

A Comparative Study on the Three Versions of Mainstream English Textbooks of New Curriculum for the Senior High School in China

XU Keqiang^{[a],[b],*}

^[a]Faculty of Education, Southwest University, Chongqing, China.

^[b]Research Centre for Basic Education, Southwest University, Chongqing, China.

*Corresponding author.

Supported by the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities, China (SWU1009105); the Key Research Bases of Humanities and Social Science, Research Centre for Basic Education, Southwest University, Chongqing, China (20500105).

Received 5 February 2016; accepted 9 April 2016

Published online 26 May 2016

Abstract

The study examined three versions of mainstream English textbooks for current use in senior high school. It first focuses on the research background and significance of the current use of three main versions of English compulsory textbooks. Then it outlines the design of the research scope and contents, research method. It conducts comparison of four dimensions and is analyzed in details. The findings indicate that three versions of textbooks have their respective and unique characteristics, and the scope of adaptation. It suggests that the author of textbooks should re-examine and survey, and really come up with a credible basis to demonstrate the moderate and feasible measures of the materials, and to adjust the difficulty of the text. At the same time, it needs to increase the input of modern teaching equipment, so that teachers are more likely to operate and implement the link in the classroom teaching.

Key words: English textbooks; New curriculum; Comparative study; Senior high school

Xu, K. Q. (2016). A Comparative Study on the Three Versions of Mainstream English Textbooks of New Curriculum for the Senior High School in China. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 10(5), 9-19. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/8483>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/8483>

INTRODUCTION

As the development of information and technology, the current society is called knowledge society, in which ideas and knowledge function as commodities and every aspect of our life are influenced by this strong social background along with the globalization and internationalization. As a widely used language in the world, it is reported that over 85% academic papers are published or written in English and the language of the main journals for each disciplines are also based on the English. That is why at the forthcoming of knowledge economy, every country carries out the education reform especially through curriculum reform. As the further development of open-up policy and economy in China, in order to improve peoples' overall quality and nation's comprehensive powers, it needs to cultivate talents with strong capabilities of English utilization. Because of long-term influence of exam-oriented education in basic education, English classroom teaching commonly stress on the "input" but overlook "output" strategies, this obviously cannot adapt to the social economy, scientific and cultural requirements. So it is imperative to carry out high school English classroom reform, more importantly it should focus on aspects as syllabus, textbooks, teaching methodology and system of curriculum. Since the promulgation and implementation of *English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education* (2001, 2011), as the core of curriculum, English textbooks determine the contents and form of teaching, which is the key area and basis of deeper development. It is placed more important position in English teaching. Hence, to comply with the requirements of curriculum reform, relevant experimental textbooks based on the curriculum standards are put into use and set for school selection. The following are the current-used versions such as People's Education Press (short as PEP), Beijing Normal University Press (short as BNUP), Hebei Educational Press (short as HEP), Foreign Language

Teaching and Research Press (short as FLTRP), Chongqing University Press (short as CUP) etc.. Each version of English textbooks features differently from the point of compilation. As for the results of utilization, the above diversified textbooks have been well practiced and achieved very good teaching effects, which further enhance the development of curriculum reform. Of course, during the process of utilizing and practicing, different versions of textbooks also appear some problems, and different teachers hold different views about these textbooks. The current research will be conducted through the comparison and analysis among the three mainstream versions of PEP, BNUP and FLTRP English textbooks. The reasons why choose three versions of textbooks for comparison as follows:

(a) The three versions of textbooks are widely used among most schools around China;

(b) The three versions of textbook compilers are all from the top universities and they are renowned in their respective expertise;

(c) The principle of the compiling textbooks is closely comply with the spirits of curriculum reform and better reflect the essence of quality education and cultivating students' key competencies;

(d) The contents or materials textbook selected are very diversified and authentic and the compiling framework is very scientific, which is closely comply with students' actualities.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Studies on English Textbook Compilation Home and Abroad

Textbooks play an important role in English teaching system. As the core of teaching tools to implement curriculum, it has not only had the most important and direct impact on the teaching content, but also it is also the concrete representations of the syllabus and curriculum standards. Developing ideal textbooks can effectively meet the needs of English language teaching and learning. As a foreign language, English textbooks are the carrier of comprehensively implementing the route, contents, means and strategies of English education. Furthermore, it is the information source that students and teachers that depend on to carry out activities and to acquire and develop English knowledge, skills, and the comprehensive utilization of language capacities.

Through literature review, it appears that there are many studies on English textbooks home and abroad. One of the contextual syllabus of textbooks compilations spread in the 1970 to 1980s of the 20th century, which suggested to compile textbooks around the needs of language in different contexts and all the textbook compiled focused on the context to select the contents and arrange the activities. For instance, L. G.

Alexander compiled *the New Concept English* in 1976, which is the best example of making connection with structure, context and textbooks. In the 1970s, notional and functional syllabus became the guiding principle of many language curriculum and textbook compilation. English language teaching belongs to communicative language teaching. It is based on the theoretic foundation of psycho-linguistics and social linguistics featured in using language as communicative tools, and requires that students need to be repeatedly exposed, utilizing real language, and gradually grasp appropriate language. It also stresses on students' interests and needs, utilizing diversified teaching methods and cultivating communicative skills. It has the following syllabus design patterns of textbook compilation: a) pure function of compiling and presentation system. It based on the pure functionality of textbooks and through filling the blanks and replaced with exercises to practice functional language, which would not concern much about the systemic feature of grammar, and it generally does not arrange students' systematic training. The contents of pure functional textbooks are often closely connected with reality. Textbooks such as *the Survival* serials, were published by Longman Publishing Group of the United Kingdom in 1980, which allow learners to obtain a minimum level of a foreign language, in similar with foreign language needs of tourism or business travel level. b) Structural and functional compiling system. Textbooks through the design of this method, it could not only access to the main aspects of notional and functional syllabus requirements, but it could meet the needs of step by step and the hierarchy of easiness and difficulty level. Many sets of China's self or collaborative compiling textbooks for current use were written within this system. These textbooks cleverly integrated grammar and structure into context, and it intends to make students grasp grammar and structure in meaningful situations, which have made a good teaching results, and are adapted to the traditional circumstance of teaching grammar and structure. In the 1980s, *Functions of English* is a typical example of compiling with such guiding principle. *Communicative English Grammar* edited by Geoffrey N. Leech and textbooks JEFC (Junior English for China) and SEFC (Senior English for China) are also examples of such compiling system. 3. Functional and structural system. The purpose of using this method and the purpose of function means to dominate and to teach the significance of structure accordingly. While compiling such kind of textbooks, in order to connect function with structure organically, it needs to compile items of function in different levels into textbooks, but also it should arrange structures in different levels systematically as well. Textbooks compiled in this method are usually for English learners in intermediate and advanced stages. English learning in this stage would be more diversified. Students are easy

to maintain the highest and durable learning enthusiasm and it would also make learning more efficient.

1.2 Research on English Textbook Evaluation Home and Abroad

Textbook evaluation is also an important part of research. Evaluation of textbook is an item of more technical work, and it should not be evaluated by experience, perception, and appearance of textbooks. As early as in the 1980 of the 20th century, many experts and scholars have studied textbook assessment, among which Alan Cunningsworth first published his monograph on *Evaluating and Selecting EFL Teaching Materials* in 1984. And he put forward important principles of English textbooks for evaluation that textbooks should be closely related with teaching objectives and it needs to be clear about the aim of learning language. It would be helpful to choose those textbooks for students' utilization of language effectively. It needs also to consider the relationship among language, learning process and learners. In 1987, the collected works, *ELT Textbooks and Materials: Problem in Evaluation and Development*, edited by Sheldon, was published, in which altogether 11 papers about textbook evaluation were included and among which Breen and Candlin (1987) put forward the textbook evaluation framework to explore the relevant theoretic and practical issues. In 1995, Cunningsworth in his textbook evaluation guide further proposed four items of standards for evaluations: a) Textbook should be consistent with students' needs and learning target. b) Textbook should be reflected students' needs at present and in the future, and help students effectively use language. c) Textbook should be considered students' needs as a learner, and it needs to promote their learning process, not to impose their so-called method arbitrarily. d) Textbook should clearly be appeared the role of support and encourage students' learning. Meanwhile, he raised the overall impressionistic overview and the in-depth evaluation. In addition, some scholars have proposed a number of other assessment theories and standards. For instance, Grant (1987) put forward the three levels of evaluation as initial

evaluation, detailed evaluation and in-use evaluation. From three aspects, namely students, teachers, syllabus and test, he designed three questionnaires for selecting textbooks. Kuo (1993) raised that textbooks should have a certain dynamic. Tomlinson's (1998) suggested criteria for evaluating good teaching materials, and so on. Ur (2000) referred to that there are two kinds of standards: the general criteria and the specific criteria. The former refers to apply standards to evaluate any material and the latter is applicable to specific courses or textbooks evaluation criteria for specific groups of students. Ur made not only a distinction between General and specialized evaluation criteria, specifically outlined the general evaluation criteria.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This paper is based on construction theory, schema theory, humanistic theory and output theory. And it uses mixed qualitative and quantitative methods in combination with some relevant research findings of textbook compilation principles and textbook evaluation theory. It intends firstly to conduct the comparative analysis of the three versions of textbooks through the base of the theoretic framework, secondly the comparative analysis of specific contents such as the arrangement of pragmatic and linguistic knowledge, the design for cultivating linguistic activities, and learning strategies. Thirdly it investigates teachers and students' views about the current-use textbooks and recommendations to the textbooks compilers, so that future textbooks will be better to meet the needs of high school English teaching. Furthermore, it will put forward some suggestions about how teachers take the use of textbooks.

3. COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS

3.1 The Comparison of Compiling Main Framework

The following tables are overall frameworks of the three versions of mainstream textbooks for current use.

Table 1
Overall Frameworks of the Three Versions of Mainstream Textbooks for Current Use

Version	Contents design	Teaching units design	Workbook design	Appendix design
People's Education Press	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unit 2. Topics 3. Functional items 4. Structures 5. Reading 6. Writing 7. Workbook 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Warming up 2. Pre-reading 3. Reading 4. Comprehending 5. Learning about language 6. Using language 7. Summing up 8. Learning tip 9. Reading for fun 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listening 2. Talking 3. Using words and Expressions 4. Using structures 5. Listening task 6. Reading task 7. Speaking task 8. Writing task 9. Project 10. Checking by yourself 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes to the texts 2. Grammar 3. Words and expressions in each unit 4. Vocabulary 5. Irregular verbs 6. Changes in international phonetic symbols for English

To be continued

Continued

Version	Contents design	Teaching units design	Workbook design	Appendix design
Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Module 2. Topic and task 3. Grammar/functions 4. Skills 5. Vocabulary/Everyday English 6. Culture/learning to learn 7. Workbook 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Reading and vocabulary 3. Listening and vocabulary 4. Listening and speaking 5. Writing 6. Fuction and everyday English 7. Grammar 8. Pronunciation 9. Culture corner 11. Task 12. Module file 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grammar 2. Vocabulary 3. Reading 4. Listening and speaking 5. Speaking and writing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes to the text 2. Grammar 3. Words and expression 4. Names and places 5. Vocabulary
Beijing Normal University Press	<p>Language input</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Units/lessons 2. Function 3. Grammar 4. Vocabulary <p>Skills development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading (strategies) 2. Listening(strategies) 3. Speaking(strategies) 4. Writing(strategies) 5. Unit diary 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Warm-up 2. Lesson 1 Lesson 2 Lesson 3 Lesson 4 <p>(language focus and skills focus)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Word corner 3. Communication workshop 4. Culture corner 5. Bulletin board (1) Project (2) Literature spot (3) Language problem-solving 	<p>Language Power</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lesson 1 Lesson 2 Lesson 3 Lesson 4 2. Word corner 3. Remember 4. Focus on reading 5. Focus on writing 6. Key word bank 7. Word power 8. Check your progress 9. Word tip 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writing help 2. Grammar Summary 3. Mini-grammar 4. Notes to the text 5. Vocabulary in each unit 6. Word list 7. Tapescript

As can be seen from the above table, each unit starts basically with topics as the core, organize and arrange listening, speaking, reading and writing activities by the clue of structure and functional items. It means to realize the teaching goals through “task-oriented” activities and the completion of the project.

The overall structure of PEP textbooks is consisted of four parts for each module: contents, teaching unit, units supporting exercise, and appendix. The contents for the teaching task are quite clear, in which it includes Unit, Topics, Functional Items, Grammar Structure, Chapter Reading, Writing and Workbook. And it utilizes ways of unit division and sets many parts.

The overall structure of FLTRP are made up of four parts for each module: Contents, Teaching Unit, Units Supporting Exercise as well as the Appendix. Its contents include units, topic and task, functions, grammar, skills, vocabulary, everyday English, culture, learning to learn and matching exercises (Workbook). Teaching content is based on topics and tasks, and it adopts the way of unit division too.

As for BNUP textbooks each volume consists of three modules, and each module contains four texts. Through text topic it means to carry out fostering language skills and learning language knowledge, meanwhile it penetrates the guidance of language and the guide of emotional attitudes. For example, the first three pages of each textbook is learning strategy instruction (Language to Learn). One of the prominent advantages of BNUP textbooks is the very clear ideas running through from the start to the end. That is every unit, every lesson, and the design of each task are targeted to the next learning

activities through careful studies, which are prescribed specific communicative results

It is obvious from the above analysis that three versions of textbooks conform to the rule of Chinese students’ cognitive and psychological characteristics. It takes the teaching methods of the combination of function, structure, topic and task-based activities, and stresses on discipline integration and the cultivation of cross-cultural communicative competence. In addition, three versions of textbooks emphasize listening, speaking, reading and writing skills training of comprehensive ability of task-based teaching activities and it enable students to complete different tasks, learn to think positively, participate actively, sum up after class, and discover independently. It means to foster autonomous learning ability. The design of the textbooks reflects the transfer of teachers’ role. Students are in the center of learning, and teachers take a part to organize, promote and guide students’ learning.

3.2 Theme Comparison

Themes refer to certain aspects of social life as writing materials. And it also refers especially to materials that writers are used to work the theme. It usually refers to those centralized, chosen and refined life events or phenomenon in a work.

New English textbooks centers on topic, rich, wide and diversified, and involves a wide range of topics. It ranges from splendid history and culture in ancient times to the development of modern science and technology, from sports stars to the national hero, from familiar campus to a foreign country with charming scenery. There are permeated with a deep breath of life and the fresh flavor

of the times. Students will immerse themselves in living English atmosphere, broaden their horizons, and enrich their knowledge. But one of the questions raised about whether three versions of textbooks concerning subject arrangement is focused on the same. The following comparison is about the three textbook discourse theme arrangement.

Table 2
Textbooks Discourse Theme Arrangement

Theme	PEP (N=Passages arranged)	FLTRP (N=Passages arranged)	BNUP (N=Passages arranged)
Personal matter	5	3	9
Family, friend, and people around	1	1	1
Surroundings	0	2	2
Daily activities	0	0	2
School life	1	1	2
Interest and hobbies	0	1	1
Personal affection	1	0	1
Interpersonal relationship	1	5	2
Plan and wishes	2	2	0
Activities for holiday	1	2	3
Shopping	0	0	1
Food	2	0	0
Health	4	3	0
weather	0	0	0
Amusement and sports	4	4	3
Travel and transport	4	4	9
Language learning	2	2	1
Nature	6	6	1
The World and environment	4	4	0
Scientific knowledge and modern technology	7	8	5
Hot topic	2	4	4
History and geography	4	0	9
Society	2	3	3
Literature and arts	7	7	6

As indicated from the above table, three versions of textbooks for the choice of the subject matter is all-inclusive, and with wide range of coverage. It stresses on student interest in the selection of subject matter for each version in accordance with the physical and mental development of the students, and it is expanded from the class, family, and gradually to the community. It also

covers a very wide range from personal to social life, from astronomy and geography to history and politics, from the traditional language and arts to modern science and technology, and social hot topics etc.. As in a whole, comparing with the other versions, more chapters are chosen by BNUP, and FLTRP select less by contrast. On social activities, three versions of textbooks keep overall balance. Only some version selects more articles on certain topics than the other, such as interpersonal relations. FLTRP select 5 articles. As for travel and traffic, BNUP select 9 articles. On nature, the world and the environment, PEP and FLTRP are comparatively keeping consistent. There are 6 and 4 articles respectively. By contrast, BNUP select only 1 article on nature, but do not select any on the latter.

3.3 Cultural Awareness

There are over 200 definitions for culture. Nunan (2001) believes that culture is rules and norms which guide communication among the diverse groups and personal conduct. It shows beliefs, customs, institutions, goals, and technology of a society. Culture includes a community's behavior and beliefs at a particular time. Cultural awareness means to develop sensitivity and understanding towards another culture. It usually consists of changes in attitudes and values. Awareness and sensitivity also refer to the relationship between people's openness and adaptability in quality. Cultural awareness needs to be supplemented by cultural knowledge. In terms of definition, culture refers not only to the deep understanding of other cultures, but also it should have a deep understanding of ones own. From two definitions of culture and cultural awareness, while conducting cross-cultural communication, it is quite clear to learn first of all grammar and vocabulary in the target language, but it is even more important to master the rules and norms of personal behavior and communication among target language communities. At the same time, it needs to have a firm grasp of mother tongue and target language in order to achieve effective communication, and a real communication. The so-called "cultural permeation" means to gradually introduce Oriental and Western social and cultural knowledge in English teaching. Cultural awareness has been a hot topic in English teaching. Because the use of language is inseparable from its cultural context. Discourse of three versions of textbooks is saturated with extremely rich culture, including culture home and abroad, and it mainly refers to a country's history, geography, customs, traditions, lifestyles, arts, behavioral norms and values etc. The previous study concerning cultivation of cross-cultural awareness has been analyzed in details through cultural knowledge transference, teacher's appropriate teaching methods and English textbooks compilations (Xu, 2015). The following is comparison and analysis concerning culture home and abroad in three versions of textbooks.

3.3.1 Selection of Domestic Cultural Theme of Three Versions of Textbooks

Table 3
Domestic Cultural Theme of Three Versions of Textbooks

Volume	PEP version	BNUP version	FLTRP version
Compulsory Book 1		Policeman: Fang Ming Volunteer: Wang Shu Astronaut: Yang Liwei	Introducing new teachers
Compulsory Book 2	Writer: Feng Jikai	Classical pianist: Kong Xiangdong	
Compulsory Book 3		Expoler: Zhen He	Philosopher: Confucius, Meng Zi, Mo-tse
Compulsory Book 4	Stateswoman: Song Qingling Father of hybrid rice:Yuan Longping Jia Sixie and his monography <i>Important Arts for the People's Welfare</i>		Father of hybrid rice: Yuan Longping
Compulsory Book 4	A common editor		Sport star: Li Ning

As can be seen from the statistics of the above table, the characters of the selection contain ancient and modern, and having different careers and from different walks of life. And in different versions of textbooks they have the same character selection, such as Yang Liwei, Yuan Longping, Xu Beihong, and Qi Baishi. Compared with the old teaching material, the three versions of textbooks have leap in quality and quantity. Especially PEP edition selects the writer Feng Jikai. BNU edition selected classical pianist Kong Xiangdong, and FLTRP select philosopher Confucius, Mencius and Mozi etc. It is really

different, and give something fresh. But there are uneven, such as BNUP and FLTRP versions tend relatively more to select characters, while PEP version is relatively small. In addition, three versions, the ratio of selecting the male and female is imbalance. Furthermore, the modern and contemporary history of political figures are involved less, such as the great man Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and Deng Xiaoping, etc.. In the future of the compilation of textbooks, it needs to be considered adding part of that to the content. At the same time, the selection of characters is also for the purpose of educational significance.

Table 4
Holiday and Art Selection

Volume	PEP version	BNUP version	FLTRP version
Compulsory Book 1		The Mid-Autumn Festival; The Dragon Boat Festival; The Lantern Festival; The Spring Festival.	
Compulsory Book 2			Renowned artist and their masterpiece
Compulsory Book 3	The Mid-Autumn Festival; The Dragon Boat Festival; The Spring Festival.		
Compulsory Book 4			China dragon
Compulsory Book 5			

From the table it shows that holiday in selected areas is generally referring to Chinese traditional festival. BNUP version gives a very detailed descriptions. As for PEP version, it isn't specifically described. Whereas, FLTRP version almost does not give any descriptions.

As for art selection, it is worth mentioning that there are choices of the Beijing Opera and paper-cut in BNUP version. The former is consistent with the requirements

and initiation by the Ministry of Education that Beijing Opera needs to be performed in the primary and high school classroom. And paper cutting has a long history in China. As early as in the Han and Tang Dynasties, women utilized silver and gold color silk to cut flower. Later on, as it is developed, in the festival, they cut colored paper into a variety of flowers, animals, characters or the story, and posted on the window, and on the lintel as decoration,

but also used as a gift or decoration embroidery pattern. Therefore, as a kind of folk art, paper cutting should be inherited and developed. As for the artist's works, we think that BNUP and FLTRP versions to select Xu Beihong's horse picture is a very good example, because it is very representative. And for the Qi Baishi's work, FLTRP makes a very good selection of the use of his "shrimp" works. As is known to all, nobody can match master's "shrimp" work, which signifies his talented foundation. Chinese cabbage, this work is selected by BNUP version, although it is excellent, it is not enough to reflect the quality of the master.

3.3.2 Selection of Foreign Cultural Theme for Three Versions of Textbooks

As is known to all, the language is used in a certain cultural background. The use of language is influenced by culture. At the same time, different languages also reflect the cultural differences between different nations. Three versions of the textbooks are rich in information on cross-cultural communication. There are relatively large proportion of foreign cultural themes to be selected. PEP version of unit 1 and unit 2 in Compulsory Book 1 introduce the whole world of English, and it is intended to give students a preliminary understanding of the relationship between English language and English culture, as well as understanding of the common use of English idioms and expressions and cultural connotation.

BNUP version in Unit 2 of Compulsory Book 2 refer to foreign sports stars, and Unit 3 about foreign festivals, banquets and weddings and so on. Unit 12 in compulsory book 4 is about the content of culture shock, and it specifically relates to geographical location of Britain, customs and the introduction of new Australians. Compulsory Book 3 describes the development of the United States car. Compulsory Book 4 talks about the second major currencies in the world, the Euro, the British newspaper and Australia. Compulsory Book 5 introduces the characteristics of personality and the type of nation and the educational system of the United Kingdom.

Unit 3 in Compulsory Book 1 of the FLTRP, it introduces Australia's natural landscape by taking a train to travel. Unit 3 in Compulsory Book 2, it introduces the music master at Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven in the world. Unit 1 in compulsory book 3, it introduces several major cities in Europe. Unit 1 in Compulsory Book 5 it introduces British English and American English, and in Unit 4 introduces the western carnival. It is similar to the version of BNUP, the FLTRP version. It also opens up a cultural corner with a lot of chapters to introduce foreign culture.

3.4 The Comparison of Language Materials Input

3.4.1 Vocabulary

Comparing the data from the above table statistics, it is clearly indicated that the requirements for the vocabulary

of three versions are not the same. Vocabulary for junior high school graduation requirement purposes (4 levels), is 1,500 to 1,600 words, and 200 to 300 idioms or collocations. In order to meet the 2,400 to 2,500 vocabulary requirements of *curriculum standard* for 7 levels, it needs also to be increased to 1,000 vocabulary extra.

Table 5
The Comparison of the Three Versions About the Input of Vocabulary

Textbook	Module	Curriculum vocabulary	Non-curriculum vocabulary	Overall vocabulary
PEP	Module 1	256	63	319
	Module 2	291	93	384
	Module 3	316	114	430
	Module 4	284	78	362
	Module 5	327	96	423
	Total	1474	444	1918
BNUP	Module 1	203	23	226
	Module 2	233	21	254
	Module 3	253	10	263
	Module 4	316	7	323
	Module 5	306	8	314
	Total	1311	69	1380
FLTRP	Module 1			216
	Module 2			199
	Module 3			198
	Module 4			270
	Module 5			244
	Total			1127

3.4.2 Text

The layout design of PEP version is particularly good. All *Reading* is on the left of the text, and the supporting exercises are on the right side. It shows gradient arrays, quite cleanly. In addition, the vast majority of *pre-reading* and *reading* are respectively placed in a positive and reverse two pages, so that the students can be easy to read and preview, which is very effective and undoubtedly original. Reading section is provided in the main reading text of each unit. The themes and genres are various.

The reading materials for FLTRP version are rich. It stresses on the training of reading skills. The *reading* materials in the textbooks are rich in subject matter, features with the times, and are close to students' life, so that students are willing to learn.

The topics that the text selected in the BNUP textbook are rich. It is included 15 themes in 5 modules, such as

Life Styles, Heroes, Celebrations, Cyberspace, Rhythm, Design, The Sea, Adventure, Wheels, Money, The Media, Culture, Shock, People, and Careers.

3.4.3 Grammar

Table 6
The Arrangements for Grammar Items in Three Versions

PEP version		BNUP version		FLTRP version	
Module 1 Unit 1 Friendship	Direct Speech and Indirect Speech (I): statements and questions	Module 1 Unit 1 Lifestyle	Present tenses Present Simple Present Continuous Future tense Arrangements Intentions	Module 1 Unit 1	Revision of the present tenses Adjective ending in -ing and -ed
Unit 2 English around the world	Direct Speech and Indirect Speech (II): requests and commands	Unit 2 Heroes	Past tenses (Past Simple Past Continuous) Present tense (Present Perfect)	Unit 2	Verbs followed by -ing
Unit 3 Travel journal	The Present Continuous Tense: Expressing futurity	Unit 3 Celebration	The passive(I) Modal verbs have to/don't have to can / can't ought to /ought not to	Unit 3	The -ed form Past tense time expressions Present perfect tense
Unit 4 Earthquakes	The Attributive Clause(I) (that , which, who ,whose)	Module 2 Unit 4 Cyberspace	Predications ---will and be going to First conditional Second Conditional	Unit 4	Present perfect tense
Unit 5 Nelson Mandela--a modern hero	The Attributive Clause(II) (where, when, why, prep.+ which/whom)	Unit 5 Rhythm	“will” for decisions Adverbial clause(I) ---time and concession Adverbial clauses(II) ---cause, result and purpose	Unit 5	Degrees of comparison
Module 2 Unit 1 Cultural relics	The Restrictive and Non-Restrictive Attributive Clause	Unit 6 Design	Prepositions ---time /place/ movement Relative clauses(I) Who/whom/whose/which/that	Unit 6	Compound words Definite and zero articles
Unit 2 The Olympic Games	The Future Passive Voice	Module 3 Unit 7 The Sea	Relative clauses(II) where when why prep+ which/whom Comparison of adjectives	Module 2 Unit 1	Nouns used as verbs Will/be going to for future actions
Unit 3 Computers	The Present Perfect Passive Voice	Unit 8 Adventure	State or activity verbs Relative clauses(III) Defining and non-defining clauses	Unit 2	Infinitive of purpose Adverbial clause of result
Unit 4 Wildlife protection	The Present Progressive Passive Voice	Unit 9 Wheels	Present perfect continuous Present perfect and Present perfect continuous	Unit 3	Adverbial clause of time The past perfect tense

From comparison of the above table, it can be seen that even the guiding principles of a variety of textbooks in conformity with the same *New Curriculum Standards* (2001, 2011), three versions of grammar compilation system are not the same, and the arrangement form may vary over time. There are many differences between them.

The common point is that these three versions are covered by the requirements of mastering key grammatical items in the senior compulsory phase, such as the attributive clause, noun clause, non-predicate verb, etc..

There is some difference among three versions. In terms of the focus for the concentration of the grammatical

items, the layout of the BNUP textbooks grammar is the most concentrated. By contrast, the grammar of the PEP and FLTRP versions is compiled to be extended in a circle. In view of the grammatical points, PEP version is the most extensive coverage of the grammar points, focusing on the expansion and extension of grammar knowledge. However, it stresses on the reviewing of the grammar for FLTRP version, with particular emphasis on the consolidation and mastery of grammar knowledge.

Table 7
Students' Views on PEP Textbook Usage

	Totally agree	Comparatively agree	Agree	Not agree	Completely not agree
I like my Senior English Textbooks.	12.5%	20.5%	42.8%	13.4%	10.8%
Senior textbooks better connect with junior textbooks.	9.8%	23.4%	37.8%	15.4%	13.6%
I can improve my spoken English through "Speaking" practice.	11.8%	17.3%	39.9%	18.5%	12.8%
"Writing" part is helpful for my writing level.	13.8%	18.2%	31.2%	23.2%	13.6%
Reading for Fun can improve my interests for learning English.	12.4%	15.7%	37.1%	22.1%	12.7%
The textbooks is beneficial to improve my self-learning ability.	13.1%	21.8%	34.8%	21.8%	8.5%

As it is indicated from the above table, most students prefer this set of textbooks from *Agree* to *Totally Agree*. It shares a total of 75.8%. And there is a small part of *Not Agree*, which is consisted of a total of 24.2%. About 29% students think this set of textbooks are not good enough to connect with junior textbooks. PEP textbooks set very high starting point, and comparing with contents in junior

4. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Questionnaire for Students

Comparing with other versions, PEP English textbooks are widely used. In order to better understand students' views on PEP textbook usage, we choose two schools. Altogether 100 students in grade 1 of senior high school participated the survey. The results are as follows.

textbooks, it is more difficult for most of the just-entering students to adapt to.

4.2 Questionnaire for Teachers

The following tables are the statistics for teachers' views. They are from 6 schools, and altogether 50 teachers take part in the survey.

Table 8
Teachers' Views on BNUP English Textbooks

Teachers' view about the textbooks	Yes	No
The design of the <i>Listening and Speaking Activities</i> in the textbooks is hard to conduct.	30.0%	70.0%
Some of the vocabulary are too partial and the frequency of use is not high.	17.1%	82.9%
The arrangement of the grammar items in the textbooks is not in the order of itself.	89.8%	10.2%
There are some advantages comparing with the textbooks used before.	94.1%	5.9%
Students are quite interested in the language materials and topics selected in the textbooks.	75.2%	24.8%
The articles that the textbook selected are up to date and diversified.	94.6%	15.4%
The supplemented English language and cultural background, and literature knowledge are very typical, and it is helpful for students to understand what they learned.	77.8%	22.2%

As can be seen from the above table, BNUP English textbooks are more recognized by most teachers. 93.5% of the teachers think that the textbook has certain advantages compared to the past. It is believed that the selection of this version can make the students interested in the topic.

The selected texts have a sense of time and diversified topics, which can effectively help students to improve the enthusiasm of learning English. However, most teachers think that the layout is a mess, fancy, and too many illustrations. That would affect visual effects.

Table 9
Teachers' Views on FLTRP English Textbooks

Teachers' view about the textbooks	High	Medium	Low
What do you think of the general goals and requirements in the textbooks?	2.0%	41.5%	56.5%
What do you think of the requirements for the <i>Listening</i> in the textbooks?	9.8%	60.2%	30.0%
What do you think of the requirements for the <i>Spoken English</i> in the textbooks?	7.4%	59.8%	67.2%
What do you think of the requirements for the <i>Reading</i> in the textbooks?	10.1%	34.6%	55.3%
What do you think of the requirements for the <i>Writing</i> in the textbooks?	20.2%	55.4%	24.4%

Throughout the above results, the general requirements for FLTRP English textbooks are low. Most of the teachers think that requirements of listening, speaking, reading and writing are on the low side. In particular, the requirements of the new textbook for reading, 67.7% of the teachers think that it is too low, 22.6% think moderate, only 9.7% of teachers think high. Therefore, the author suggests that it needs to increase the difficulty of textbooks in certain degree. In particular, it needs to expand the vocabulary and increase the length of reading articles etc..

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this study three versions of English textbooks based on the *High School Curriculum Standard*, altogether 15 copies of compulsory books are qualitatively and quantitatively studied. Through the above comparison, there are some similarities and distinctions for three versions of textbooks from the aspects of textbook discourse, language arrangements, training activities design for language proficiency, and learning strategies. It is concluded as follows:

(a) In view of the system and structure, three versions of textbooks are in accordance with and beyond the curriculum standards, and in compliance with the rule of Chinese student's cognitive and psychological characteristics, that is to go step by step and make gradual cycle all over again. Meanwhile, it put the topic in the center of the textbook and adopts the teaching methods of function, structure, and topics in combination with task-based activities. It pays attention to the discipline integration and the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence, inspire students' independent and explorative learning, cultivate the spirit of innovation, and improve practical ability.

(b) In addition, it is added evaluation parts, combining formative assessment and summative evaluation, and it stresses on scientific nature and feasibility of the evaluation. PEP textbooks are a combination of heritage and innovation. It features with flexibility. In order to make creative teaching and learning, it lays importance not only on the improvement of students' learning style, but also on the guide of teachers' creative teaching.

(c) Through the comparison and analysis, it is clear that the above three versions of textbooks have their own unique characteristics and the scope of adaptation. PEP textbooks, in terms of text selection, arrangement of language knowledge, or language activities design for cultivating language proficiencies, it stresses on training student's comprehensive language utilization, and it targets on laying foundation for the further study. It is suitable for those advanced schools. FLTRP textbooks have made a great effort on the cohesion of the grade. And it lays importance on the fostering of basic knowledge as vocabulary, speech and basic skills. It is suitable for students in general secondary school. BNUP textbooks are more close to the society and the students' life, with high cultural taste and content, authentic language, rich corpus with high repetition rate and innovative format. The writing style is creative, and the form of practicing exercises is flexible. It features with the introduction of the real context and decomposition of the difficulty for the contents. It is more suitable for the secondary schools in economically developed areas. The actual difficulty and easy level of textbooks are inclined to disconnect with many students' actuality. Topics in some textbooks are in accordance with the requirements of the new curriculum, but the difficulty of the materials selected is not suitable for students' age and cognitive level. Especially for those lacks of modern facilities for teaching, it appears to be slightly difficult for teachers in explaining knowledge background. It suggests that the author of textbooks should re-examine and survey, and really come up with a credible basis to demonstrate the moderate and feasible measures of the materials, and to adjust the difficulty of the text. At the same time, it needs to increase the input of modern teaching equipment, so that teachers are more likely to operate and implement the link in the classroom teaching. Language is more difficult. Thus the quality of the teachers should be improved.

REFERENCES

- Candlin, C., & Breen, M. (1987). Which materials? A consumers' and designers' guide. In L. Sheldon (Ed.), *ELT Textbooks and materials: Problems in evaluation and development ELT Docs 126*. London: Modern English Publications.

- Cunningsworth, A. (1984) *Evaluating and selecting EFL teaching materials*. London: Heinemann.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Grant, N. (1987). *Making the most of your textbook*. London and New York: Longman Group UK Limited.
- Tomlinson, B. (1998). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ministry of Education. (2001). *English curriculum standards for compulsory education*. Beijing, China: Beijing Normal University Publishing Group.
- Ministry of Education. (2011). *English curriculum standards for compulsory education*. Beijing, China: Beijing Normal University Publishing Group.
- Nunan, D. (2001). *Second language teaching and learning*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Tomlinson, B. (1998). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Xu, K. Q. (2015). Cultivating junior high school students' cross-cultural awareness in EFL context: Evidence from an empirical studies. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 11(12), 46-51.