EVALUATION OF CHINESE CULTURAL APHASIA BASED ON INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS REFLECTED IN THE READING MATERIALS OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL ENGLISH TEXTBOOK

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Abstract

"Chinese cultural aphasia" in English education has been emphasized in China in the recent years. Evaluation of Chinese cultural aphasia in higher vocational English textbook in this research will be implemented by analyzing the intercultural awareness reflected in the textbook's reading materials. The eleven steps of content analysis designed by Cohen et al. (2007) has been utilized in this research [4]. The coding system was adapted from the elements of intercultural awareness constructed by Baker (2012) [2]. ATLAS.ti 9 was used to code the text and illustrations in the textbook. Relevance sampling will be applied to code the reflected three levels of intercultural awareness in the higher vocational English textbook's reading materials for the evaluation of Chinese cultural aphasia. As for the reliability, analysis result of the Krippendroff's alpha equals 0.921 in the ATLAS.ti 9 which means the inter-coder agreement of this research is highly reliable. Based on the analyzing results, all the three levels of intercultural awareness are reflected in the reading materials of the representative higher vocational English textbook. However, the findings show that Chinese cultural aphasia still exist in all the three levels of intercultural awareness reflecting Chinese culture in the reading materials of the textbook.

Keywords: Chinese Cultural Aphasia, Intercultural Awareness, Higher vocational English Textbook.

Introduction

The study of English as a foreign language inevitably involves both target and native cultures. Higher vocational English has been one of the research frontiers in China (Chui & Mohammed, 2022) [5]. Within the realm of foreign language education, experts and academics concentrate on the significance of recognizing and understanding the cultural aspects of the target language. However, when it comes to English instruction in China, Chinese culture often receives insufficient attention. Therefore, Chinese cultural aphasia could be constantly found in English education of China. Cultural aphasia analyzed by language researchers has primarily been focused on material cultures, customs, and various dimensions of spiritual culture from English-speaking countries, but the cultural background of the other party involved in intercultural communication, specifically Chinese culture, has been overlooked (Cong, 2000) [7].

Textbook, as the basic learning material, directly reflects whether Chinese cultural aphasia exist in the English education of China. Chinese cultural aphasia has been researched in some higher vocational English textbooks in China, for example, Zhang (2020) pointed out that higher vocational English textbooks lack the integration of Chinese traditional culture, and teachers ignore the characteristics of Chinese traditional culture content in daily teaching, which is the main reason for the phenomenon of cultural aphasia [15]. Similarly, infiltration of Western culture in English classes leads to the "cultural aphasia" phenomenon. As for the measures to make up for the Chinese cultural aphasia, it is suggested to optimize the textbook by increasing the Chinese culture content appropriately (Zhang, 2019) [16]. Moreover, there are some researches utilizing the content analysis of higher vocational English textbooks in order to cultivate intercultural awareness, for example, Zhao (2020) has implemented the content analysis of English textbook from Comparative analysis from three dimensions including cultural types, cultural region and cultural theme [18].

However, the intercultural awareness reflected in the higher vocational English textbooks has not been systematically analyzed in order to figure out the Chinese cultural aphasia phenomenon. Therefore, this study aims to find out the Chinese cultural aphasia based on the three levels of intercultural awareness reflected in the higher vocational English textbook.

Problem Statement

The main concern of this research is to find out if there is Chinese cultural aphasia based on the three

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levels of intercultural awareness in the reading materials of the higher vocational English textbook. To be more specific, this research will answer the following questions.

- What's the level of Chinese cultural aphasia based on the basic cultural awareness reflected in the higher vocational English textbook?
- What's the level of Chinese cultural aphasia based on the advanced cultural awareness reflected in the higher vocational English textbook?
- What's the level of Chinese cultural aphasia based on the intercultural awareness reflected in the higher vocational English textbook?

Methodology
1. Research Design

This research is a qualitative research of content analysis on a higher-vocational English textbook in China. Content analysis can be defined as any technique of making inferences based on systematically and objectively identifying certain messages (Holsti,1968) [8]. There are two general types of content analysis: conceptual analysis and relational analysis (Herzberg et al., 1993) [9]. This research will apply the conceptual approach of the content analysis in order to code the intercultural awareness in the higher-vocational English textbook.

As the design of the content analysis for this research, the eleven steps of content analysis designed by Cohen et al. (2007) will be utilized for this research, which has been illustrated briefly in Figure 1 [4].
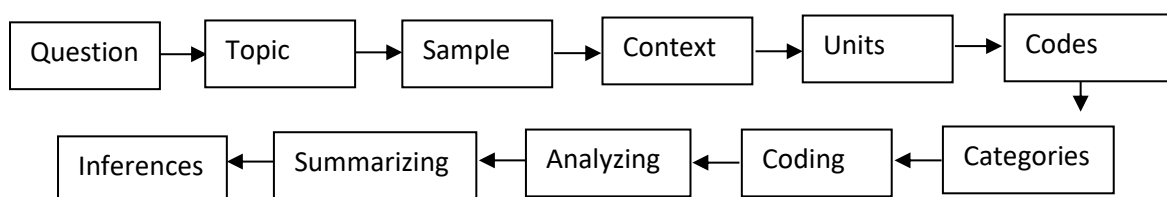

Figure 1: Instructional Mode for Content Analysis

Note. This figure is designed by summarizing the eleven steps of the content analysis of Cohen et al. (2007) [4]. Coding structure for content analysis with the guidance of the instructional mode of content analysis in Figure 1, the research has been implemented accordingly. As for the coding structure to be used in the content analysis of the higher vocational English textbook. As is described in Table 1, the coding structure table of intercultural awareness utilized for the content analysis in this research includes codes, the definition of each code, coding examples and coding rules. In the coding process of this research, the coding group will be built based on this coding structure in ATLAS.ti.9 which will make preparations for the further coding processing.

Table 1: Coding Structure of the Three Levels of Intercultural Awareness

Coding Unit	Codes	Definition	Coding Rules
Basic Cultural Awareness	1.1.1 General definition of culture National definition of culture	1.1.1 Culture is a description of a particular way of life which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behavior (Baldwin, 2006) [3]. 1.1.2 National conceptions of cultural behavior based on personal experience from Chinese society.	1.1.1 If there are not reading materials directly relative to the general definition of culture, the other general definitions of different concepts of culture can also be coded here. 1.1.2 If the description is focused on the influence other than its definition of certain cultural concepts, it can be coded in 1.2.
	1.2 Influence of First Culture	Our own culturally induced behavior, values, and beliefs and the ability to articulate this (Baker, 2012) [2].	

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	1.3.1 Self-stereotypes 1.3.2 Other stereotypes	The term stereotype is commonly used to refer to negative or positive judgments made about individuals based on any observable or believed group membership (Hoyt, 2012) [10]. 1.3.1 The negative or positive judgments made about individuals based on Chinese culture. 1.3.2 The negative or positive judgments made about individuals based on other cultures.	
Advanced Cultural Awareness	2.1 Relativity of cultural norms	Following Baker (2011), relativity of cultural norms refers to instances of the different interpretations cultural norms can have in different contexts [1].	If it emphasizes the different cultural norms in one country, code in 2.2.
	2.2 Awareness of different national cultural perspectives	There is a coexistence of different perspectives of national culture.	If it emphasizes the same cultural norm in different contexts, code in 2.1.
	2.3 Awareness of cultural identity	Collier & Thomas (1988) describe this as cultural identity, or the identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has a shared system of symbols and meanings as well as norms for conduct [6].	
	2.4 Awareness of cultural revision	Awareness that cultural understanding is open to change.	If the cultural revision is happening in synchronic form, code it in 2.2.
	2.5 Awareness of cultural differences	A detailed awareness of common ground and mismatches between specific cultures (Baker, 2012) [2].	When there is just several list of the different interpretations of cultural norms, code in 2.1.
	2.6 Basic practice of intercultural communication	Practice to compare and mediate between cultures at a specific level (Baker, 2012) [2].	
2. Intercultural Awareness	2.1 Culturally based frames	Culturally based frames of reference, forms, and communicative practices as being related both to specific cultures and also as emergent and hybrid in intercultural communication (Baker, 2012) [2].	

1	3.2 Initial interaction in intercultural communication a.	Initial interaction in intercultural communication as possibly based on cultural stereotypes or generalizations but an ability to move beyond these through (Baker, 2012) [2].	
2	3.3 Advanced intercultural communication	A capacity to negotiate and mediate between different emergent social culturally grounded communication modes and frames of reference based on the above understanding of culture in intercultural communication (Baker, 2012) [2].	If the description of the intercultural communication is based on the cultural generalization, code it in 3.2.

Note. This table is adapted from "From cultural awareness to intercultural awareness: Culture in ELT" by Baker (2012) [2] and the theory of content analysis of Cohen et al. (2007) [4].

2. Research Sampling

This research focused on the higher vocational English textbook currently used in China, especially in Luoyang City of Henan province. All the background information, reading texts, vocabulary, illustrations, reading tasks in this higher vocational English textbook will be collected for this research. Based on the sample size of the relative researches described in Table 2, this study will take Volume 1 students' book currently used in LYPT—Thirteenth Five-Year Vocational Education National Planning Textbook "English" of Yajun Yang published by Beijing Publishing house to implement the content analysis in order to evaluate Chinese cultural aphasia by figuring out the three levels of intercultural awareness reflected in the reading materials of this textbook.

Table 2: Sample Size from Relative Researches

Author/Year	Textbook	Sample size	Research focuses
Zhang Ailing/2020	'New Concept Vocational Basic English 1'	1 book	Evaluation on discourse, language contents, development of skills and methodology in this textbook.
Zhou Lili & Li Mei/2022	'New Practical English ' 'New Horizon English Tutorial '	2 books	Expounds the contents of Chinese culture presented in higher vocational public English textbooks.

Note: Data collected by the author during the literature review period.

Relevance sampling will be used to find out the level of the reflected intercultural awareness in the textbooks. The contents of the representative textbook are divided into three layers with 14 elements according to the theory of Baker (2012) [2]. With the support of this sampling method, the resultant textual units are not intended to be representative of a population of texts; rather, they are the population of relevant texts, omitting textual units that lack important information (Krippendorff, 2004) [11].

3. Research Instruments

As a qualitative study, this research utilized the content analysis of the higher vocational English textbook to evaluate the extend of Chinese cultural aphasia in the reading materials. This research instrument has also been applied in the research on the College English textbook to find out there is a serious lack of Chinese culture. The collected data has been analyzed with the ATLAS.ti.9 to code the reading materials reflecting intercultural awareness. The coded data will be analyzed again to figure out the frequency of every code and the number of every category to make inferences based on the details of the analyzing data.

4. Reliability Procedure

In order to make sure the reliability of the research, the representative textbook will be coded by the researcher and another coder coming from a higher vocational college using this textbook currently. As is required, at least two researchers need to independently code the same body of content in

order to evaluate the coding's reliability (Mouter & Noordegraaf, 2012) [12]. As for the inter-coder's reliability, the two coders firstly coded the 25% reading materials and corresponding supporting resources in the higher vocational English textbook, which is also the second coder's analyzing percentage of Zhang & Li (2022) [17]. The research objectives were not provided to the second coder. When the two coders finished the coding tasks of the 20% reading materials, their coding recordings were compared with each other in order to make sure the reliability of the research. Krippendorff's alpha was applied to identify the inter-coder reliability. The coding results of the two coders in the reading materials of Unit 1 and Unit 2 were analyzed in ATLAS.ti 9 by adding the two coders, the files and the semantic domain of the codes. As is described in the figure below, the Krippendroff's alpha equals 0.921 which means the inter-coder agreement of this research is reliable.

Results & Discussion

Based on the report of coding results in ATLAS.ti 9, intercultural awareness reflected in the reading materials of the representative higher-vocational English textbook can be revealed from three levels. As the data analyzing results in the table below indicate, all the three levels of intercultural awareness are reflected in the representative higher vocational English textbook. However, there is a lack of intercultural awareness compared with the basic cultural awareness and advanced cultural awareness. According to the coding times of each level in Table 3, there are more basic cultural awareness with 47 coding times and the advanced cultural awareness with 38 coding times. However, there are a little intercultural awareness reflected in the higher vocational English textbook with 12 coding times in all. The following part will introduce the reflected intercultural awareness in detail from three levels based on the analyzing results. Generally speaking, there is still Chinese cultural aphasia in the reading materials of higher vocational English textbook and the supporting teaching materials in China despite that some of them has included the three levels of intercultural awareness which still has not been fully utilized by higher-vocational English teachers in China (Sun, 2021) [13]. The following part will analyze the Chinese cultural aphasia from different levels of intercultural awareness.

Table 3: Analyzing Results of Coded Intercultural Awareness

Level 1: Basic Cultural Awareness	Coding times	Examples of the coded reading materials in the textbook
1.1.1 General Definition of culture	5	The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as people "traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes".
1.1.2 National definition of culture	0	
1.2 Influence of first culture	11	Sample of language points "Precious": Pandas are precious creatures.
1.3.1 Self-stereotypes	6	Sample of language points "Straight A student": I was a straight-A student and one of the popular kids, liked by all the different crowds.
1.3.2 Other stereotypes	25	The genetic genie is out of the bottle.
Level2: Advanced Cultural Awareness	Coding times	
2.1 Relativity of cultural norms	6	Publicly supported schools are generally state colleges or universities or two-year community colleges. These institutions get most of their funding from the states in which they are located. Private schools generally have higher costs because they do not receive the same primary funding from the state and federal government.
2.2 Awareness of different national cultural perspectives	0	
2.3 Awareness of cultural identity	3	China's High-speed Rail Revolution "While other countries still debate high-speed rail, it is already reality in China. But have recent corruption allegations and growing concerns about the safety of the high-speed rail network cast shadow that could

		prevent future progress of the projects?" Elisabeth Fischer reports. When China's former Premier Wen Jiabao boarded the first bullet train to open the service of the new high-speed line between Beijing and Shanghai on 30 June 2011, he described the step as "New Chapter" in China's history.
2.4 Awareness of cultural revision	2	Change is already coming to some offices, especially in the design of desks. A "standing desk" lets people stand while they work. Another new design is called the "treadmill desk". A treadmill is an exercise machine that lets you walk in one place. Even some U.S. school are trying to experiment with desks that are part bicycles to keep children moving.
2.5 Awareness of cultural differences	7	They are cheerful and inventive. In one carpet store, an owner lifted his shirt and turned around to demonstrate that he had no gun. "We are not in Morocco, we are in Istanbul", meaning there is no pressure to buy; What makes a real friend? Different cultures have their own definitions of it.
2.6 Basic practice of intercultural communication	20	What do you think of Istanbul? Do you like it?
Level 3: Intercultural Awareness	Coding times	
3.1 Culturally based frames	3	For the French, friendship is a one-to-one relationship that needs a keen awareness of the other person's intellect, temperament and particular interests.
3.2 Initial interaction in intercultural communication	6	China's high-speed rail goes globally: In practice, sophisticated negotiation skills and a practical marketing concept are needed for the program of high-speed rail construction.
3.3 Advanced intercultural communication	3	Chinese Couplets in English

Note: Data collected by utilizing ATLAS.ti to code the reflected intercultural awareness in higher vocational English textbook.

1. The level of Chinese cultural aphasia based on the reflected basic cultural awareness in the reading materials of the textbook

Firstly, there is Chinese cultural aphasia based on the reflected first level of intercultural awareness (basic cultural awareness) in higher vocational English textbook. As for the definition of culture, there is no Chinese "national definition of culture" coded in the textbook. Nevertheless, there are five codes of the "general definition of culture". When it comes to the stereotypes, self-stereotypes related to Chinese culture are coded in four illustrations, but other stereotypes influenced by target culture are coded for twenty-five times. Undoubtedly, Chinese cultural aphasia could be found in the reading materials reflecting the basic cultural awareness in the representative higher vocational English textbook, which is also emphasized by the research of Zhang (2020) [15].

2. The level of Chinese cultural aphasia based on the reflected advanced cultural awareness in the reading materials of the textbook

As for the advanced cultural awareness, the second element "awareness of different national cultural perspectives" was not coded in the reading materials of the textbook which is a reflection of Chinese cultural aphasia. Moreover, the coded "relativity of cultural norms" like the background information of public and private schools are not compared with that of Chinese culture. When it comes to the "cultural revision", the two coded contents of the reading materials are "people's attitudes towards bungee jumping" and "sitting less live longer". Neither of them is relevant to Chinese culture. What's more, the coding in "awareness of cultural difference" which are supposed to be comparing native and target cultures mainly includes the comparison of cultures in different western countries, for example, the text in Unit 2 "further reading" focuses on the different understanding of friendship in France, Germany and England. Even

though the coded traveling texts in Unit 8 involve a trip to Hangzhou and Istanbul, there is no further comparison of the two trips in one text.

To make a summary, the phenomenon of Chinese cultural aphasia also exists from the perspective of the reflected advanced cultural awareness in the reading materials of the textbook. As is described by Zhang (2020) [15], the Chinese cultural contents in the higher vocational English textbook are limited and worrying.

3. The level of Chinese cultural aphasia based on the reflected intercultural awareness in the reading materials of the textbook

Compared with the former two levels, the last level of intercultural awareness reflected in the reading materials is fewer based on the frequency of the materials being coded. Chinese cultural aphasia of this reflected intercultural awareness in the reading materials can be found in the coding of "culturally based frames" and "initial interaction in intercultural communication", because there are few Chinese cultural elements being found.

Therefore, Chinese cultural aphasia also exists in the reading materials of the higher vocational English textbook from the perspective of reflected intercultural awareness. Moreover, this phenomenon is much more worrying than those in the former two levels. Moreover, the aphasia of Chinese culture in higher vocational English classes will hinder the globalization of Chinese culture too.

Conclusion

As is shown in the research findings, the level of intercultural awareness reflected in the reading materials of higher vocational English textbook has been coded in the background information, topic of the text, reading tasks, expressions in detail and the illustrations of the reading materials in the representative higher vocational English textbook "English" edited by Yajun He and published by Beijing Publishing house. Despite the inclusion of reading materials related to Chinese culture in the textbook, the coding results of the three levels of intercultural awareness reveal the persistence of Chinese cultural aphasia. Moreover, there is no Chinese traditional cultures in this textbook which is unfavorable to the cultivation of students' intercultural awareness and intercultural communication as required in the higher vocational English curriculum standard. In order to make up for the Chinese cultural aphasia in the reading materials of higher vocational English textbooks, suggestions of consciously introducing Chinese traditional cultures, comparing Chinese and western cultures, and improving Chinese culture's proportion in the blended teaching model are made.

As for the suggestions for further research, there can be two or more higher vocational English textbooks involved and compared in the further research. What's more, the further research can also be focused on students' and teachers' perception of the intercultural awareness reflected in the higher vocational English textbooks.

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