

A Study of Curricular Components of English/Korean-Language Textbooks*

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Kim, Youngroong. (2016). A Study of Curricular Components of English/Korean-Language Textbooks. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 24(2), 57-71. This paper leads off with the belief that the curricular genres and contents of textbooks for secondary school students should play a crucial role in helping absorb and embrace multiethnic cultures. A properly-designed curriculum can lay a foundation for national students to adapt well to society after graduation, leading them to accept and understand even uncongenial cultures. This paper takes a look into how both the U.S. English/Korean-language textbooks for secondary school have been constituted in terms of genres, contents, and components in conformity with the growing multiethnic cultural society. This paper reveals in what way their designs and constituents are different. It sets forth a proposal as regards the desirable design of the genres and components of the Korean-language textbook.

Key Words: curricular components, genres, multicultural society, English/Korean-language textbooks

1. Introduction

In the 2014 State of the Union Address, President of the United States Barack Obama stressed that “In the end, it’s our ideals, our values that built

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America--values that allowed us to forge a nation made up of immigrants from every corner of the globe."¹⁾ It is a very clear-cut example, stressing that the United States has made all efforts to embrace different races and peoples with multiethnic cultural traits.

As for the attitude toward the cultures or languages, Brown (2007) claims that "Attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition and affect in human beings, develop early in childhood and are the result of parents' and peers' attitudes of contact with people, who are "different" in any number of ways, and of interacting affective factors in the human experience. These attitudes form a part of one's perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living." In this sense, designing proper curricular contents and components can bring about both a better national unity in diversity and harmony among the peoples with multiethnic cultures within a nation. In the paper, 'Xenophobia and distribution in France: A politico-economic analysis,' Economists Roemer and Van der Straeten (2004) talk about a policy against "anti-solidarity effect and anti-immigrant feeling (xenophobia)," with lots of immigrants coming into a country. How textbooks are constituted has an inevitable influence not only on native students, but also on students with multiethnic cultural backgrounds. Considering the current circumstances in which diverse peoples are in position to live together for various reasons within a nation, constituting a well-balanced curriculum has arisen as an important issue that brooks no further delay. It is directly linked not only with the harmony of a nation but also with those peoples' settlement in community. The purpose of this paper is to address some of these questions and to explicitly set forth a few proposals for the effects that properly-designed genres and components of vernacular language textbooks have on secondary school students.

1) The State of Union Address, "Opportunity for All," was delivered by U.S. President Barack Obama on January 28, 2014. It was retrieved Sept. 15, 2014 from <http://www.cnn.com/interactive/2014/01/politics/sotu-speech-transcript>.

2. Korea Emerging as a Multicultural Nation

In order to take a comprehensive look into how the contents and components of the English-language textbook in the United States and the Korean-language textbook in Korea for secondary school are designed, this paper analyzes the textbooks, with a view to grasping to what extents the U.S. and Korean educators have tried and are trying to enlighten, nurture, and engage students' consciousness towards those students with multiethnic cultural backgrounds, going beyond language teaching itself. This is because the secondary school curricular components would, in the long run, help to get students to accept even incongruous multiethnic cultures and to advance into society with a healthy mind. Assuming that there is something to be desired in the contents as well as in the framework of a Korean-language textbook, this paper is going to put forward a suggestion: How to constitute a properly-designed curriculum for high school students for a better harmonious community and the benefit of a country in a far-sighted manner.

The current U.S. harmonious society among diverse races could be a fruition partly borne by the curriculum which is properly designed and constituted in view of its natives and other races on an equal footing²⁾. Likewise, it is high time that the Korean educational authorities should, from a future-oriented viewpoint, create a 'Koreanness' to prepare for a more multicultural society by accepting, reflecting, and containing various social factors arising from diverse ethnic cultures. This is a penchant spreading across the country: Different peoples who have different cultural backgrounds have been on the increase in the world, settling down in foreign countries for jobs, exogamous units, etc. Korea is not an exception any more. As such, an exploration of the curricular components of the U.S. English-language textbook for secondary school can offer a good momentum for Korea to put its best foot forward a multiethnic cultural society.

Based on the statistics of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, a majority of foreigners settling down in Korea are usually Asian immigrants from Vietnam, the Philippines, Cambodia, China, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Japan.

2) There might be many different opinions about what it is meant by 'the U.S. harmonious society among diverse races.'

Others are from the United States, European countries, etc., for various reasons such as jobs, marriage, and so on. As shown in Table 1, the number of foreign peoples and their children settling down in South Korea has been on the increase every year. Accordingly, this clearly evidences that Korea has been emerging as a multicultural/ethnic nation, i.e., Korea is not a one-race country any more. So, as the United States has been a typical multicultural/ethnic nation, it can set a model of 'a new multiethnic culture for Korea' in terms of how we should embrace and accept different kinds of races together with their own unique cultures, including their ways of life. To this end, curricular components have to play a role in preparing students to lead a harmonious life in the multicultural/ethnic society. Clearly believing that both community and curricular contents are intertwined factors, I claim that the first step towards the community should start in designing good school curricular genres, contents, and components.

Table 1. Number of foreigners settling down in South Korea³⁾

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
TNP ⁴⁾	281,295	267,727	252,764	221,548	199,398
TNC	191,329	168,583	151,154	121,935	107,689
CA6	116,696	104,694	93,537	75,776	64,040
CA7-12	45,156	40,235	37,590	30,587	28,922
CA13-15	18,395	15,038	12,392	8,688	8,082
CA16-18	11,081	8,616	7,635	6,884	6,645

Legends: CA 6: children aged under six; CA: children's age; TNC: total number of their children; TNP: total number of population

3) The statistics on the 'number of families with multiethnic cultures in South Korea,' are retrieved October 13, 2014, from the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, <http://www.mogef.go.kr>

4) The number of immigrants from foreign countries ranks as follows: China (including Korean compatriots), Vietnam, the Philippines, Japan, Cambodia, Mongolia, the United States, Thailand, Taiwan, Russia, and others.

3. A Comparison of Curricular Components

This paper focuses on how and to what extent multiculturalism is included, reflected, and taught through the curricular components of secondary schools. This is because we cannot overemphasize the importance of culture in learning a foreign language too highly. H.D. Brown (2007) says that “Culture is our continent, our collective identity. Culture might also be defined as the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time.” He also adds that “The cross-cultural learning experience, additionally, takes place when the individual encounters a different culture and as a result (1) examines the degree to which he is influenced by his own culture and (2) understands the culturally derived values, attitudes and outlooks of other people.” As regards the encounter of a new culture, William Acton (1979) says that “The acculturation process is a factor of how they perceive their own culture in relation to the culture of the target language, and vice versa.” In addition, Larson and Smalley (1972) describes that “Culture governs our behavior in groups, makes us sensitive to matters of status, and helps us know what others expect of us and what will happen if we do not live up to their expectations. Culture helps us to know how far we can go as individuals and what our responsibility is to the group.”⁵⁾

Their remarks are construed as implying that: To create a mutually beneficial society for the good of the people from all strata, school curricula should take into consideration the contents and components in order to embrace all strata of students with diverse multiethnic cultures. It is for the reason that the essentials of curricula are the most important ones when students learn to help each other accept and understand cultures different from their own. When people respect each other as equal and valuable beings, it is possible to achieve a long-term national prosperity and stability in harmony with other races while maintaining their own unique cultures. We should live a mutually beneficial life in such a way that the majority with dominant cultures helps the minority, on one hand. The minority, on the other hand, has a mind to accept a genuine trust toward

5) Lambert (1967) contends that “feelings of anomie or homelessness take place where learners have moved away from their native culture but are still not completely assimilated into or adjusted to the target culture.”

the majority in a way to promote a more harmonious and cooperative society, under the current circumstances where different cultures, different ways of thinking, different ways of looking at things, different ways of life, and so on have existed. When a community comes to appreciate and value different peoples' heritage, multicultural and cross-cultural contents and components can be included and taught through secondary school textbooks to help students understand the people with multiethnic cultures. In this sense, it is worth studying the contents and components of the U.S. secondary school curriculum, given the fact that different races and peoples are living together in the United States.

Cultures should differ according to a degree of collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and gender role prescriptions.⁶⁾ Thus, the secondary school curricular contents and components, designed in accordance with different peoples' cultures and values, can be successfully implemented at a secondary school level. For this reason, the curricular designers and educators have to be adept at balancing different peoples' cultures and mores, not allowing any excessive concentration on one to dilute the importance of the other.

3.1. Components of a U.S. English–Language Textbook

From the standpoint of non-Americans, various races and peoples have been living in harmony in the United States. To see to what extent students have been influenced by the contents and components of their secondary school curricula, I analyze a recommended U.S. English-language textbook, entitled 'Literature and Language' which is used for Orange-Level Class in a high school, Minnesota, the United States.⁷⁾ Broadly speaking, as for its framework, it consists of two parts: Literature and Language involving grammar, as described in Table 2. The tables 2 and 3 belows show the components of a U.S.

6) Brown (2007, p. 201) notes that "power distance as a characteristic of a culture defines the extent to which the less powerful persons in a society accept inequality in power and consider it as normal. Inequality exists within any culture, but the degree of it that is tolerated varies between one culture and another."

7) This textbook was recommended by a native English teacher, who used to be a high school English teacher and used it at a high school, in Minnesota, the United States.

English-language textbook and authors’ nationalities and their work genres carried in the textbook:

Table 2. Components of a U.S. English–language Textbook

Literary Genre		No.	
Fiction		26 (38.2%)	
Nonfiction	Autobiography	7	15 (22%)
	Essay	2	
	Article	2	
	Biography	2	
	Personal Narrative	2	
Poetry	Formal ⁸⁾	23(33.8%)	
	Informal		
Drama		4 (5.9%)	
		Total: 68	
Language & Grammar	pronoun, punctuation, modifier, comparison, sentence joining, subject-verb agreement, simple/complex/sentence, transition, tense, conjunction, relative pronoun		

8) What is meant by ‘formal’ poetry is that there is an official chapter along with an introduction of the poetry and of the biography of the author. In addition, there are sections at the end of the poetry, like “Responding to Reading” and “Literary Concepts.” By ‘informal’ poetry, it is meant that, unlike the ‘formal’ poetry part, there is no official chapter, but there is a page for a poem under the heading ‘Insight,’ neither with explanations nor with biography of the author.

Table 3. Author's Nationality/Work Genres

Author's Nationality	No	Work Genre
American	48	all kinds
France	1	fiction
Spain	2	fiction, drama
Argentina	1	fiction
Canada	1	fiction
Greek	1	poetry
England	3	autobiography, fiction, drama
Russia	1	fiction
Mexican-American	1	poetry
African-American	1	poetry
Jamaican-American	1	biography
Chinese-American	3	poetry, autobiography, article
Jewish-American	1	fiction
Caribbean-American	1	fiction

First, as regards the specific literary contents, it contains 4 genres as follows: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. The total number of literary works reaches 68, with fictions coming to 26, poetry 23, nonfictions 15, and dramas 4. The nonfiction is classified into 5 subcategories: 7 works for autobiography; 2 for essay; 2 for article; 2 for biography; and 2 for personal narrative. Second, as seen in 'Table 3,' there appear 66 authors in total, with American authors coming to 48, non-American national authors footing up to 18⁹⁾. This means that, irrespective of their nationality, the U.S. English textbook contains foreign literary works, believing that they have a worthwhile and valuable effect on nurturing students' global minds in conformity with mounting diverse cultural community.¹⁰⁾ The literary genres, authored by foreign authors, involve all of

9) The total number of works carried in this textbook is 68. However, as I could not identify two authors out of them, I did not include them in the number of authors.

10) The works of foreign famous British and Russian authors, William Shakespeare and Leo Tolstoy, are introduced in this textbook: 'The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet' and 'The Two Brothers.' We find that, even though it is the English-language textbook for American national high school students, the American educators do not mind carrying various kinds

the following 4 categories: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama, like the U.S. native writers. In addition, the works by foreign authors, contained in the nonfiction part, are: autobiography, essay, article, biography, and personal narrative, just like those by the U.S. native authors, on an equal footing.

The number of non-American authors, whose works are introduced and carried in the U.S. English-language textbook, is as follows: 3 from England, 3 from Chinese-American, 2 from Spain, and 1 each from Argentina, Canada, Greek, Jewish-American, Mexican-American, African-American, Jamaican-American, Russian, and Caribbean Island. The number of foreign authors is 18. Compared with the number of American national authors reaching 48, the portion of foreign national authors comes to about 26 percent.

Third, to help understand literary glossary, easy explanations are provided, such as “Elements of Fiction, Elements of Poetry, and Elements of Drama, Understanding Fiction and Strategies for Reading Fiction, Understanding Poetry and Strategies for Reading Poetry, Setting, Plot, Point of View, Style, Imagery, Mood, Symbolism, Alliteration, Narration, Metaphor, Flashback, Theme, Soliloquy, Comic Relief, Foil, Tragedy.”

Fourth, as for the contents on ‘Language and Grammar,’ emphasis is put on writing ability throughout the textbook, such as ‘Prewriting, Drafting, Revising/Editing’ in every chapter.

In connection with the grammar part, just easy and simple contents are introduced, like “Pronoun Use, Punctuation, Modifier Use, Comparison, Sentence Joining, Subject-Verb Agreement, Combining with Word Additions, Pronoun Agreement, Transitions, Adding Phrases, Avoiding Unnecessary Shifts in Tense, Relative Pronouns, Conjunctions, Simple/Compound/Complex Sentences, and Confusing Verbs.”¹¹⁾

3.2. Components of a Korean–Language Textbook

Like the framework of the U.S. English-language textbook, the

of works by authors from different countries, on the ground that they are considered valuable and worthy for the education of American students.

11) The grammar parts are considered quite easy and simple from an angle of Korean students.

Korean-language textbook is composed of 4 literary categories: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. However, the contents of each category are different from those of the U.S. English-language textbook, as shown in Table 4:

Table 4. Components of a Korean–Language Textbook

Genre	Period			Total		
	Mod	Mid	Old			
Fiction	5	2		7 (11.7%)		
Non-fiction	Article	12		12	43 (63.7%)	
	Biography	2		2		
	Essay	17	5	3		25
	Interview	3				3
	Report	1				1
Poetry ¹²⁾	11	2	3	16 (23.5%)		
Drama	1			1 (1.4%)		
Grammar (Writing)	phonological rules (Old/Mid/Early Mod language)			Book 1: Chap 3, 5 Book 2: Chap 5		
Chinese Letter	Book 1: Chap 1~5, Chap7 (out of 7 Chap)			10 Chap		
	Book 2: Chap 1~3, Chap5 (out of 6 Chap)					

Legends: Chap: Chapter, Mid: Middle, Mod: Modern;

The contents and components of a Korean-language textbook are constituted as follows:

First, as for the fiction, there are only 7 works in books 1 and 2. These works were novels written in the Modern and Middle Ages.

Second, the nonfiction reaches 43 works and their categories are classified into 5 parts: article, biography, essay, interview, and experiment-observation report. Out of 43 works, essay takes up 25, including those works written in the Old-/Middle-/Early Modern Ages. Specifically, they were authored during the reigns of the Shilla Kingdom and the Chosun Dynasty. Out of the 25 essays, 5

12) A poem written by an Indian author Tagore is included in Chap5, Book 2.

were written in the Middle Age and 3 in the Old Age.

This means that, for the construal of the Old-Age literary works, students are required to have a considerable and sophisticated knowledge of how to read the letters and diacritic symbols employed in these periods.

Third, Chinese letters frequently appear in the Korean-language textbooks. That is, they appear in 5 chapters out of 7 in Book 1, and 4 chapters out of 6 chapters in Book 2. Thus, a great deal of knowledge of both Korean and Chinese letters is prerequisite to figuring out the texts of the Korean-language textbook.

Last, in the Korean-language textbook, there appear words and expressions, which are not easy to understand. For example, as for a word meaning ‘agreement,’ instead of an easy and common Korean word ‘Hyop-jeong,’ several difficult words are alternatively used, such as “Kyu-yak,” “Hyop-yak,” “Yak-gwan,” and “Jo-yak” in Korean. In addition, for an expression meaning ‘a speech for a ceremony,’ instead of using a common Korean expression ‘Haengsamun,’ rather a difficult expression--“Siksamun” in Korean--is used in the Korean-language textbook.

3.3 Findings

The comparative analysis of the two countries’ language textbooks reveals many differences between the two:

First, as regards the number of an essay genre, there are 15 works in the U.S. English-language textbook, while there are 43 in the Korean-language textbooks. Considering that an author’s personal opinion and subjectivity should be reflected in the essay genre, this cannot be construed otherwise than as implying that the Korean-language textbook attaches more importance to the reification of a personal ideology and subjectivity than the English-language textbook does.

Second, as for the works like fiction, poetry, and drama, we find that 26 works are carried in the English-language textbook, while 8 works are carried in the Korean-language textbook. Poetry comes up to 23 works in the English-language textbook, while 16 works in the Korean-language textbook. Drama reaches 4 works in the English-language textbook and only 1 work in the Korean-language textbook.

Third, concerning the number of the authors of literary works in both

language textbooks, the same number of authors, 68, appears not only in the U.S. English-language textbook, but also in the Korean-language textbook. However, concerning the variety of the authors' nationality, the English-language textbook introduces 48 American national and 18 foreign authors.¹³⁾ In the meantime, in the Korean-language textbooks, all authors but only one are Korean national. Thus, I can say that, unlike the English-language textbook, the Korean-language textbook is composed of all Korean authors' works.

Fourth, regarding the part to which the English-language textbook and Korean-language textbooks attach significance, the English-language textbook puts more value into improving writing ability. However, the Korean-language textbook attaches a great deal of importance to the side of linguistic knowledge.

4. Conclusion

In view of the contents and components of both countries' language textbooks, we see that there are many differences between the two. In conformity with the increase of students with different multiethnic cultures in school, curriculum should be duly redressed in a way to encompass extrinsic factors and sociocultural variables, including their own social mores, ways of life and thinking, ways of looking at things, and so on. As school is the very environment in which students have to exist, think, feel, and relate to others, they have to be fully exposed to the opportunities to learn about such things through proper curricular contents and components.

Through the U.S. English-language textbook, American students have the opportunity to nurture an open-minded spirit towards other countries' cultures. This fact implies that various countries' literary works lay a foundation for them to prepare themselves with multicultural minds and openness toward other world.

Contrary to the English-language textbook, reading the Korean-language

13) As noted in 'Table 3,' the total number of works comes to 68 in the textbook. As I cannot identify the authors' names and nationality of two works, I classify them as unknown writers.

textbook requires a sophisticated linguistic knowledge, which goes beyond simple grammatical one. Judging from the suitability of a reading textbook, the Korean-language textbook has problems concerning readability and exploitability.¹⁴⁾ Lots of defunct Middle-Age Korean symbols and expressions have still appeared in the novels. This clearly means that, without some degree of previously-learned knowledge of the Middle-age writing system, learners have trouble comprehending the contents.

Therefore, from the standpoint of students with multiethnic cultures, the contents in the Korean-language textbooks are constituted in a manner to put them to an impasse in school. What is worse, some of the literary genres and language rules do not need to be learned for high school curricula. Rather, these contents have to be learned as a major coursework in college, not through high school curriculum. In this sense, the Korean-language textbook does not meet suitability, exploitability, and readability for reading at all.

In addition, foreign students with multiethnic cultures have a difficult time studying a Korean textbook, as there are no suitable textbooks for ‘Korean as a Second Language (KSL),’ like ESL books in the United States. This may further get them to undergo a hard time accustoming themselves to Korean school and settling down in Korean society.

It is high time that the framework and components of the Korean-language textbooks should be redesigned, like those of English-language textbook. In addition, it should contain foreign literary genres beneficial to nurturing students’ open-mindedness toward the rest of the world. By doing so, they can, with no difficulty, embrace other people with multiethnic cultures for a more harmonious society when they advance into society after graduation.

This paper seeks to find an example for Korea arising as a multiethnic culture society, in view of a long-term national harmony with different races and peoples and also in view of the role of high school textbooks to provide ideal curricular contents and multiethnic cultural components. For this reason,

14) Brown (2007, p.374) quotes Christine Nuttall (1996) as defining exploitability: “A text that facilitates the achievement of certain language and content goals, that is exploitable for instructional tasks and techniques, and that is integratable with other skills,” and readability: “A text with lexical and structural difficulty that will challenge students without overwhelming them.”

the merits of the U.S. English-language textbook provide a motivation for Korea to include more various multicultural contents in the Korean-language textbook. Now that Korea is no longer a one-race nation, a long-term national prosperity and harmony should be promoted based on the respect for various ethnicities and cultures wherein the majority does not ignore the minorities and the minorities do not resent the majority.

In this paper, I put forward a proposal as regards the genres and components of the textbooks: The Korean-language textbook should be revamped to channel into diverse ethnic-cultural backgrounds, and thereby we should help students prepare for a rapidly-growing multiethnic cultural society, where lots of different races and peoples have settled down in Korea.

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