of a wanderlust. Parents know this. We watch the little ones turn over in the crib, crawl away from us on the floor and run with glee away from us in the park. But something happens to some people - they develop superior attitudes thinking that there can be no better place than the city where they were born, or they become chained to routines that stunt their desire to see the world. I have related my experience as a six-year-old all too often. My teacher had announced that China was on the other side of the world from New Orleans. Eager to see something interesting, to interview a people different from my own, to taste food unlike my beloved Creole cuisine, I began digging. Right there in my own backyard. I summoned a few other likeminded peers (almost likeminded). They got hungry and went home. I was left digging. The hole was large and loomed before me. My father inquired. I told him I was going to China. He proclaimed, "Mamma made a good dinner tonight. Let's cover this hole and go inside. You can see China when you are a man." Over fifty years later (1999) my father's prophecy came true. I was able to stand among good friends and colleagues at Tianjin Normal University and to read a section of my little book, *Good Times*, in which I tell the story of the shovels and the wanderlust. Japanese English language texts seem newly appreciative of the good wanderlust. They present in such an attractive manner scenes, passages and photographs of young students learning English, engaging foreigners in conversation, traveling and utilizing their second language skills to facilitate adventure. Prominent among these photographs are scenes of ocean vastness, sailboats in harbors, maps of the world, illustrations of immigration counters at airports, and drawings of passports. A part of language learning kindles and reclaims that wanderlust of our earliest years.

"Shouldn't you always greet a new acquaintance with 'How do you do?'"

Gradually, the Japanese texts are even employing more natural conversation. It used to be assumed that Japanese language was unique in its deference to seniors and authority figures. English, too, is a language that changes slightly depending on whether we are speaking with our school principal or our best friend. Recently in China, a young female teacher approached me with an air of anxiety. She was shocked that another foreigner had greeted her without using the prescribed "How do you do?" She wanted to know how could a native speaker have made such a mistake. This

young English teacher in China, like so many other speakers of English as a second language, had come to understand that textbooks give us all of the possibilities of language and situation. In her mind, there was only one way to greet someone for the first time. I replied, “Well, I suppose you could still greet someone with “How do you do” (she was quick to let me know that curiously the answer to that question is a repeat of the question - I knew that.). I continued, “However, that sounds old fashioned and formal. I am more likely to say something more casual such as, ‘Hi, my name is Harris, nice to meet you.’” She seemed disappointed that the textbook, then, could not be relied upon as a comprehensive guide to unvarying phrases to be used in predictable circumstances. More and more, I am seeing dialogues in Japanese texts that reflect the natural interchange between young people. Nothing sounds stranger than a junior high school child assuming the language of a fifty-year-old-adult. And, nothing embarrasses me more than a fifty year old trying to “relate” to a teenager by employing the slang expressions of that group. With its emphasis on language learning for socialization, the Japanese text, more and more, is promoting English learning as a way to meet friends. I like that.

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How Large a Vocabulary Is Needed for Reading NSE and UNICORN

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Abstract:

Words included in the texts chosen from a textbook can give us a lot of information. By analyzing the distribution of words in each 1000 word-level ranging from high-frequency to low-frequency, we can tell whether or not the majority of words contained in the texts belong to the high frequency words category. We can also predict how many words are needed for learners to grasp in order to understand the texts.

Students with limited vocabulary will not be able to fulfill the task of reading comprehension successfully when the vocabulary load of textbooks is beyond their reach. Therefore, as a part of the textbook research project, this paper focuses on the vocabulary difficulty of both NSE and UNICORN. A software program “Range” is adopted to measure vocabulary difficulty in this part of study. The coverage rate of known versus unknown words in both *New Standard English* (NSE, China) and *New Edition Unicorn English Course* (UNICORN, Japan) is examined to see how big a vocabulary size is needed for students in senior high school to understand 95% of the running words in texts from the both series of textbooks. It is calculated that presumably to a student possessing 3000 words, averagely 92% of words from NSE, while 83% of words from UNICORN will be known to him, that is to say 8 words from NSE and 17 words from UNICORN among every 100 words in the text will be new to the learners. Obviously, UNICORN demands higher than NSE does in terms of vocabulary difficulty in reading comprehension.

Meanwhile, this paper also examines how well the textbooks NSE and UNICORN use a variety of passages to represent some words repeatedly to enrich the chances of acquiring those words. Result of the study suggests that NSE has a lower demand for vocabulary size than UNICORN does, whereas, target words appearing in UNICORN obviously are repeated much more frequently than those in NSE, which indicates that UNICORN is more effective in teaching new words in terms of presenting them in different contexts.

Introduction

Most English learners in China become aware of the significance of vocabulary

learning. They understand that a person with a good vocabulary is not only impressive, but he is better able to communicate and understand complex thoughts as well. The better command they have of words, the better chances they have of saying exactly what they mean and of understanding what others mean. So they give their priority to vocabulary learning and put in plenty of time and energy in it in class and outside class, only to find that the words they tried to remember with dear efforts erased from their memories so fast that it discouraged them from devoting a constant effort. Meanwhile, they see the size of vocabulary as a crucial factor in determining one's English proficiency. Nine out of ten students who fail to learn English well would attribute their deficiency in English to the lack of vocabulary.

Considering knowledge of words as the most important factor in language proficiency is in part due to its close ties with text comprehension. Words are the carriers of meaning as many people suggest: without knowledge of words, understanding sentences or texts is out of the question. Therefore, expanding the students' English vocabulary knowledge is a primary goal for teachers of English to pursue in China.

When it comes to textbook design, vocabulary is an indispensable part which the textbook writers are concerned with. As Barrow said "the four traditional basic language skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening are based upon the student's vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, vocabulary is a very important consideration for English teachers when choosing textbooks and preparing for their classes". (1999:224)

Introduction to English curriculum and textbooks in senior high schools of China

China has adopted a nine-year compulsory schooling system, which means all children are required to attend school for at least nine years. Students have to complete both the primary school program and the junior middle-school program. Senior-high school program is mainly for those who have passed the entrance examination and are in preparation for receiving higher education.

According to the official regulations, pupils begin to learn English from grade three at primary school, but most children gain access to English by attending some training courses before that, some even learn English from kindergarten. In junior and senior middle-school programs, students will work on English for six years continuously. So as a whole, a senior middle-school graduate has to learn English for ten years before he is given admission to the college.

The new English curriculum for senior high schools in China was issued in 2003 by the Ministry of Education. Many changes have been made on this new curriculum: for example, learning strategies, learners' affection, and the cultivation of cross-culture

awareness are emphasized. Additionally, it points out that apart from the main coursebook, learners should do extensive reading with the number of words reaching up to 0.23 million.

On the basis of the new curriculum, a prestigious press house in China published a series of textbooks, “New Standard English”(NSE for abbreviation) . The majority of senior high schools in China choose to adopt this series of textbooks. It includes 8 textbooks as a whole, among which 5 books are compulsory and should be used in the class during the whole year of senior grade one and the first half term of senior grade two. The other 3 are optional, which can be used according to the teachers’ own judgment. After learning the first five books, the learners are supposed to accumulate 900 words within one year, and their vocabulary size is expected to reach 2500 words, which is the minimal requirement for a senior high school graduate. The optional textbooks (Book 6, 7 and 8) aim to help students gain around 1000 words. The following chart gives a display of the requirements made by the textbooks designers.

Table 1: An Introduction of NSE

Grades	Textbook series	Role of textbooks	Vocabulary demands	Vocabulary Size of students
Senior grade 1 (one year)	Book 1 - Book 4	compulsory	+ 900 words	Master 2500 words
Senior grade 2 (one year)	Book 5			
	Book 6 - Book 8	optional	+1000 words	Master 3500 words
Senior grade 3 (one year)	No particular textbooks	In preparation for college entrance examinations	?	

Would it be possible for learners to gain 1900 words within two years with the help of textbooks and formal instruction at school? Some research conducted by Nation suggests that learners basically only learn about 3-6 words per hour of reading. Let’s try to calculate the hours of classroom teaching first and then count the number of words learned by students within one year. Senior high school students in China normally have around 4 hours of exposure to English each week for 36 weeks a year. Presumably one third of the time focused on reading, it totals about 50 hours of reading per year, then the vocabulary growth within one year ranges from 150 to 300 words, not counting naturally forgotten words. Nation suggests that the young native speakers of English increase their vocabulary size by around 1,000 word families a year. Thus we can tell that learning 1000 words per year by formal instruction at school in EFL context is out of reach.

How many words are the learners from high schools supposed to learn in China and Japan according to the curriculum?

The English Curriculum for learners of senior high school in China (Ministry of Education, 2004) requires that students in grade 7 (senior one), grade 8 (senior two) and grade 9 (senior three) should have a vocabulary size of 2400-2500 words, 3300-3500 words and 4500 words respectively. That is to say, by the end of junior high school 1600 words should be learned, and 2900 words should be learned at the stage of senior high school within three years. Eventually, a senior high school graduate will maximally end up with learning 4500 words. Compared with their counterparts in Japan, Chinese students surely have more pressure from memorizing new vocabulary in English learning. According to the guidance provided by the Monbusho (Ministry of Education, 1989), approximately 1000 English words should be learned in junior high school and 2000 words by the end of senior high school.

How many words are possessed by learners when graduating from senior high school in China?

Since the mid-1980s, vocabulary size studies conducted by Chinese researchers began to prosper. These investigations covered a wide variety of subjects. An empirical study on vocabulary knowledge development of top university students in China was conducted by Ke (2006). The vocabulary size test was designed on the basis of Paul Nation's Vocabulary Levels Test. According to the investigation on lexical size, freshmen who just registered in the university had a startup vocabulary size of about 3800 words, and sophomores knew about 5000 words. That is to say the students in this study have learned 3800 words in high school and have gained around 1200 receptive words within one year at university. From the above research, we can tell that the maximum demand for mastering 4500 words in Chinese senior high school remains a challenge and somewhat an unrealistic target. Even the startup vocabulary size of 3800 words is out of reach for most average good learners by the end of senior grade three in China. But it is a pity that no relevant research is found conducted on the average students in a broad region..

How to measure the requirements of vocabulary in English textbooks

It is significant to estimate the basic size of students' English vocabulary knowledge upon entering senior high school and to develop a series of textbooks with adequate rate of unknown words in each book. This study will measure the breadth of the vocabulary students are supposed to learn in NSE and UNICORN.

Measuring breadth of the vocabulary has been considered of limited value by some researchers (Schmitt & Meara, 1997) because it ignores the fact that words can be known to a greater or lesser extent. But to the intermediate English learners, only

when their breadth of vocabulary is in accord with the difficulty of vocabulary in textbook, their chances to learn the new words can be maximized.

Teachers can easily and instantaneously judge that the vocabulary in one book is more difficult than another. However, the judgment they made is rather a subjective than empirical one, since different teachers may apply different standards when they assess the difficulty of vocabulary. For example, a text with 5% of unknown words might be a suitable article to read in the eye of one teacher, but it might be too difficult in another teacher's opinion. One part of the study conducted by Zhou & Gu (2008) concerns a comparison of vocabulary difficulty between NSE and UNICORN in book I approximately. It was concluded that the average proportion of the new words in NSE ranges from 2.5-4%, however, that in UNICORN ranges from 3.5-7.5%.

Nation (2004) believes that if the text is too difficult then little learning can take place, so we should confirm the right instructional levels of the materials when we give it to the learners both for intensive and extensive reading. In the light of the belief "good vocabulary enables good comprehension", Nation further suggests that there are three levels of instruction regarding the coverage rate of known versus unknown words. The appropriate text coverage level for intensive reading involving the direct learning of new language features can be less than 95%. When reading a text, if more than 5% of the running words are unfamiliar to the learners, reading can be a formidable task. That is to say, if a second language learner wishes to make a successful guessing and draw an inference about the unknown words from the text they are reading, they should have a vocabulary size with 95% coverage of the text. However, for extensive reading with the aim of language growth, the rate should be between 95-98%. For extensive reading for fluency improvement it should be 99-100%. Here I'm talking about the texts for intensive reading, so the coverage rate of known words should be 95%.

Principles of vocabulary learning and teaching

Nation (2006) proposes that one primal principle of vocabulary learning and teaching is that the sequence of vocabulary learning should move from high frequency vocabulary and special purposes vocabulary to low frequency vocabulary. It is impossible to teach every word unknown to students which appear in textbooks, so teachers should be aware of the distinction between high frequency and low frequency words when selecting some words from each unit to focus on. Around "2000 or 2570 high frequency words deserve classroom time" (Nation, 2006:494) The high frequency and wide occurrence of those words will simplify the task of reading and help build the learners' confidence, thus it is worth the valuable classroom time devoted.

In intensive reading, deliberate attention is usually given to some target words, so students form a short-term memory of those words, but they will forget them very soon

if there are no chances to turn them into long-term memory.

For pedagogical considerations, some words taught in textbooks may not always be chosen from a high frequency list, and reflect the real word use, so those words should merely take a small proportion in the whole vocabulary included in textbooks.

Vocabulary learning from the teacher's direct instruction text is fragile and easy to be forgotten. As a result, it is important to have quantity of input with substantial opportunities for vocabulary repetition.

Range software program

Range is a tool that can be used to evaluate the difficulty of a reading text in terms of words distribution. It was programmed by Alex Heatley and designed by Paul Nation, a professor of the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, Victoria University of Wellington. It can be used to compare a text against vocabulary lists to see what words in the texts are and are not in the lists, and to see what percentage of the items in the text are covered by the lists. It may also be used to check the vocabulary of the language coursebooks to see how many of the words in the texts are among the high frequency words of English. I have managed to use Range in this study to check the vocabulary in both sets of books so as to see which one is easier for students to learn.

Textbook Analysis

A computer program called RANGE is used in this study to compare the words presented in textbooks with the lists of word-families based on BNC. RANGE includes

Table 2: the Coverage Rate of Known Words in 11-1000 Word Lists in Unicorn series

Word list (1,000)	Unicorn I		Unicorn II		Unicorn Reading	
	Coverage including proper nouns (%)		Coverage including proper nouns (%)		Coverage including proper nouns (%)	
1000	59	59	48	48	39	39
2000	22	81	24	72	25	64
3000	8	89	11	82	14	77
4000	4	93	6	88	7	85
5000	2	95	4	93	6	91
6000	1	96	2	95	3	93
7000	1	98	2	96	2	96
8000	1	99	1	97	1	97
9000	1	99	1	98	1	99
10000	0	99	1	99	1	99
11000	0	100	1	100	1	100
<i>Total families</i>	1010		1548		2096	

14 word-family lists. From the first 1,000 to the fourteenth 1,000, the number RANGE program helps to count numbers of word-families from the textbooks distributed in each individual word-family list. If we wish to know how big a vocabulary students need in order to be familiar with 95% of words in the textbook, we can calculate the percentage of word-families distributed in each word list base, until we reach the proportion of 95%. For example, table 2 & table 3 give cumulative percentage coverage figures for the word families in UNICORN and NSE respectively.

The above table shows in Unicorn I, with a vocabulary of 5,000 word-families, and assuming that proper nouns are easily understood, 95% of the tokens would be familiar to students reading the texts. This means that there would be 1 unknown word in about every 20 running words. With a vocabulary of 8,000 word-families plus proper nouns, 98.61% of the tokens would be familiar to students reading the texts. In Unicorn II, a learner possessing 6,000 words-families can comprehend 95% of the words. The Unicorn Reading book has a demand for owning 7,000 words-families to get 96% of the words understood.

Table 3: the Coverage Rate of Known Words in 11-1000 Word Lists in NSE series

Word list (1,000)	NSE I		NSE II		NSE III		NSE IV		NSE V	
	Coverage including proper nouns (%)		Coverage including proper nouns (%)		Coverage including proper nouns (%)		Coverage including proper nouns (%)		Coverage including proper nouns (%)	
1000	72	72	73	73	67	67	68	68	64	64
2-1000	17	89	14	87	18	85	16	84	20	84
3-1000	6	95	5	92	7	93	7	91	7	91
4-1000	4	99	3	95	3	96	4	95	3	94
5-1000	0	99	2	97	2	98	2	96	2	96
6-1000	0	99	1	98	1	99	1	97	1	97
7-1000	1	100	1	99	0	99	1	98	1	98
8-1000	0	100	0	99	0	99	1	99	1	99
9-1000	0	100	0	99	1	100	0	100	0	99
10-1000	0	100	0	99	0	100	0	100	1	100
11-1000	0	100	1	100	0	100	0	100	0	100
<i>Total families</i>	483		478		503		603		695	

Table 3 shows that reaching up to the size of 3000 and 5000 word-families respectively will enable students to use book one and book five with 95% words known to them. While book 2, 3 and 4 make little difference in terms of vocabulary difficulty, that is to say, grasping 4000 word-families, students can comprehend 95% of words among any one of the three books.

Table 4: Percentage of words included in the first three 1000 word level in NSE and UNICORN

Book \ Word list		1000 Word Level	2-1000 Word Level	3-1000 Word Level	First three 1000 Word Level (Total percentage)
NSE	Book 1	72%	17%	6%	95%
	Book 2	73%	14%	5%	92%
	Book 3	67%	18%	7%	93%
	Book 4	68%	16%	7%	91%
	Book 5	64%	20%	7%	91%
<i>NSE on average</i>		69%	17%	6%	92%
UNICORN	Book 1	59%	22%	8%	89%
	Book 2	48%	24%	11%	82%
	Book 3	39%	25%	14%	77%
<i>UNICORN on average</i>		49%	24%	11%	83%

The above table shows that NSE includes more high frequency words than UNICORN does. On average, if a learner has a vocabulary size of 3000 words, he may know 92% of the running words in the texts of NSE, and know 83% of the running words in the texts of UNICORN. In other words, every 8 words in 100 words remains unknown to a student in NSE, and every 17 words in 100 words are new to him or her in UNICORN.

Students graduating from junior high school in China normally have a vocabulary of 1600 words, so when they are enrolled in senior high school for the first year, it is proper to include the majority of words known to them in the textbooks, so that they have a chance to review the words learned before and acquire a few more in the new semester. NSE Book I and Book II have 72% and 73% of words distributed in the first 1000 words list, which is the category of words most frequently used in the authentic English context. However, UNICORN Book I contains only 59% of words from 1000 word level, which means that the learners will be more likely to meet words from 2000 and 3000 word level. Clearly those words from 2000 and 3000 word level will be more unfamiliar to the students, and therefore increase the difficulty of reading when decoding the texts. It is also likely that junior high school graduates in Japan have accumulated more words than their counterparts in China. Presumably their vocabulary size is over 2000 words, they will have no difficulty in reading the textbook. On the contrary, they may need more exposure to the words beyond 2000 word level. So it is quite necessary to measure the word size of junior high school graduates in both China and Japan. By doing this we can guarantee that the students' word size is in accord with the requirements of the English textbook. But this point is beyond my discussion in this paper.

Table 5: Percentage of words included in the first three 1000 word level in NSE and UNICORN

NSE	Book 1	95%	UNICORN	Book 1	89%
	Book 2	92%			
	Book 3	93%		Book 2	82%
	Book 4	91%		Book 3	77%
	Book 5	91%		(Reading book)	
On average		92%	On average		83%

When we check the continuity of vocabulary difficulty in the two sets of textbooks, we may notice that the percentage of words included in the first three 1000 word level in NSE decrease from book 1 to book 5 smoothly, from 95% to 91%. That is to say, there is no huge difference between each book in terms of its vocabulary difficulty. However, in UNICORN the percentage drops from 89% to 77% sharply. As we move from UNICORN book 1 to book 3, we expect that the learners will encounter more and more low frequency new words bringing troubles to their reading.

When an effective vocabulary counting program FREQUENCY was used to change texts into frequency lists of vocabulary and count the frequency of words appearing in each set of textbooks, something interesting was found. Function word types taking a great proportion of the running words found in the texts, however, make up a small part of the frequent words. Firstly, the words from UNICORN are repeated more frequently than those from NSE. For example, “people” is a high frequency word in both set of textbooks. It ranks number 34 in terms of frequency among all the words appearing in UNICORN and 31 in NSE, but “people” is repeatedly presented in texts for 137 times in UNICORN, higher than 52 times in NSE. We learn nearly all of our active vocabulary through context, and usually through context in reading. Words that we learn through their use in context are much more likely to stay with us than words we memorize by themselves, as in a list or in a dictionary. The more they expose themselves to new words, the more words they will pick up just by seeing how they're used. So repeated presenting words in different texts will give the learners more exposure to the usage of words in context. Anyway, success on vocabulary learning is determined largely by the proper way to draw learners' attention to the target words. Having a word repeatedly met by learners is the key to directing their attention to it. In this sense, UNICORN does it better than NSE.

UNICORN			NSE		
Word	Rank	Frequency	Word	Rank	Frequency
people	34	137	people	31	52
world	52	85	world	50	35
years	61	76	year	52	34

Conclusion:

No matter what textbooks students use, or what teaching methodology textbooks adopt, it is still up to the teachers to make some adaptations on the books according to the learners' reality.

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Appendix:

UNICORN			NSE		
Words	Rank	Frequency	Words	Rank	Frequency
people	34	137	people	31	52
world	52	85	China	43	38
years	61	76	world	50	35
children	71	63	year	52	34
Japanese	76	59	city	62	27
because	95	43	Chinese	67	25
school	101	42	time	68	25
life	103	40	countries	69	24
women	104	40	British	82	21
year	110	38	important	89	19
friend	112	37	film	95	18
Japan	113	37	famous	100	17
Tofu	127	34	man	100	17
island	144	29	American	106	16
grandfather	151	28	Beijing	107	16
difficult	164	26	different	112	15
house	166	26	English	113	15
animal	169	25	river	115	15
child	172	25	cocaine	118	14
fashion	173	25	space	126	14
men	175	25	student	127	14
language	188	24	music	131	13
scientists	222	21	rice	132	13
albatross	226	20	beautiful	136	12

UNICORN			NSE		
Words	Rank	Frequency	Words	Rank	Frequency
population	243	19	Picasso	142	12
traditional	246	19	traffic	145	12
buddy	250	18	person	159	11
cloning	252	18	Carnival	169	10
herbs	253	18	government	173	10
queenie	255	18	iron	175	10
brain	261	17	films	194	9
cells	262	17	Gorges	195	9
man	265	17	internet	198	9
Americans	273	16	metres	201	9
friends	278	16	million	202	9
game	279	16	newspaper	204	9
intelligence	281	16	web	208	9
London	284	16	Americans	211	8
beach	294	15	artist	213	8
intelligence	281	16	century	215	8
health	298	15	developed	217	8
kilometers	300	15	money	225	8
learning	301	15	mother	226	8
problem	309	15	painted	229	8
Problems	310	15	tourist	237	8
cultures	320	14	yuan	244	8
girls	324	14	drug	255	7
journey	325	14			
money	329	14			
woman	329	14			
boy	346	13			
China	348	13			
Cuisine	350	130			
English	351	13			
family	353	13			
father	354	13			
history	356	13			
developed	415	11			
differences	417	11			

Abstract

本稿は、2010年2月27日に茨城キリスト教大学において開催された日中英語教育研究会で発表された2つの研究を論文にしたものである。アイヴスは、日本で使用されている英語教科書のデザインに着目した。彼は日本で使用されている英語教科書では、旅行やホストファミリーに関することが多く記載されていると結論づけ、日本における英語学習の初歩的な動機付けは、旅行と人との関わりであると結んだ。周は、中国と日本で使用されている英語教科書における英語の語彙について研究し、生徒に対して高頻度の単語を教えることが必要であると結論づけた。さらにまた、周は、教師は語彙を教える際に想像力を必要とし、効果的な指導法を用いなければならないとまとめた。