Methodology on the Study of Integration of Culture Themes in *I English* Textbooks

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Abstract: Integrating culture in college English textbooks is a promising approach to promoting students' language learning. Therefore the importance of cultural integration in language education which emphasizes the need for a mutual exchange and adaptation of cultural practices and the willingness to learn and understand different cultural perspectives should be highlighted. The study seeks to focus on the methodology of the study which investigates the extent of integration of Chinese cultural themes in the textbooks along various dimensions from the aspects of conceptual framework, paradigm of the study, statement of the problem, hypothesis, research design, participants of the study, instrumentation and data gathering procedure.

Keywords: Integration; Cultural themes; Methodology; *I English*

1. Introduction

The integration of cultural themes in English textbooks is an essential component of language teaching. Cultural themes help students understand the language and the culture of English-speaking countries. In this thesis, we aim to develop a methodology for studying the integration of cultural themes in English textbooks using Byram's checklist. The checklist will serve as a guide for evaluating the extent to which cultural themes are integrated into the viewing, listening, and speaking activities in English textbooks.

This study aims to develop a comprehensive methodology for examining the incorporation of cultural themes in English textbooks. By leveraging Byram's checklist as a foundational framework, the methodology involves the following key steps.

2. Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

The framework for the study is mainly based on the concept of Byram's checklist which is a practical guide for assessing ICC and promoting cultural understanding through language learning materials [1].

2.1 Byram's Checklist

Using Byram's checklist as a conceptual framework for integrating cultural themes in the target textbook is a way to promote intercultural communicative competence (ICC) among language learners. The checklist includes a range of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that learners need to develop to effectively communicate and interact with individuals from different cultures.

2.2 Alignment with the CBI

The integration of cultural themes in the target textbook also aligns with the principles of content-based instruction (CBI), which emphasizes the integration of content and language learning to enhance students' language proficiency and understanding of academic subject matter. By incorporating cultural themes as content, language learners can gain a deeper understanding of cultural practices, beliefs, and values, while also improving their language skills.

Furthermore, the integration of cultural themes in language learning materials can be seen as a way to promote multicultural education and foster an inclusive learning environment. Multicultural education emphasizes the importance of promoting cultural diversity and inclusiveness in educational settings. By integrating cultural themes in language learning materials, learners can gain exposure to a variety of cultures, promoting cultural diversity, and inclusiveness.

Finally, the contact hypothesis suggests that meaningful and positive interactions between individuals from different cultural groups can reduce prejudice and increase tolerance. By incorporating cultural themes in language

learning materials, learners are exposed to different cultural perspectives, promoting positive interactions and increasing tolerance. The use of Byram's checklist as a conceptual framework for integrating cultural themes in the target textbook is a way to promote ICC, CBI, multicultural education, and the contact hypothesis, all of which are essential for developing learners' intercultural communication skill.

3. Paradigm of the Study

3.1 The Input

Figure 1 shows the paradigm or concept of the study which began with the gathering of data (input) which would involve gathering information and data related to the cultural themes that are integrated into the textbooks. By utilizing the questionnaires both for the teachers and the students, the profile variables about demographic information such as age, gender, educational attainment, years in materials development training, and academic rank will be observed. These variables help to identify the characteristics of the participants and potential influences on their perspectives and approaches to integrating cultural themes in the textbook.

3.1.1 Extent of Integration of Cultural Theme and the Extent of Alignment

This step involves examining the hypothesis: Is there a significant difference in the extent of integration of the identified Chinese cultural themes into the *I English* textbooks when grouped according to profile variables?

3.1.2 Suggestions for Integration of Cultural Themes

Based on the open-ended questions attached to the teacher's questionnaire, this will be used to collect suggestions on how to further integrate cultural themes into the textbook materials to better align with the intended learning outcomes and to enhance students' intercultural communicative competence.

3.1.3 Evaluation of the *I English* Textbook

By using the checklist, this involves an analysis of the extent to which cultural themes are integrated into the *I English* textbook. This analysis may involve examining the topic of the textbook units, learning objectives, activities, teaching resources, and assessment to identify how cultural themes are incorporated and how they relate to the language learning objectives.

3.2 The Process

3.2.1 Survey Questionnaire

Figure 1 shows firstly, administering a survey questionnaire which involves collecting data from participants through a set of standardized questions. In this case, the survey questionnaire would include questions related to the participants' profile variables, such as age, gender, educational attainment, years in materials development training, and academic rank. These variables can provide important insights into how the participants' characteristics and experiences may affect their perceptions of cultural integration in the textbook.

3.2.2 Open-ended Questionnaire

Secondly, an open-ended questionnaire will be used to gather more detailed and qualitative feedback from participants. This type of questionnaire allows participants to provide more personalized and descriptive responses, giving researchers a deeper understanding of their thoughts and experiences related to the integration of cultural themes in the textbook.

3.2.3 The Checklist

Lastly, Byram's checklist will be used as a tool for evaluating the extent of cultural integration in the textbook. This checklist provides a framework for assessing intercultural communicative competence and emphasizes the importance of integrating cultural themes in language learning materials. By using this checklist, researchers can evaluate the extent to which cultural themes are
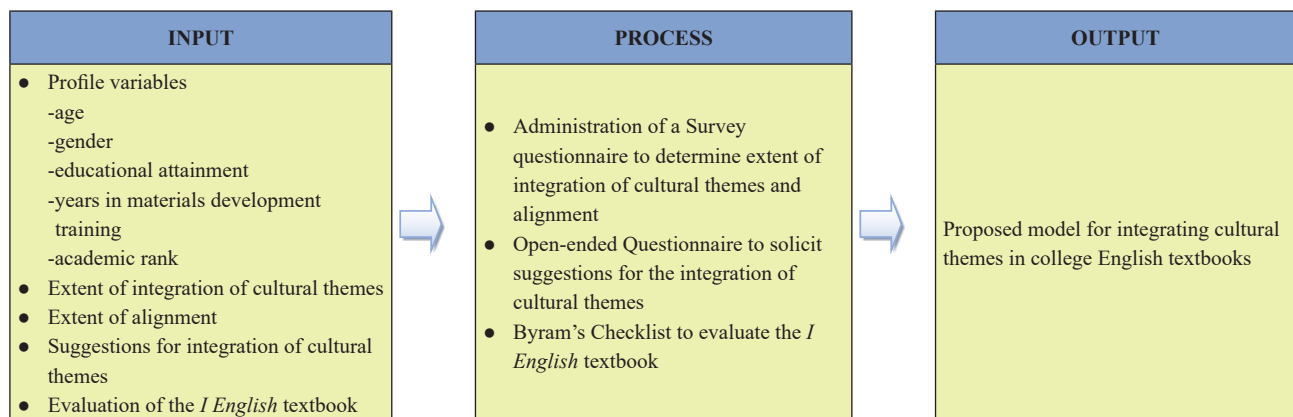
INPUT	PROCESS	OUTPUT
• Profile variables -age -gender -educational attainment -years in materials development training -academic rank • Extent of integration of cultural themes • Extent of alignment • Suggestions for integration of cultural themes • Evaluation of the *I English* textbook	• Administration of a Survey questionnaire to determine extent of integration of cultural themes and alignment • Open-ended Questionnaire to solicit suggestions for the integration of cultural themes • Byram's Checklist to evaluate the *I English* textbook	Proposed model for integrating cultural themes in college English textbooks

Figure 1. Paradigm of the study.

integrated into the textbook and identify areas for improvement. This process involves using multiple methods to collect data from participants, including standardized questions, open-ended responses, and a checklist for evaluation. This allows researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the extent of cultural integration in the textbook and identify ways to improve it.

3.3 The Output

Figure 1 shows that the proposed model for integrating cultural themes in college English textbooks may be a framework that outlines the steps and considerations for effectively integrating cultural themes into English language learning materials. The proposed model may provide a systematic approach to integrating cultural themes in college English textbooks that takes into account the needs and cultural backgrounds of the learners and promotes intercultural communicative competence.

4. Statement of the Problem

This study aims to assess the integration of cultural themes in *I English* textbooks for non-English majors at Hengshui University.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1) What is the profile of the participants, in terms of the following variables:

(1) Teacher participants

Gender,

Age,

Highest educational attainment,

Academic Rank,

No. of years in teaching English,

No. of year in utilizing *I English* textbooks, and

Training in material development?

2) What is the extent of integration of Chinese cultural themes into the the *I English* textbooks along the following dimensions:

(1) Social Identity and Social group;

(2) Social interaction;

(3) Belief and behavior;

(4) Social and political institutions;

(5) Socialization and the life cycle;

(6) National history;

(7) National geography;

(8) Stereotype

3) Is there a significant difference in the extent of integration of the identified Chinese cultural themes in the contents of *I English* textbooks when grouped according to profile variables?

4) What is the extent of alignment of the cultural themes per content in the *I English* Textbook?

5) What suggestions can be given to improve the integration of cultural themes in *I English* textbooks?

6) What model can be proposed for the enhanced integration of cultural themes in the college English Textbooks?

5. Hypothesis

The study tested the following hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

There is no significant difference in the extent of integration of the identified Chinese cultural themes in the contents of *I English* textbooks when grouped according to profile variables.

6. Research Design

The study will utilize Explanatory Sequential Mixed Method Design. It is a research design developed by John Creswell that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods in a sequential manner [3]. In this design, the researcher starts with a qualitative research phase, followed by a quantitative research phase [2]. Accordingly, questionnaires—both for the teachers and students as well as the checklist—looking into the textbook—will be employed to carry out the research. The research will start with a qualitative phase, followed by a quantitative phase. The data will be collected through questionnaires that will be distributed to both teachers and students, as well as a checklist that will be used to analyze the textbooks.

7. Participants of the Study

The study will involve both student and teacher participants. For the student participants, a representative sample of around 90 non-English major students will be randomly selected from the freshman and sophomore classes at Hengshui University.

Table 1. Participants of the study.

Grade Level	Table Number of Enrollees	Sample
Freshmen	2,350	196
Sophomores	1,890	157
Total	4,240	**353**

Stratified random sampling will be utilized in the determination of the student participants.

The following are the student participants' inclusion criteria:

1) Grade level: Freshmen or sophomores who are studying this textbook.

2) English proficiency: The study may target students who are proficient in English or have a certain level of English language proficiency.

3) Enrollment in English classes: The study may target students who are currently enrolled in English language classes.

4) He/She should be willing to participate in the study and should sign the informed consent form.

For the teacher participants, a purposive sampling method will be used to select 20 English language teachers from 36 available teachers in the university. The following are the inclusion criteria:

5) He/She is currently teaching non-English major students.

6) The teacher must have at least five years of teaching experience and experience in integrating culture into language learning.

7) He/She should have a knowledge of textbook evaluation.

8) He/She should be willing to participate in the study and should sign the informed consent form.

8. Research Instrumentation

The study will employ the following data gathering tools and/or techniques:

8.1 Survey Questionnaire for Students and Teachers

A survey questionnaire can be designed to collect data from students and teachers. The questionnaire can contain questions that are based on the different levels of integration of cultural themes in the textbooks, as determined by Byram's checklist. The questions can be open-ended or close-ended, and can be designed to elicit information about the students' and teachers' perceptions of the cultural themes in the texts, the effectiveness of the cultural themes in promoting intercultural communicative competence, and any suggestions for improvement.

8.2 Checklist

A checklist can be designed based on the eight dimensions of cultural content identified by Byram's checklist. The checklist can be used to evaluate the textbooks and determine the extent to which they integrate cultural themes in accordance with each of the eight dimensions according to the topic of each unit, the activities and the teaching resources.

8.3 Open-ended Questions

Open-ended questions for the study on the integration of cultural themes in English textbooks can be designed based on the following questions:

What is the extent of alignment of the cultural themes per content in the I English Textbook?

What suggestions can be given to improve the integration of cultural themes in I English textbooks?

What model can be proposed for the enhanced integration of cultural themes in the college English Textbooks?

These open-ended questions can elicit rich and detailed responses from students and teachers, providing valuable insights into their perceptions of the integration of cultural themes in *I English* textbooks and potential strategies for improving intercultural communicative competence.

9. Data Gathering Procedure

To obtain the data needed for the investigation, the following procedures will be undertaken by the researcher.

1) The researcher will obtain clearance from the Ethics Review Committee of St. Paul University Philippines to ensure the ethical soundness of the research.

2) After obtaining clearance from the Ethics Review Committee, the researcher will seek endorsement from the Dissertation adviser and the Dean of the Graduate School for data gathering.

3) Then, the researcher will ask permission from the school administration for the conduct of the study.

4) Before the data collection, the validity of the research tools will be established, and the identification of the study participants will be undertaken.

5) Informed consent from these participants will likewise be sought to ensure that the study conforms to the ethical norms of research.

6) Upon approval of the school heads, the researcher will confer with the persons involved in gathering the data.

The following are the details of the processes involved in obtaining the specific data:

7) The researcher will use survey questionnaire, checklist and open-ended questions to analyze the selected textbooks for the presence and quality of cultural themes. A survey questionnaire to a sample of students and teachers who have used the selected textbooks in their English classes or teachers who have taught this textbook will be conducted based on the first question of the SOP. The checklist will include the cultural themes grouped by the unit, the activities and the resources. The open-ended questions will be carried out based on the last three questions of the SOP.

The data from the textbook evaluation, and questionnaire, will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, and the results will be presented using tables, and narratives, and will be compared and triangulated to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Based on the data collected the researcher will write a report summarizing the findings of the study and making recommendations for improving the integration of cultural

themes in college English textbooks. The report will also propose a framework for integrating cultural themes that are based on Byram's checklist and tailored to the specific context of Hengshui University. The report will be disseminated to the relevant stakeholders, including the English department, the textbook publishers, and the university administration.

10. Data Analysis

The following statistical tool will be utilized in answering of the problem:

10.1 Frequency and Percentage Distribution

A frequency and percentage distribution can be used to present the data in a study on the integration of cultural themes in *I English* textbooks. This type of analysis can provide a clear picture of the distribution of data across different categories, which can be helpful in identifying trends and patterns in the data.

10.2 Weighted Mean

This is used to describe the variables of gender, age, choice to study English, and enjoyment in learning English.

10.3 Test for Independent Samples

An ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test for independent samples can be used to analyze the data in a study on the integration of cultural themes in target textbooks. The ANOVA test can be used to compare the means of three or more independent groups to determine if there are significant differences between them. In this case, the groups

could be defined by the level of integration of cultural themes in the textbooks. This was used to test for the significant difference on the assessment of the students and the teachers on the extent of integrating Chinese culture in the target textbooks.

10.4 Thematic Analysis

To answer the first and second problem statements, the researcher used thematic analysis of the answers of the students and teachers in an open-ended questionnaire.

11. Conclusions

The integration of cultural themes in English textbooks is crucial for language learning and intercultural competence development. Byram's checklist provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating the integration of cultural themes in language learning. The methodology presented in this thesis can be used as a guide for future research on the integration of cultural themes in English textbooks. The results of this study can help language teachers and textbook developers to improve the integration of cultural themes in language learning.

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