

# *A Comparative Research on the Text Selection Systems of High School Mother Tongue Textbooks of China and the United States*

**Cuiwei Song**

*Lincang Ethnic Middle School, Lincang, Yunnan, 677000, China*

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**Abstract:** As an important carrier of students' learning, Chinese textbooks play an important role in cultivating students' Chinese ability. Mr. Ye Shengtao once pointed out that "the textbook is nothing but an example", which emphasizes the exemplary function of the textbook, that is, the selection of texts in the textbook is to provide some examples for students' Chinese learning. There are many factors to measure the quality of a set of teaching materials, and the selection of teaching materials is one of the important factors. The purpose of this paper is to compare the Chinese and American text selection system, in order to bring some useful suggestions for our country's textbook selection system. I expects the research results of this paper to bring some positive effects to the optimization of the text selection system of textbooks.

## **1. Comparison of Selected Text Arrangement in Chinese and American Textbooks**

The research objects selected in this article are the People's Education Press textbooks in China and the Illinois edition textbooks in the United States. The People's Education Press textbooks are currently widely used in most regions of China, with advantages and classics. The selection system of textbooks varies among different states in the United States, and the main reference factor for selecting textbooks in most states is the publication institution of the textbooks. The Illinois edition of textbooks is published by Houghton Mifflin, one of the world's largest educational publishing groups, Houghout Mifflin Group is one of the largest educational publishing groups in the United States, and its textbooks have high authority. The Illinois version of textbooks is used by schools in multiple regions of the United States. It is currently the most widely used and authoritative teaching material in the United States. The People's Education Press High School Chinese Textbook (one to five compulsory volumes) and the Illinois version of high school literature Textbook (one volume) They are all for the entire high school stage of students' mother tongue learning. This article aims to discover the advantages and disadvantages of each of the two through comparison, and optimize the Chinese language textbook selection system based on China's national conditions, in order to improve the writing of the Chinese language textbook selection system.

The arrangement of textbooks refers to the internal composition of textbooks, which includes knowledge systems, text selection systems, reading aid systems, and homework systems. The research object selected in this article is the text selection system. This chapter mainly compares the

similarities and differences between Chinese and American textbooks in terms of text selection arrangement.

Contemporary Chinese language educator Hong Zongli pointed out that "the research community of contemporary Chinese language curriculum and textbooks generally divides the compilation of Chinese language textbooks into two types: joint compilation and sub compilation. Joint compilation textbooks refer to the arrangement of reading training, writing training, and Chinese knowledge in a set of textbooks. Sub compilation Chinese language teaching materials are divided into several books, such as literature and language, reading and writing, classical Chinese and vernacular, and so on. The People's Education Press textbooks combine reading, writing, and language knowledge, while the Illinois edition textbooks in the United States separate literary and language knowledge. According to Hong Zongli's classification of Chinese language textbooks, the People's Education Press textbook can be defined as a combined Chinese language textbook, while the Yizhou edition textbook can be defined as a divided Chinese language textbook.

## **2. Comparison of Selected Text Content between Chinese and American Textbooks**

Textbooks are an important medium for teachers' classroom teaching and students' learning, and an excellent set of Chinese language textbooks can effectively promote the development of students' abilities such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The selection content of a textbook can largely determine the quality of the textbook. This chapter takes the literary style as the starting point and compares the selection content of the People's Education Press and the Illinois Press textbooks.

The poetry selection of the People's Education Press textbook includes ancient poetry and modern poetry, with a total of 4 modern poems included in the compulsory unit. There are a total of 22 ancient poems, concentrated in the units of Compulsory Three and Compulsory Four. It can be seen that there are more ancient poetry than modern poetry [1]. Due to the scattered selection characteristics of modern poetry, some express youthful atmosphere, some describe sad love, and some express farewell feelings, it is difficult to accurately summarize its characteristics. The poetry selection of the People's Education Press textbook selects the most peak part of Chinese poetry. It is sufficient to demonstrate the importance that textbook editors attach to traditional culture. Only by learning these most distinctive poems can students better understand how wonderful ancient poetry is, and then pass it on, accumulating rich cultural genes for their learning and life.

The drama selection content in the People's Education Press textbooks is based on the real reality of society, and can reflect certain actual situations from it. Simply put, it is a real event that criticizes some profound problems in society at that time. Contradiction and conflict, as the most prominent characteristics of drama, are clearly reflected in these selected works of drama. From this, it can be seen that Chinese textbook editors have a preference for emphasizing the content of dramatic genres.

## **3. Comparison of Selected Topics in Chinese and American Textbooks**

From the perspective of a single article, each textbook's selection of articles has unique characteristics [2]. However, from the overall perspective of the textbook, the selected articles also have certain commonalities, which can present certain similarities or differences at the macro level. These characteristics are called the themes of the selected articles. This chapter takes the theme of the selection of Chinese and American textbooks as the starting point, and compares the selection system of Chinese and American textbooks.

The selected articles of the People's Education Press textbooks contain a relatively rich range of themes, which can be divided into the following themes from a large perspective: patriotic themes,

scientific themes, educational themes, and other themes. Selected articles with the theme of family and country account for a large proportion in the textbooks of the People's Education Press, with distribution in both Compulsory Three and Compulsory Four. Overall, the selection of educational themes plays a crucial role in students' growth, and high school students are in a critical period of growth and development. Choosing this theme in the textbook selection can help students establish correct values. This type of selection not only reflects the humanistic connotation of Chinese language education, but also achieves the goal of subtly educating students through reasoning.

The topic selection of American textbooks covers a wide range of topics, but the topics that occupy a large amount of content generally include the following aspects: natural themes, immigration themes, education themes, and other themes. The scientific theme selection of American textbooks focuses on the concept of interdisciplinary integration in textbook writing. This interdisciplinary writing awareness, such as integrating relevant concepts of biology into native language courses, is worth learning from. The selection of social themes focuses on genuine reflection on hot issues in real society. The selection of such themes reflects the close relationship between textbooks and social issues, highlighting the contemporary characteristics of textbook selection.

#### **4. Beneficial insights from comparative research**

I hope to find some advantages to learn from the excellent experience of American textbooks, so as to continuously optimize the design of the text selection system in the textbooks[3]. Make it suitable for students' actual learning situation, and effectively enhance and develop their core Chinese literacy. By comparing the arrangement of Chinese and American textbooks, it can be seen that the selection capacity of the People's Education Press textbook is relatively small. Many selected texts simply consist of selecting a few texts on a certain topic to form a unit of selected texts. Obviously, this method of selecting texts has certain limitations, which lie in the fact that the selected texts in the unit arrangement cannot meet the actual learning situation of students [4]. Compared to native language textbooks in the United States, the selection of articles in the People's Education Press textbook focuses more on quality, so the capacity of each unit's selection is relatively small. This poses a problem where the selection of texts in the textbook may not fully showcase the entire content of the topics covered by the unit. The most effective way to solve this problem is to increase the capacity of the selected text reasonably.

Setting up a certain Chinese language knowledge system outside the main part of the textbook selection system has always been the direction of unremitting efforts by textbook editors. In this regard, the editors of American textbooks have provided us with a certain demonstration. How to use the text selection system to shift students' knowledge from singular to diverse is the criterion that textbook editors should follow when writing textbooks. Set up a recitation module in the textbook selection, and incorporate the reading requirements advocated by the curriculum standards into it.

There have been attempts to do so in the Chinese language textbooks published by the Jiangsu Education Press, and certain results have been achieved. For example, the Jiangsu Education Press textbook has set up a "recitation and appreciation" module at the end of each unit, which will include some ancient poems and famous works. Students can use these modules to enhance their recitation ability and accumulate a certain amount of ancient poetry and famous works. In the process of learning, not only did I improve my reading ability, but I also accumulated basic knowledge of Chinese.

## 5. Suggestion for Selected Textbook Content

Overall, the selection of articles in the People's Education Press textbooks includes a relatively comprehensive range of literary themes. The downside is the uneven distribution of literary styles in the selected content within each textbook.

Firstly, add poetry selections. In terms of literary genres, the People's Education Press textbooks have fewer modern poetry selections [5]. This is an area where the selection of textbooks needs to be improved, and the People's Education Press textbook places great emphasis on the inheritance of ancient traditional culture. So there are many selections of ancient poetry in the textbooks, but the frequency of modern poetry appearing is relatively low, and only modern poetry is included in the compulsory textbooks for the first year of high school. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, modern poetry has made significant progress in the history of contemporary literature, so we do not lack excellent modern poetry. What we need to do next is how to use the perspective of discovery to select excellent works and incorporate them into textbooks.

Secondly, introduce contemporary writers to select articles. The selection of articles in the People's Education Press textbook places great emphasis on the characteristics of "both literary quality and beauty" and "suitable for learning". One obvious feature is that most of the selected articles in the textbooks are works of contemporary writers, such as Lu Xun, Feng Youlan, Zhu Ziqing, etc. It's not that these writers' works are not excellent enough and are not conducive to students' learning. However, there are many modern writers who have written many excellent articles, and some of these articles should have been included in the textbooks. This approach can create a sense of closeness among students, feeling that excellent literary works are not far away from them. Instead of blindly letting them learn some outdated articles, they always immerse themselves in the works of past writers.

## 6. Conclusion

As an important component of Chinese language textbooks, text selection plays a crucial role in Chinese language teaching. The author attempts to further analyze the selection of Chinese and American textbooks based on previous research. There are relatively many topics that can be discussed in the selection of Chinese and American textbooks, and I have only selected a few important aspects for discussion. For example, the themes of patriotism, science, education, and so on, the author only provided a general discussion on some other themes and did not elaborate on them in detail. It is worth noting that the selected themes of Chinese and American textbooks are closely related to their respective cultures, and both are deeply influenced by their respective cultures. There are certain differences in the selection style between Chinese and American textbooks. The People's Education Press textbook is a collaborative teaching material, with language and literary selections arranged together.

Compared to the Yizhou version of the textbook, the People's Education Press has relatively fewer selected themes, so I have put forward suggestions to enrich the selected themes of the textbook. However, in the specific implementation process, we should also balance the number of selected topics within the textbook. The capacity of textbooks should be suitable for students' learning, and should not be too large or too small. Only by balancing the internal composition of each selected theme can it be beneficial to students' Chinese learning. We can reasonably set the proportion of the selected topic from the following aspects.

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