

Treating culture: What 11 high school EFL conversation textbooks in South Korea¹ do

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ABSTRACT: This study collects 11 high-school EFL conversation textbooks used in Korea and sees how the textbooks teach culture since language learning is closely tied to culture learning (Kramersch, 2002). Conversation materials are chosen because socio-cultural values and norms are best acquired during the process of interaction (Scollon & Scollon, 2000). The content analysis is based upon the models conceptualized by both Paige et al. (1999, 2003) and Lee (2004, 2005), all of which posit that culture learning/teaching and the themes to accomplish this are important for contemporary L2/FL/ELT culture acquisition. Findings show that all of the textbooks neglect both the teaching of the culture-general aspect of culture learning and the small “c” target-culture learning. There was a strong sense of a hierarchical representation of the Anglophone world in which the US culture served as the supreme source. Remarkably scant use of authentic materials along with interactive technologies like the Internet for teaching culture was used. In its final section, this study suggests some guidelines that need to be addressed for cultural content/information in contemporary ELT(EFL/ESL/EIL) instructional materials.

KEYWORDS: Culture-general aspect of culture learning, culture-specific aspect of culture learning, Big “C” target-culture learning, small “c” target-culture learning, L2/FL/ELT culture teaching/learning.

INTRODUCTION: THEORIES OF CULTURE-BASED PEDAGOGY

Theoretical efforts regarding the interdependence of language and culture along with its implication for L2/FL/ELT acquisition have been exerted and propelled by a number of different schools of thought. These include semiotic frameworks (Kramersch, 2002; Halliday, 1978; Ware & Kramersch, 2005); schema theory (Vegas Puente, 1997; Tseng, 2002); cultural literacy (Hirsch, 1989); linguo-cultural didactics (Kodotchigova, 2002; Vegas Puente, 1997); cultivation theory (Tseng, 2002); and sociocultural approach (Brown, 2000; Hinkel, 2001; Hymes, 1974; Lee, 2004; Savignon, 1972, 2001).

All culture-based theories are interdisciplinary, since contributions to the knowledge base have come from psychology, anthropology, education, and intercultural communication to linguistics and language teaching or vice versa. According to these theories, successful communication with people from a target language society depends on two factors. Firstly, it is the level of L2/FL/ELT learners' understanding of intercultural dynamics (that is, intercultural knowledge, behaviour and attitude) of human interaction and communication. Secondly, it is their socio-cultural competency in respect of the target speech community. It is evident that L2/FL/ELT instruction

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must provide students with opportunities for learning about these two factors to maximise learners' communicative competence.

Following discussion of culture-based pedagogy in Section 1, this paper sets out to investigate how high school EFL conversation textbooks used in Korea treat culture teaching. This study is the first of its kind in that it seeks to examine the treatment of culture in adolescent EFL conversation textbooks in Korea. The research materials to be analysed are described in Section 2. In Section 3, the method for materials analysis is described. Then, the results of the content analysis and discussions gravitating around the findings are dealt with in Section 4. In Section 5, the study is summarized and conclusions are drawn. In the final section, this study suggests some guidelines that should be addressed in ELT (that is, EFL/ESL/EIL) instructional materials for teaching culture, including suggested guidelines for the Korean EFL/ESL context.

RESEARCH MATERIALS

The 11 high-school EFL conversation textbooks analysed in this study (see Appendix) were found at one of the national Geomjung [in Korean 검정] textbook association outlets located in Seoul in the final quarter of 2005. The bookstore outlet officially deals with textbooks used in both middle and high schools in Korea. No middle-school EFL conversation textbooks were detected at that time of the year.

All of the textbooks are mainly for third (final)-year high-school students (18 years old), except one textbook (*Sounds Great II*), which is used for second-year students (17 years old) in any foreign language high schools (that is, high school for a special purpose). This second-year textbook is treated differently from the rest of the textbooks by being labelled as a GookJung (in Korean 국정) textbook – published by the governmental ministry known as the Ministry of Education and Human Resources (MOEHR). On the other hand, all the rest of the textbooks are labelled as GeomJung textbooks, which are published by private publishing companies for general high schools commissioned by MOEHR. The four textbooks published between 1996 and 1997 adopted the guidelines from the 6th national curriculum, and the remaining seven were published in 2003 based on the 7th national curriculum. Those two national curriculums were designed by the Korean Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation, which has been strongly in favour of the current climate of the Communicative Approach since the beginning of the 1990s (Chang, 2002).

CONTENT ANALYSIS

The investigation of the contents of the 11 textbooks was conducted on the basis of the conceptualized models proposed by Paige, Jorstad, Paulson, Klein, and Colby (1999), Lange and Paige (2003) and Lee (2004, 2005). Paige and his associates (1999, 2003) propose a model conceptualized for integrating language and culture teaching/learning. The model, although much of it seems to share a common conceptual core with Byram's (1988, 1997) and Kramsch's (1993) previous works, offers theoretical contributions to our understanding of L2/FL/ELT culture teaching/learning as well as practical implications for the teachers. From Paige *et al.*'s model, two significant conceptual distinctions deserve special mention.

The first conceptual distinction is the culture learning goals and outcomes from their definition of culture learning: “Culture learning is the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures. It is a dynamic, developmental, and ongoing process which engages the learner cognitively, behaviourally, and affectively” (Paige *et al.*, 1999, p. 50). Two specific aspects of culture learning as the learning goals and outcomes are suggested as necessary to achieve. They are the culture-general aspect of culture learning and the culture-specific aspect of target-culture learning.

The second conceptual distinction is the dimension where these two aspects of culture learning are taking place: that is, the two aspects of culture learning should be actualized cognitively (knowledge), behaviourally (acting), and affectively (attitudes) with a dynamic, developmental and ongoing process (not a simple memorized result).

In sum, the culture learning/teaching goals and outcomes claimed by Paige and his associates are both culture-general and culture-specific knowledge, behaviour and attitudes.

The culture-general learning described by Paige *et al.* (1999, 2003) refers to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are more generalisable in nature and transferable across cultures. As Byram (1997) and Ware and Kramsch (2005) did, Paige *et al.* (1999, 2003) argue that this learning is extremely important, chiefly because it provides L2/FL/ELT learners with a fundamental starting point in culture learning. It is a point where they recognise that they are a “cultural being” and that culture affects every facet of human interaction, communication, the boundary of their own cultural identity, and other cultures (that is, culture-general knowledge). She/he has to raise her/his capacity to show respect for and interest in, and a continuing desire to learn about other cultures, and they ultimately become “intercultural beings” across cultures (culture-general behaviours and attitudes).

The culture-specific learning involves acquiring knowledge, behavioural skills, and attitude as related to a given target speech society (that is, a particular culture group or community). Paige *et al.* (1999, 2003) specify the culture-specific aspect into both the Big “C” and the small “c” domains of target-culture learning.

The Big “c” domain represents a set of facts and statistics relating to the arts, history, geography, business, education, festivals and customs of a target speech society. It is, by nature, easily seen and readily apparent to anyone and memorized by learners, and has been utilized heavily by many L2/FL/ELT language practitioners to teach a target culture. The small “c” domain, on the other hand, refers to the invisible and deeper sense of a target culture (that is, the mainstream socio-cultural values, norms and beliefs, taking into consideration such socio-cultural variables as age, gender and social status). It is particularly essential, chiefly because certain ways of thinking, behaving and using a language are a direct result of socio-cultural values, norms, beliefs, and assumptions. In language use, small “c” not only determines the norms of appropriate and polite language use within the framework of a target society, but can potentially create pragmatic failure, especially in interactions with people from other cultures. Thus, knowledge of small “c” culture can assist L2/FL/EFL/ESL/EIL

learners to understand how members of a particular group and community within a target language society use their language to refer to, describe or function.

However, it should be pointed that there are some problems implementing Paige *et al.*'s (1999, 2003) model in actual L2/FL/ELT classrooms. This is mainly because the model does not offer a general set of specific themes (or topics) to accomplish the particular aspects of culture learning. For this, Lee (2004, 2005) in his model – the “L2/FL/EFL/ESL/EIL Culture Teaching/Learning Tree” – designed themes through which each of the particular aspects of culture learning could be implemented. The themes, according to Lee, offer the opportunity to mould a wide variety of exercises and activities for teachers of L2/FL/EFL/ESL/EIL.

Lee (2004, 2005) suggests that 16 themes (see Table 1) of culture-general learning are required to successfully acquire culture-general knowledge, behaviour and attitudes. Nine themes such as “The self as a cultural being”, “Impact of culture on human communication”, “Cultural adjustment stages”, “Cultural learning”, “Culture shock: social distance”, “Culture stress”, “Intercultural development”, “Cultural identity”, and “Cultural marginality” all refer to the cognitive facet of culture-general learning. They are all related to L2/FL/ELT learners’ awareness and knowledge of how a culture shapes him/herself as a cultural being and, furthermore, as having a cultural identity across cultures that affects human communication and interactions. The themes also deal with learners’ knowledge of how to learn culture and adjust themselves in intercultural confrontations, and deal with culture shock and stress associated with intense culture and language immersion.

Further five themes relate to culture-general behavioural skills when learners are interacting with others from other cultures: “Culture learning strategies” (for example, ability to acquire strategies for culture learning), “Strategies dealing on intercultural stress”, “Intercultural communicative competence” (for example, ability to show respect for and interest in cultures), “Intercultural perspective-taking skills” (for example, ability to be a continuing culture learner by using such skills as tolerance, patience, control of emotion, and the like), and “Ability to culturally adapt” (for example, the ability to draw on a variety of resources for cultural learning).

Finally, two themes (“Positive attitudes towards foreign cultures” and “Intercultural attitude toward cultural differences”) refer to the culture-general attitude toward others from different cultures engaging in interaction. This attitude is also known as “intercultural attitudes” (see Kramsch, 1987) toward culture learning and cultural difference.

For acquiring the Big “C” target-culture domain from the culture-specific aspect of culture learning, Lee (2004, 2005) designed 22 themes (see Table 2 in Section 4) with references from Paige *et al.* (1999, 2003) and Hinkel (2001). For the small “c” target-culture learning, 26 themes are suggested as seen in Table 3 (see Section 4). These small “c” themes are designed with references from interculturalists’ ideas (Levine & Adelman, 1993), sociological perspective (Dateman, Crandell, & Kearny, 1997), ethnography (Seal, 1997), and a sociolinguistic perspective (Brown, 2000; Hinkel, 2001).

Based on the frameworks of the two models discussed above, the current study examined 11 textbooks. Results will be described in terms of the two main areas described: culture-general and culture-specific.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The culture-general aspect of culture learning

Table 1 shows that the 11 textbooks did not encourage the culture-general aspect of culture learning. Out of the 16 themes suggested by Lee (2004, 2005), only two themes (12%) “Intercultural communicative competence” and “Positive attitude toward culture learning” were identified in 9 textbooks (with three being the maximum number of occurrences across the mean average lessons of 14). The two themes were realized mostly through dialogues and activities along with other textual inserts.

In the dialogues, both “Intercultural communicative competence” (that is, the ability to show respect for and interest in different cultures) and “Positive attitude toward culture learning” was captured through one’s willingness to help foreigners and to give directions to them and through Americans’ willingness to learn foreign social customs (that is, “Hyo” [in Korean “효”], filial duty strongly valued and observed in Korea).

In the activities and other textual inserts, the two themes were identified through topics such as Americans’ willingness to be familiar with foreign cultures’ greeting (that is, taking a bow to someone instead of handshaking); one’s willingness to get to know and taste foods across nations; identifying cities around the world that you would like to visit and what to do there; knowing how to use different table settings across cultures; and preparing for international travel. Even though the two themes were encouraged by most of the textbooks (9 out of 11 textbooks), the present study still considers them to be low frequency when taking the number of lessons in each of the textbooks into consideration (22 lessons in the text by Jihaksa (1997) with 12 being the smallest and most common number of lessons in other texts).

Such themes as “The self as a cultural being”, “Impact of culture on human communication”, “Culture learning”, “Culture shock: Social distance”, “Culture shock”, “Intercultural perspective-taking”, “Intercultural attitude toward cultural differences” were rarely realized in the 11 texts. Specifically, the topic of “The self as a cultural being” was attempted only once by each of the three conversation textbooks (Hankuk, 2003; MOEHR, 2003; and Hyundai, 2003). In Hankuk (2003), this was done in a rather big picture showing harmonious smiles among many different ethnic groups; in MOEHR (2003) a dialogue was used revealing two friends promising to be international buddies to each other (MOEHR, 2003); and in Hyundai (2003), a dialogue was given showing that people around the globe are basically the same, having their own distinctive values and lifetime goals.

Textbooks Culture general categories	KyoHakSa, 1996			JiHakSa, 1997)			KumSung, 1996			ChungAng, 1997			HanKuk, 2003			MFHR, 2003			ReungYul, 2003			TaeHan, 2003			Hyundai, 2003			JiHakSa, 2003			MinJung SubRim, 2003								
	D	P	A	D	P	A	D	P	A	D	P	A	D	P	A	D	P	A	D	P	A	D	P	A	D	P	A	D	P	A	D	P	A						
The self as a cultural being																																							
Impact of culture on human community																																							
Cultural adjustment stages																																							
Cultural learning																																							
Culture shock: Social distance																																							
Culture stress																																							
Inter-cultural development																																							
Cultural identity																																							
Cultural marginality																																							
Culture learning strategies																																							
Strategies dealing with intercultural stress																																							
Intercultural communicative competence	2			3			1						1	2	1	1	3	1	3	1	3	1						2											
Intercultural perspective taking skill																																							
Ability to culturally adapt																																							
Positive attitude toward culture learning	2			2			1									2	2	1	1	1	1	1						1											
Intercultural attitude toward cultural differences	1																																						

Table 1. Analysis of high-school conversation textbooks: The culture-general domain of culture learning (D = dialogue, P = picture, A = activity)

The theme of “Impact of culture on human communication and interactions” was encouraged just once by Hyundai (2003) in an activity directed at the notion that people with different values and norms think differently with their languages. The textbook made other attempts to encourage learners to acquire such topics as “Culture shock: social distance” and “Culture stress”: that is, a discussion activity aiming to find out some possible problems that overseas Koreans face when they come back to Korea. And the topic of both “Intercultural perspective-taking skills” (that is, a dialogue showing an American’s tolerance to be a continuing culture learner, by Jihaksa, 1997) and “Intercultural attitude toward cultural differences” (that is, a dialogue displaying an American’s willingness to sleep on the floor with Yo [in Korean, ㅁ] by Kyohaksa, 1996) was again realized only once.

The present study found that 8 (50%) out of the total of 16 culture-general themes were not treated in any manner by the 11 textbooks. These mostly included both the cognitive facet (5 of 9 themes) and the behavioural facet (3 out of 5 themes) of culture-general learning. The theme, “Intercultural perspective-taking skills”, in the behavioural facet, was practically ignored by the 11 textbooks, being evident only once in the 22 lessons of one textbook (Jihaksa, 1997).

The findings from Table 1 indicate that the majority of the EFL conversation textbooks neglected most of the topics associated both with the cognitive facet and with the behavioural facet of the culture-general learning. Instead, what has been focused on are the two themes: “Intercultural communicative competence” (the behavioural facet of the culture-general learning) and “Positive attitude toward culture learning” (the attitudinal facet of the culture-general learning).” This emphasis on just two themes seems to overlook the current major shift in culture learning and teaching in L2/FL/ELT classrooms: that is, from the culture-specific (especially the Big “c” domain of a target language culture) to the culture-general aspect of culture learning.

It is noticeable that all of the textbook illustrations appear to depict people of European ethnicity (particularly middle-class Anglos, especially in the US) as an ultimate ethnic group of native English speakers. Such depictions occupy most of the front and back covers and pictures inserted throughout the 11 textbooks. Only three textbooks (Chungang, 1997; Reungyul, 2003; and Hankuk, 2003) show a person of Afro-American descent on their front or back cover pages. In particular, the majority of the drawings (other than photographs) inserted in all the textbooks for pedagogical purposes (in fact, the numbers of drawings used by all the textbooks far outnumber photographs) are virtually all European people communicating in English with the same ethnic groups or with Korean boys and girls.

This very fact ignores other ethnic groups whose native tongues (or official language) are also English. For adolescent EFL learners of Korea, this near absence of other English-speaking ethnics other than middle-class Anglo-Americans may imply that English should be considered the sole property of Anglo-American people of the US. Since English has grown into a world-wide language in the postmodern era, there have been strong assertions (Canagarajah, 2006; Kachru, 1992; Talebinezhad & Aliakbari, 2001) that old varieties of English (for example, British and American) should accept the norms and values reflected in the use of new varieties of English (for example, from Nigeria, India, Singapore, the Philippines, and Jamaica). Thus, the

existences of these legitimized different Englishes may have to be, at least, recognized in contemporary EFL/ESL/EIL materials and classrooms.

One textbook, in particular by Kumsung (1996) contained oversimplified (or exaggerated) representations of other cultures. These include:

- a dialogue revealing “tasteless English foods” (Kumsung, p. 48);
- activities designed to encourage dialogues among Korean learners based upon cultural generalisations such as the New York subway filled with crime and dirt, the city of Rome crammed with pick-pockets and the streets of Hong Kong made famous for “bogus merchandise” (Kumsung, p. 199).

These negative views that other cultures are “filthy” and “dangerous” often result in the maintenance of a stereotype and negative attitudes among adolescent learners in Korea. In fact, as Kramersch (1987) has found, textbook authors’ frequently biased perspectives on foreign cultures becomes true and real for learners. Such views may also undermine an effort to create interaction across cultures by focusing on similarities to reach a shared meaning. EFL/ESL/EIL practitioners in classrooms need to be aware that every learner has both positive and negative attitudes. However, negative attitudes can be changed both by exposure to a more balanced reality (for example, encounters with actual persons from other cultures) and through language teachers’ endeavours to facilitate an accurate understanding of other cultures.

The culture-specific aspect of target-culture learning

Analysis of the content of the 11 textbooks from the culture-specific aspect of target-culture learning is focused on the following two domains: Big “C” and small “c” culture.

The Big “C” domain

Table 2 shows the attempts made by the 11 textbooks to bring about Big “C” culture learning. Results show that the 11 textbooks spent a considerable amount of time and devotion to the Big “C” domain through dialogues, pictures, and activities and other textual inserts².

Of all the themes, the “Various social customs” theme was utilised most frequently (a total of 16 times in 7 different textbooks). These include: the meaning of a firm grip when handshaking in the US; how Americans and British start a conversation or break the ice with strangers; social etiquette as observed in the theatres of the US; how Americans interpret aging compared to Koreans; blowing one’s nose in public places in the US; and some observable customs related to housewarming parties in the US.

The “Currency/ shopping/ market / industry/ business” theme occurred 15 times in 7 different textbooks through dialogues, pictures, activities and other textual inserts as follows: business hours of most banks in the US; information about a net price plus sales tax and tipping at stores when buying goods in the US; a statistical breakdown

² These textual inserts include items such as “Cultural tips” or “Culturally speaking” or “Culture focus” or “Information box” and can be found at the end of each lesson in some textbooks.

Textbooks	KyoHakSa, 1996		JiHakSa, 1997)		KumSung, 1996		ChungAng, 1997		HanKuk, 2003		MFHR, 2003		ReungYul, 2003		TaeHan, 2003		Hyundai, 2003		JiHakSa, 2003		MinJung SuhKim, 2003	
	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A
Big “C” categories																						
Races/geography/historical sites												3										
Arts/crafts/national treasures											2											
Agriculture											1											
Literature																						
Medicine/science					1	1																
Currency/shopping/market/industry/business					3					1		1	1									1
Infrastructure/metropolitan					1							2		1								
Education					1	1						1										
Dress/style/food/housing					1	2	2		1		2	2										
Festivals/party/ceremonies/celebrations							1					2										1
Holidays	1					1																
Postal system/																						
Mass communication					1				1			1										1
Various social customs					5			4		1				2		1		2				1
Region/regional varieties																						
Regions																						
Sports/leisure/music/recreation					1										1							
Traffic/transportation					1																	
Family									2													
Meaning of touch/space/artifact					1				2													
Nonverbal behaviors																						
Space communication																						
Government/politics																						1

Table 2. Analysis of high-school conversation textbooks: The Big “C” aspect of target-culture learning (D = dialogue, P = picture, A = activity)

of the jobs most people in the US prefer; great buildings such as the Sears Tower in the US; how to fill out an authentic document of merchandise-ordering forms and to figure out an advertisement for a garage sale in the US; and pictures showing real US dollars including coins.

The “Dress/ styles/ foods/ housing” theme was found 10 times in 5 different textbooks. They were introduced as related to: information about typical foods enjoyed everyday in the US including dining customs (for example, position of forks, knives and glasses); women’s dresses and traditional costumes in the US; tasteless English cuisine and what cottage cheese and no-dressing taste like; current popular hairstyles in the US and how to barbecue; and dining etiquettes in the US.

The “Traffic and Transportation” theme was found 10 times in 4 different textbooks, mostly through activities and other textual inserts (and twice through dialogues). They included facts about the road system in England and Japan (for example, they drive on the other side of the road compared to the US); a classroom activity on how to use the subway with a map in London; traffic systems and signs currently used in the US (especially in Chicago, by MOEHR, 2003); and information about how to obtain a driver’s license in the US.

The “Festivals/ parties/ ceremonies/ celebrations” theme was in evidence six times in four different textbooks, and the “Postal system and mass communication” was the next most frequently used Big “C” theme (6 times in 6 different textbooks). For the “Festivals/parties/ceremonies/celebrations” theme, MOEHR (2003) drew on them 3 times in both dialogues and activities (including inserts). They were mostly realized through information about dishes Americans usually bring for various kinds of party (for example, food for a pot luck dinner) and dialogues revealing information about the Taste of Chicago (that is, a festival of various ethnic foods in Chicago). For the “Postal system and mass communication” theme, most of the information also occurred through activities and other textual inserts. They dealt with different address codes on envelopes in Korea and the US, the future of mass media in the US and information about movie ratings.

The “Sports/leisure/recreation” theme (found 5 times in 4 different textbooks) and “Infrastructure and metropolitan” theme (found 5 times in 4 different textbooks) were mostly realized through the activities and other textual inserts. They involved popular American sports (for example, football and basketball); information about sports and leisure clubs in the US; statistics about the most popular exercises in the States; the road system (for example, avenue, street and drive in the US) and block-shaped cities in the US.

As seen in Table 2, many themes were rarely attempted by the texts examined. MOEHR (2003) was the only one that made frequent attempts to include all of the themes listed.

Big “C” themes such as “Literature”, “Region and regional varieties”, “Religions”, and “Space communication” were not realised in any of the 11 textbooks. Interestingly, 82% of all Big “C” themes were used less than 6 times in 8 different textbooks. The present study suggests that this is mainly because 8 (73%) out of the 11 textbooks are set in Korea, mostly through dialogues with some pictures and

activities and other textual inserts. These Korea-contextualized dialogues, along with some related activities and tasks, include an introduction to some national treasures, historical sites and the most popular and famous shopping malls, including traditional markets like Namdaemun [in Korean, 남대문] market, and giving directions for some streets of Seoul.

Those 8 textbooks begin with dialogues occurring in Korea (especially Seoul and some historical sites such as Gyeongju [in Korean, 경주]). But the majority of the succeeding exercises and activities have been based most frequently in the US context. The most conspicuous instance is that there come first dialogues about asking and giving directions, for example, for Shinchon [in Korean 신촌] “Ro” or “Ga”, between an American and a Korean boy or girl. However, all of a sudden, the subsequent activities and exercises are all related to the typical maps and traffic system of the US, directing young Korean students to find out a particular place and building on a local American map containing words like “Street”, “Avenue” and “Drive”.

Other frequent examples from the 8 textbooks are dialogues dealing with typical Korean foods (for example, bulgoggi [in Korean, 불고기] and samgyupsal [in Korean, 삼겹살] in Korean restaurants. However, the immediate follow-up exercises and activities are all associated with America’s most well-known commercial foods (for example, how to order the Big Mac with a large coke and French fries in a fast-food restaurant). The topic of weather forecasts refers to centigrade (or Celsius) and centimetres in the dialogues; but the activities immediately following are suddenly oriented to the American measurement of temperature (for example, Fahrenheit and feet). This kind of abrupt shift in the lesson sequence may not encourage adolescent EFL learners to acquire the culture-specific learning of a target society (both for the Big “C” and small “c” domains). What may be appropriate in this regard is that dialogues applying a particular pragmatic function need to be oriented to the culture (for example, the small “c” and Big “C” domains) of a target society, and then, the follow-up exercises and activities should also be consistently related to the same target cultural context. This might enhance the understanding and learning of a target speech culture. The comparisons and contrasts with the EFL learners’ cultural background may have to be carefully encouraged in some parts of the special textual inserts of exercises and activities. And they need to be conducted through the EFL learners’ overlapping lenses to better understand the other’s perspectives and arrive at shared meanings.

In sum, the attempts that the 11 textbooks made to encourage the Big “C” target-culture learning have been most fruitful, compared to attempts at both the culture-general aspect of culture learning and small “c” target-culture learning. The Big “C” target-culture learning was realized mostly through activity sections and textual inserts. All 11 textbooks were preoccupied with cultural content/information that were fragmented and strictly memorisable: that is, they all dealt with simple directions of “what to do” and “not to do” in particular places and situations, and on certain days of a target speech society (most frequently the US), for young Korean learners of English.

The Big “C” cultural content/information depicted by the 11 textbooks seemed shallow and superficial, because all the behavioural skills and directions (“Shoulds” and “Should Nots”) were presented without any explanation of the underlying socio-cultural values, norms and beliefs of the target language culture. For example, the following advice is given: Americans handshake firmly with a rather strong grip to show their friendliness; Americans consider it impolite not to give “straight” answers; and for American students, it is not impolite to say “No” to others when they are being asked to lend a class note for classmates. However, there is no explanation of the fundamental sociocultural values and beliefs of the US attached to these social behaviours.

Moore (1991) and Byram *et al.* (1991) claim that factual fragments or highly generalisable Big “C” cultural information should be accompanied by explanations of how these patterns of social behaviours develop to fit in with a complex [socio]cultural system and they should also be accompanied by indications that any of the norms and values of the target culture might differ among people of different genders, ages, socio-economic strata, regions and the like. The 11 textbooks do not provide such explanations or indications. This very lack in [socio]cultural complexity and such a simplistic presentation of Big “C” cultural content/information are likely to bolster pre-existing assumption and stereotypes.

Statistical data, the most prevalent form in Big “C” target-culture learning, also turn out to be problematic in most of the 11 textbooks. For example, the statistics employed by Jihaksa (1997), showing what British teenagers usually do at home/outside home and a diagram of the expenditure patterns between the US and Korea, have no references at all. Another statistic by Hankuk Educational Media (2003) shows jobs most people in the US prefer. However, no references are attached or footnoted. In fact, the majority of the statistical data employed, especially in textual inserts such “Culture learning” and “Culture tips” remarkably lack referenced sources. This lack of referenced sources for statistical data make no sense in communicating Big “C” cultural content/information, since the Big ‘C,’ by nature, always deals with visible cultural/social contributions in connection with statistical facts in the arts, literature, and others social facets (Byram *et al.*, 1991; Paige *et al.*, 1999). This lack of references may lead the Korean adolescent EFL learner to misunderstand and, at worse, stereotype or overgeneralise the information given about all members in a target speech community, which, according to Brown (2000) “should be avoided in any L2/FL[EFL/ESL/EIL] classrooms” (p. 179).

Apart from the text by Jihaksa (1997), which often includes Big “C” cultural content/information about Great Britain as well as the US, all textbooks refer only to Big “C” cultural content/information in relation to US society. These include social customs, etiquette, dress, food, arts, housing, road and postal systems, currency and shopping. The remaining 10 Korean conversation textbooks effectively construct US culture to serve as the supreme frame of reference for young Korean learners’ understanding of English-speaking culture. Big “C” cultural content/information about other English-speaking communities is absent in the majority of the 11 EFL textbooks.

The small “c” domain

The findings from Table 3 show that the 11 textbooks employed only minimally small “c” target cultural content/information.

The “Informality” theme was found to be most frequent (a total of 5 times in 4 different textbooks). It was realised through the textual inserts such as a “Culture Focus” containing the norm that most Americans prefer to be called by their first name (that is, don’t-call-me-sir type of norm) and most Americans feel that age does not matter in social activities.

The next most frequently identified was the theme of “Privacy and individualism” (4 times in 4 textbooks). They include: the right to protect private life and property is a priority in the US; Americans value privacy; Americans’ emphasise “I” and “my” (for example, my house/teacher) while most Koreans use words like “we” and “our” (for example, our house/teacher). This theme was also found once in a dialogue, showing that living with parents after the age of 18 years seems awkward in the US.

Socio-cultural values and norms such as “Fairness” (by two textbooks), “Directness/openness/honesty” (by two textbooks), “Rules/regulations-oriented” (by three textbooks) were found three times. In the 11 texts in this study, “Competition” (by two textbooks) and “Personal control over environment” (by two textbooks) were found twice. “Competition” was dealt with in an activity, with the direction that people have to compete for success and advancement. “Personal control over environment” was encouraged in a dialogue talking about the importance of recycling and solving landfill problems – the notion that human beings have to control their own environments instead of being determined by the environment.

As can be seen, most of the small “c” themes have were found just once in each of the 11 textbooks, with details as follows.

1. “Freedom” in Hankuk Educational Media (2003): In a textual insert about “Culturally speaking” suggesting that most people in the US do respect freedom and consider it as an essential mainstream value;
2. “Self-reliance” in Hankuk Educational Media (2003): In a textual insert suggesting that Americans have most tendencies to stand on their own feet;
3. “Equality and egalitarianism” in Kumsung Publishers (1996): In a dialogue which suggests that gender is not an impediment in getting promotion to top in the US and gender equality as a mainstream value and norm;
4. “Materialism” in Taehan Textbooks (2003): In activities, there is a discussion among EFL learners on the topic of “marriage for money” on the theme of one’s tendency to be concerned more with the material (that is, money – one of the mainstream American values) than with spiritual and intellectual goals;
5. “Hardwork” in Jihaksa (1997): A dialogue shows the value of doing – don’t just sit there, time is money;
6. “Confrontation” in Chungang Educational Promotion Institute (1997): In activities show how to ask for a discount from the clerk;
7. “Novelty-oriented” by Chungang Educational Promotion Institute (1997): A dialogue showing an American putting more value on practicality by preferring paperback books;

8. “Self-improvement” in Reungyul English Publishers (2003): A dialogue reveals one of the mainstream values in the US, that most Americans are willing to take care of someone in need. This value comes from the Puritan notion of humanitarianism – “improving oneself by helping others in need”;
9. “Action (work)-oriented” in Jihaksa (2003): Activities offer advice on what you have to do in situations to be goal-directed.
10. “High involvement” in Jihaksa (1997): A dialogue shows the mainstream value that Americans like to talk and don’t mind being interrupted;
11. “Future-oriented” in Kumsung Publishers (1996): A dialogue reveals the idea that the past is the past. Look to the future not to the past is a mainstream American value;
12. (12) “Self-interest oriented” in Taehan Textbooks (2003): Activities prompt discussion on how one feels about marriage-for-money in terms of the pursuit of one’s happiness.

The following small “c” themes were not detected at all in the 11 textbooks: “Weak-face consciousness”, “Result-oriented”, “Nurture”, “Control over time”, “Liberal”, “Experimental” and “Male-dominated”.

The small “c” cultural content/information in the 11 textbooks is remarkably limited in the number of times employed, while the majority of the cultural content/information have been predominantly devoted to Big “C” target-culture learning. Although few, the small “c” cultural content/information found in all the textbooks are all about mainstream socio-cultural value, norms, beliefs and world-views deeply-rooted in the US. However, all the textbooks neglect to explain the existence of variations in socio-cultural values, norms and beliefs. That is, no textbooks have attempted any explanation or indication that any of the values and norms might differ according to such socio-cultural variables as age, gender, ethnic groups (particularly in the culture like the US), regions political orientation, and social status of the participants in interactions. This finding seems a clear indication that the 11 high-school EFL conversation textbooks are rudimentary and superficial with regard to their treatment of small “c” culture. The textbooks seem not to reflect the movement in L2/FL/ELT culture from the simple and factual Big “C” target-culture learning to both the small “c” domain and the culture-general aspect of culture learning. Thus, it can be argued that all of the 11 EFL conversation textbooks are not “effective” for the task of teaching both small “c” target-culture learning and the culture-general aspect of culture learning.

In addition, there has also been a lack of time and effort allotted for discussions (that is, pairs or groups) in most of the activity sections in the 11 textbooks. As Folse (1996) and Shulman (1998) have attested, such discussions on contemporary social issues (such as arranged marriage, mercy killing and pollution) have proved to be highly fruitful in motivating interesting discussions and developing skills in language fluency among learners and, most importantly, in stimulating learners to identify some commonalities and contrasts between cultures. In such discussions, learners begin to see and understand their own socio-cultural values, norms and beliefs more closely.

All the 11 textbooks had an emphasis on communicative functions such as greeting, thanking, requesting and excusing. They also drew a great deal of attention to the

linguistic forms of speech acts (there are a maximum of three variations found practically in all of the textbooks). For example, under the pragmatic function of “offering”, such linguistic repertoires as (1) “Have some more tea,” (2) “Have some more tea, please,” (3) “Would you (please) like to have some more some tea?” are usually presented for Korean high-school students. The majority of the textbooks (except the one published by MOEHR) give some attention to appropriate pronunciation and intonation (all American ones). This is important because transfer of intonation from L1 to L2 can have very subtle negative consequences for interaction.

However, what the textbooks have not focused on at all is an explicit explanation for why particular linguistic expressions are appropriate in a particular setting with a particular person. For example, there is no information on with whom and where to use such expressions as “What’s up?” and “How is it going?” Such socio-cultural variables as age, gender and social status of the participants in interactions are the ones that “can make a particular expression or speech act situationally appropriate” (Hinkel, 2001, p. 448). That is, you simply cannot use the expression, “What’s up?” to a university president in a normal situation. The socio-cultural variables all reflect the small “c” domain of L1 or L2 culture. However, this small “c” culture has not been displayed anywhere (that is, dialogues, pictures and activities and other textual inserts) in the 11 textbooks. In this sense, the textbooks do not help adolescent Korean learners to be “interactionally” competent.

The use of authentic materials such as print, audio, video and realia, along with interactive technologies such as the Internet is scarce throughout the 11 textbooks. One or two authentic materials are employed, especially via print media: for example, an authentic Amtrak timetable by Kyohaksa (1996); two print advertisements, for a garage sale and a travel agency in the US by Taehan (2003); an authentic business order form used in the States by Reungyul (2003); an authentic immigration and customs form for the US by the MOEHR (2003); an authentic airline ticket by Hyundai (2002); a photo of authentic US dollars by Jihaksa (2003); and finally, two authentic print materials: one for a British hotel advertisement, the other for an American dining menu by Minjungsuhrim (2003).

The active use (or inclusion in FL/L2/ELT textbooks) of authentic materials along with the Internet investigation has been reported as the most effective and efficient move towards the culture learning process (Brinton, 2001). It is also reported (Cullen & Sato, 2000; Fantini, 1997) as helping motivate learners by introducing a slice of real life into classrooms in more complete communicative context. Such authentic materials can also provide a great deal of information and richness of cultural input, which is not possible in the classroom. This rare use of authentic materials throughout the 11 textbooks seems to neglect an important opportunity for young Korean learners to use to be aware of both mainstream socio-cultural values and norms and socio-cultural variables of a target culture.

CONCLUSION

This study examined 11 Korean EFL high-school conversation textbooks to investigate what aspects of culture learning/teaching were included and how they

were taught and found that all of the textbooks neglected the teaching of both the culture-general aspect of culture learning and the “c” target-culture learning. The majority of the textbooks showed a strong preference for Big “C” target-culture learning such as a set of memorisable facts and statistics in arts, history and customs without any further explication of the small “c” domain of a target culture. The Big “C” culture content/information was mainly from the US, showing a hierarchical representation where the US variety among all English-speaking cultures was presented as the supreme source. There was very little use of interactive technologies such as the Internet and limited use of video recorders and cassette tapes. From this, the current study concludes that the 11 EFL textbooks in Korea are not designed to allow their adolescent learners to develop either “intercultural communicative competence” or “culture-specific competence”, that is, the small “c” domain of target-culture learning.

GUIDELINES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED FOR CONTEMPORARY ELT INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN TEACHING CULTURE

Following this conclusion, the current study suggests the following guidelines to make ELT (that is, EFL/ESL/EIL) instructional textbooks more adequate for contemporary learners of culture acquisition:

1. Cultural content/information should include both the culture-general and culture-specific aspect of culture learning;
2. Cultural content/information should present a variety of English cultures or, should dictate a specific one for its purpose – American, Australian, British, New Zealand, Indian and others;
3. Cultural content/information should address specific learners and situations (for example, EFL or ESL or EIL classrooms) so they are suitable for learners in a particular classroom;
4. Materials containing cultural content need to provide information, instructions or suggestions about how the cultural content/information have to be used and appropriately handled (for example, include classroom instructions, address the role of teacher and students, and so on) so that teachers/learners can easily understand. Illustrations/suggestions need to be appropriate to the learners’ native culture;
5. Teachers using a book need specialised training to use it. Enough information in the form of a teacher’s guide should be provided;
6. Cultural content/information should address what learners are supposed to do: that is, they can use it actively in interaction or be guided by it so as to develop a better understanding of a target culture;
7. Cultural content/information presented with statistical data should include references so that reliability can be checked;
8. Cultural content/information related to the Big “C” domain need to be presented with some explanation in relation to how particular Big “C” content reflects the underlying socio-cultural values, norms and beliefs of a target language culture;
9. Cultural content/information needs to be presented with authentic materials or through interactive technologies such as the Internet, so the learners become interested and motivated;

10. Cultural content/information needs to be presented with follow-up exercises or tasks/activities, so that learners can be actively involved. Cultural content/information and follow-up exercises need to be consistent with each other;
11. Materials should identify whether the cultural content/information offers a realistic picture of the target culture or simply reflects the author's opinion. Where the cultural content/information is sourced (that is, author's own ideas or empirical research) should be addressed;
12. Cultural content/information should include the notion of generalisations about a target-language community so as to inform learners/teachers that values and norms might differ in terms of such socio-cultural variables as age, gender and ethnic group;
13. Cultural content/information need not be limited to some particular social group in a target speech community. If it is limited, the book should specify what kind of people they are. The specified group should not be stereotyped.

In sum, these 13 guidelines contend that learners of Englishes in the postmodern era should first seek with their overlapped lens to increase their ability in relation to the suggested themes (Lee, 2004, 2005) of culture-general knowledge, behavioural skills and attitudes. Then they need to engage with the suggested themes of the knowledge, behavioural skills and attitudes of both Big "c" and small "c" target language culture learning. As noted in the previous section, highly generalisable Big "C" target-cultural content/information should include an explanation of how the pattern of visible social behaviours develop to fit in with a complex cultural system (that is, mainstream socio-cultural values, norms and beliefs). This suggests that small "c" target-culture learning is much more fundamental to the understanding of certain ways of thinking, behaving and using English language than the Big "C" domain and that the norms and values of a target culture might differ among people of different gender, age, religion and socio-economic status.

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APPENDIX 1

The 11 High School EFL Conversation Textbooks

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