

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates similarities and differences found in all 6 different Middle School English textbook series which are in use in Japan. The investigation was conducted in terms of the following three criteria: (1) types of exercises; (2) presentation of word lists; and (3) word selection.

The findings of the present study are to serve as a guide for the teacher in grasping those differences so that the teacher using one particular series will know what other areas should be emphasized in class. In addition, some suggestions to the textbook writer were given based upon recent research on language acquisition.

The implications of the findings are discussed.

A Review of Middle School English Textbooks Used in Japan: Some Suggestions to the Textbook Writer

YUICHI TODAKA

Introduction

The present study attempts to display similarities and differences found in all 6 different Junior High School English textbook series which are currently in use in Japan. The textbook series are examined in terms of the following criteria: (1) types of exercises, (2) presentation of word lists, and (3) word selection. Some suggestions to the textbook writer are also given in respect to the above aspects.

Background Information

1. Pedagogy

Since the Meiji Restoration in 1868, English education has been emphasized in Japan. In the last 6 or 7 decades, various teaching methods have been introduced. According to Ito (1978:204), "the most common and influential methods are the Grammar-Translation, the Oral method, and the Oral Approach". However, actual teaching in most middle schools is "carried out largely via grammar/translation method" (Mather, J. C., 1984:45) in the form of translation using word lists and bilingual dictionaries. James Baxter (1980:331) administered a questionnaire to Japanese college students (342 subjects) and found that 97 % of all the respondents used only bilingual Japanese-English dictionaries when they were junior high school students.

The continuous usage of the grammar-translation method in Japan is attributed to the following: First, it is deeply rooted in Japanese history. John C. Mather (1984:46) states:

... in Japan, it was a religious and literary combination that led foreign language skills to develop primarily in the area of reading and translation. We can say, therefore, that the emphasis on reading in Japanese education has been carried over from the ancient practice of translation and analysis of religious texts.

Second, a knowledge of grammar and translation is required to enter high schools and colleges since most questions in the examinations are centered upon it.

2. Textbooks/Hours of Instruction

In the past, English was taught seven or eight hours a week, but the hours of the instruction are now reduced to three hours a week in middle schools. Therefore, English is currently taught approximately 105 hours a year (Ishizutani, S., 1983:103). This decision by the Ministry of Education caused considerable dismay among language teachers in Japan.

Concerning the textbooks, a "Course of Study" was prepared for the first time by the Ministry of Education in 1947 and was originally intended to give suggestions to the teacher (Imura, M., 1978:136). Since then, several revisions took place and in 1958, the "Course of Study" was "no

longer a suggestion but a syllabus imposed by law" (Imura, M., 1978:137). Thus, the Ministry of Education exerts strict control over the grammatical and lexical content of textbooks. The number of the lexical items introduced in middle school textbooks is approximately 900 to 1050 words in three years (Kiyokawa, H., 1983:82). Of those words, 490 words are specifically designated by the Ministry of Education (Imura, M., 1978:138).

Finally, the textbooks, which used to be written by the staff writers of the Ministry of Education, are now written by private authors to be published through private publishers (Henrichsen, L. E., 1978:128). Thus, currently 6 middle school textbook series (The Total series, the New Horizon series, the New Crown series, the Sunshine series, the One World series, and the New Everyday English series) are published in Japan. However, those textbooks have to be approved by the Ministry of Education.

Evaluation/Suggestions

1. Types of exercises

Tables are provided for each series indicating the types and the total number of exercises introduced in that series. The major characteristics of each series are then given. The overall similarities and differences of the textbook series, and some suggestions to the textbook writer are presented at the end.

(a) THE TOTAL SERIES (hereafter T¹)

grade	1	2	3
types			
substitution (s)	24	12	3
substitution (d)	24	2	0
speaking	4	11	3
writing	4	3	1
fill-in-the blks	2	1	4
Q/A	1	2	2
translation (s)	0	2	4
J-->E			
translation (w)	0	1	0
J-->E			
translation (s)	0	0	6
E-->J			
T/F	0	0	4
crossword p.	1	2	0
game (R)	1	0	0
matching	0	1	0
grammatical	0	16	13
total	61	53	40

(s): sentence (d): dialogue (w): word (R): reading

J: Japanese E: English

Characteristics:

Productive learning (especially, speaking) is emphasized throughout this series. 85 % of all the exercises in T 1 of this series is devoted to speaking practice (i.e., substitution and speaking exercises). No translation or grammatical exercises are included in this textbook. As students progress to T 2 and T 3 of this series, the focus is shifted from speaking to writing. In particular, more translation exercises are emphasized. It is also clear from the Table that the number of explicit grammatical exercises and reading comprehension exercises is increased. Approximately 35 % and 32 % of the total number of exercises included in T 2 and T 3 of this series respectively are grammatical ones. The total number of exercises included in each of this series is: 61 in series 1; 53 in series 2; and 40 in series 3. Almost all the exercises for productive use are supported by visual aids. The exercises introduced in this series will therefore encourage students' participation in class.

(b) THE NEW HORIZON SERIES (hereafter NH)

grade types	1	2	3
substitution (s)	2	2	1
substitution (D)	3	7	1
speaking	21	4	1
fill-in-the blks	2	6	4
Q/A	2	7	2
translation (s) J-->E	1	2	5
translation (p/c) J-->E	0	7	4
translation (w) J-->E	1	0	0
riddle		0	0
grammatical	17	10	10
total	52	50	37

(p/c): phrase/clause

Characteristics:

Speaking practice is emphasized in NH 1 of this series (50 % of all the exercises introduced in this textbook). The major types of speaking exercises are creative ones (e.g., talk about yourself or a given topic). In other words, controlled speaking exercises such as substitution exercises are introduced less compared with creative speaking exercises. More translation and grammatical exercises are introduced in NH 2 and NH 3 than in NH 1. The percentage of grammatical exercises included in each of this series is: 33 % in NH 1; 20 % in NH 2; and 27 % in NH 3. NH 2 emphasizes speaking and reading, whereas NH 3 stresses reading and writing. One unique characteristic about this series is to include multiple-choice and re-ordering exercises for reading comprehension. Some multiple-choice exercises have a list of possible titles for the texts introduced in those lessons. Students are then asked to choose the best title for those texts. Re-ordering exercises, though the number is small, provide a list of main points introduced in that text. Students are asked to order them logically. Both exercises will reinforce the student' reading comprehension. The total number of exercises included in each of this series is: 52 in NH 1; 50 in NH 2; and 37 in

NH 3.

(c) THE NEW EVERYDAY ENGLISH SERIES (hereafter NE)

grade types	1	2	3
substitution (s)	5	3	7
substitution (D)	4	3	0
speaking	1	3	0
writing	1	3	0
fill-in-the blks	2	4	3
Q/A	1	10	6
translation (s) J-->E	0	6	2
translation (p) J-->E	0	1	2
translation (w) J-->E	0	0	1
translation (s) E-->J	1	0	0
spell	1	3	0
multiple choice	1	0	0
T/F	0	0	3
crossword p.	0	1	1
analogy	0	0	1
grammatica	12	16	15
total	48	57	41

Characteristics:

The exercises in NE 1 focus upon speaking (83 %). The major speaking exercises included in NE 1 are creative exercises. They count 65 % of the total number of exercises introduced in this textbook of the series. Reading, speaking and writing exercises are more or less proportionately distributed in NE 2 and NE 3. A unique characteristic of those reading exercises is to include pre-reading (Q/A) exercises. These exercises are provided for familiar topics so that these exercises will make it easier for students to understand the texts introduced in those lessons. More translation and grammatical exercises are included in NE 2 and NE 3. The percentage of grammatical exercises introduced in each of this series is: 1 % in NE 1; 28 % in NE 2; and 24 % in NE 3. The total number of exercises in this series is: 48 in NH 1; 57 in NE 2; and 41 in NE 3.

(d) THE ONE WORLD SERIES (hereafter OW)

grade types	1	2	3
substitution (s)	13	8	1
substitution (D)	10	13	2
speaking	13	3	5

writing	1	3	1
fill-in-the blks	1	3	6
Q/A	8	12	9
translation (s)	0	0	2
J-->E			
translation (p)	0	0	3
J-->E			
translation (p)	0	0	1
E-->J			
spell	0	0	1
multiple choice	0	0	1
T/F	1	3	0
cap verses	0	1	0
grammatical	0	0	4
total	47	46	32

Characteristics:

Productive learning (especially speaking) is emphasized throughout this series. Approximately 95 % of the exercises introduced in OW 1 of this series is designed for speaking practice, whereas 76 % and 53 % of the exercises presented in OW 2 and OW 3 are for speaking. Both creative and controlled exercises for speaking are stressed in OW 1, whereas controlled exercises are emphasized in OW 2 and OW 3. The numbers of different types of exercises introduced in both OW 1 and OW 2 are small (seven each). This is due to a rather fixed format that OW 1 and OW 2 follow. In particular, most exercises in OW 1 are sequenced from substitution (s) exercises (sometimes Q/A) through substitution (d) to speaking exercises. No translation exercises are included in OW 1 and OW 2. The percentage of grammatical exercises introduced in each of this series is: 0 % in OW 1; 0 % in OW 2; and 11 % in OW 3. In other words, almost all the grammatical points presented in this series are taught through various productive exercises. The total number of exercises introduced in each of this series is: 47 in OW 1; 46 in OW 2; and 36 in OW 3.

(d) THE NEW CROWN SERIES (hereafter NC)

grade	1	2	3
types			
substitution (s)	7	3	0
substitution (D)	8	7	3
speaking	6	3	0
writing	1	5	1
fill-in-the- blks	1	2	3
Q/A	5	6	2
translation (s)	2	3	1
J-->E			
translation (p)	3	1	0
J-->E			
translation (w)	0	1	3

	J-->E			
	translation (s)	3	6	5
spell		0	3	2
T/F		0	3	2
	grammatical	22	19	30
	total	59	60	50

Characteristics:

The exercises introduced in this series are divided into two parts: (1) basic exercises; and (2) expansion exercises. Most basic exercises focus upon grammar. In NC 1, 44 % of the total exercises provided are for speaking practice, whereas 25 % of them are for speaking in NC 3. NC 2 includes reading, speaking and writing exercises more or less proportionately. Even though some exercises for communicative practice are included, translation exercises and grammatical exercises are emphasized throughout this series. The percentage of grammatical exercises in each of this series is: 37 % in NC 1; 32 % in NC 2; and 60 % in NC 3. The total number of exercises introduced in each of this series is: 59 in NC 1; 60 in NC 2; and 50 in NC 3.

(e) THE SUNSHINE SERIES (hereafter S)

grade		1	2	3
types				
	substitution (s)	1	1	3
	substitution (D)	7	0	3
	speaking	7	1	3
	writing	3	0	0
	fill-in-the blks	2	2	3
	Q/A	1	5	3
	translation (s)	1	3	0
	J-->E			
	translation (w)	0	1	1
	J-->E			
	translation (s)	0	0	1
	E-->J			
	T/F	1	1	0
	crossword p.	0	1	0
	matching	0	0	1
	cap verses	1	0	0
	riddle	2	1	0
	grammatical	17	20	18
	total	43	36	31

Characteristics:

Both speaking and grammar are stressed in S 1 and S 3 of this series, whereas grammar

is the major emphasis in S 2. Translation exercises are included throughout this series. The percentage of grammatical exercises in each of this series is: 42 % in S 1; 56 % in S 2; and 42 % in S 3. The total number of exercises included in each of this series is: 43 in S 1; 36 in S 2; and 31 in S 3. This series places emphasis upon grammar throughout.

Overall Similarities/Differences Regarding Exercise Types

1. As a whole, the Total series and the OW series seem to place emphasis upon communicative practice, whereas the S series and the NC series stress grammar. The NE and the NH series seem to include reading and speaking and writing exercises more or less proportionately (though NE 1 and NH 1 emphasize on speaking).

Concerning the types of speaking exercises, the NH series and the NE series seem to stress creative ones, whereas the Total series and the NC series emphasize controlled exercises. The S series seems to provide both types proportionately.

Regarding writing exercises, the NE series, the NC series, and the S series focuses upon translation exercises, whereas the Total series, the NE series, and the OW series stress both translation and creative writing exercises (i.e., write about yourself or about a given topic) proportionately.

2. The Total and the NC series provide the most exercises, whereas the OW series and S series supply the least as a whole. For instance, the quantitative difference between the NC series and the S series amounts to 59 (exercises).

3. All the middle school textbook series follow a similar pattern: all the first-year textbooks put emphasis on speaking (S 1 the least), whereas the second- and the third-year textbooks stress grammar/translation.

4. The OW series seems to review almost all the grammatical points covered in the series through communicative practice, whereas the NC and S series seem to recapitulate grammatical points through explicit grammatical exercises.

5. Almost all the communicative exercises introduced in all the textbook series are supported by visual aids.

6. The NH series and the NE series include several unique reading comprehension exercises to improve the student's retention.

7. Only the NE series includes pre-reading exercises.

8. The total number of different types of exercises included in each series is about the same as a whole.

Suggestions to the textbook writer Regarding Exercise types

Even though the above differences are found among the textbook series, speaking and writing exercises introduced in all the textbook series are based upon *grammar/translation and audiolingual* methods. They are far from being effective in terms of their designated purposes. Some alternative exercises such as association, paraphrasing and collocation exercises should be included. Several research indicates (e.g., Wittrock & Carter, 1975) that association exercises such as acoustic-link and imaginary exercises are helpful for the learner's retention of new words. Furthermore, paraphrasing exercises will help the learner become independent from the need to ask for translation. In addition, these exercises can be operated with a small productive vocabulary (Nation, 1990:110).

Second, no listening exercises are included in any of the textbook series. I assume that some listening exercises are carried out in class through other supplements. However, receptive learning

(both listening and reading) should be emphasized at the initial learning stage since "learning a word productively is 50 to 100 percent more difficult than learning it receptively" (Nation, 1990:48). If this is the case, the format that the Japanese textbook series follow should be reconsidered. Even though the student is asked to read texts in class, not enough pre-and post reading exercises are introduced to improve the student's reading comprehension. Very few exercises are also designed for the student to elicit the meanings of the new lexical items from contexts. It may be difficult to include such exercises at the 1000 word level. Several research nonetheless indicates (e.g., Taylor, 1983 cited in Nation, 1990) that guessing word meanings in context is an important technique for the retention of new words. It is worth considering the above issue.

Third, lexical items introduced in any lesson are rarely asked in the subsequent lessons (even though some words appear in the subsequent texts). It is important that the previously learned lexical items should be given further attention receptively as well as productively. Otherwise, the student is forced to memorize the words introduced in any lesson by rote, not through exercises. Research also indicates that even in senior high schools, "much of the teaching centers on hair-splitting grammatical distinctions and rote memorization of word lists" (Mather, J. C. 1984:46). Integrated exercises throughout a textbook are therefore needed. One way is to include exercises in which several topics such as foods and sports are supplied. Then, the student writes down several elements for the given topics.

e.g.	foods	sports
	apples	baseball
	oranges	soccer etc.

A creative writing exercise (e.g., write about your favorite sports) can follow. It is also possible to use the above exercises to talk about colors and shapes of the above elements. The important issue here is the fact that the textbooks should provide various exercises which help the student learn (and retain) new lexical items with ease.

2. Presentation of Word Lists

Every textbook series includes word lists in Appendix. Lexical items introduced in each textbook series are also listed at the bottom of the pages. However, the way each textbook series introduces the words differs. The following is a summary of the findings:

	(a)	(b)
textbooks		
Total 1	(1) table Noun 9 (2) table [te ⁺ bl]	table Noun Noun 9
Total 2	table Noun 9	table [te ⁺ bl] Noun
Total 3	same as Total 2	same as Total 2
N.E. 1	(1) table * (2) table [te ⁺ bl]	table
N.E. 2	table Noun 9	table [te ⁺ bl]
N.E. 3	same as N.E. 2	same as N.E. 2
O.W. 1	(1) table Noun 9 (2) table [te ⁺ bl]	table
O.W. 2	table Noun 9	table [te ⁺ bl]
O.W. 3	same as O.W. 2	same as O.W. 2
N.C. 1	(1) table [te ⁺ bl] Noun	table

	(2) table 9	
N.C. 2	same as N.C. 1	table [te*bl]
N.C. 3	same as N.C. 1	same as N.C. 2
Sun. 1	(1) table *	table
	(2) table [te*bl] Noun 9	
Sun. 2	table Noun 9	table [te*bl]
Sun. 3	same as Sun. 2	same as Sun. 2
N.H. 1	(1) table *	table
	(2) table [te*bl]	
N.H. 2	table Noun 9	table [te*bl]
N.H. 3	same as N.H. 2	same as N.H. 2

* means that the words are listed according to lessons (not alphabetically).

(a): word lists in Appendices

(b): word lists at the bottom of the pages

Similarities/Differences

A. Word Lists in Appendices

1. All the first-year textbooks provide two separate word lists in Appendices.
2. The word lists in all the second-and the third-year textbooks except for (the NC series) supply the same information: grammatical information; Japanese translation, stress loci, and page numbers. The word lists introduced in the N.C series include a phonetic alphabet as well as the above information for the words listed.
3. The word lists provided in T 1, the NC series (1,2,3), and S 1 include all the above information (grammatical info.; Japanese translation; page number; and phonetic alphabetic; and stress loci) on a single word list.
4. Only the NC series has the same format throughout (refer to the above Table).
5. The word lists supplied in the NC series provide metalinguistic information and example sentences for some words. Even though some other textbooks include example sentences, none of the other textbook series give metalinguistic information. Furthermore, none of the word lists in the other textbook series are as extensive as the ones in the NC series.
6. Additional word lists classifying some lexical items according to topics are provided in: the Total series (1,2,3), NE 1, OW 1, the NC series (1,2,3) the S series (1,2,3), and NH 1. The word lists included in the Total series are especially extensive, and they are easy to find in the textbooks since the top portion of the word lists is colored.

B. Word Lists at the Bottom of the Pages

The word lists in all the textbook series (except for T 1) provide exactly the same information: stress loci, and a phonetic alphabet. The word lists in T 1 supply Japanese translation as well as the above information.

Suggestions to the Textbook Writer regarding word lists

As I have mentioned earlier, almost all the Junior High School students only use bilingual English-Japanese dictionaries. According to Baxter (1980:330-331),

Long-term use of a bilingual dictionaries will produce in students the tendency to always seek a

given lexical item. If it should be unavailable, there will be no recourse, in speech, to conversational definition.

He suggests that the student should use both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. It may be understandable for Junior High School students to use only bilingual dictionaries since their level of competence for the target language is very low. However, English-Japanese dictionaries do not give definition, but only provide Japanese equivalence of an English entry (ibid., 330). What makes it worse is that not enough example sentences are provided in many of these bilingual dictionaries.

This tendency is also seen in the word lists of all (except for the NC series) the textbook series. It means that it is unnecessary for the student to even use their dictionaries since almost all the information provided in the bilingual dictionaries are included in the textbook series. In particular, T 1 even includes Japanese translation of words at the bottom of the pages. I wonder if the student using this textbook ever looks up words in their dictionaries.

A possible solution to the above problems is to exclude all the Japanese translation from the word lists. This is however improbable since (I assume) it is required by the Ministry of Education. Then, an alternative is to include word lists giving the meanings of the words as well as example sentences in English. A good example of this is found in *Words for Students of English: A Vocabulary Series for ESL* (Rogerson et al., 1988). Word definitions found in vol. 1 of this series are given in English using only 600 basic words. It is therefore possible to give the meanings of the words introduced in the third-year textbook of each series in English. Even though it is a time-consuming undertaking for the textbook writer, it is worth spending time on it for the student.

3. Lexical Selection

As I have mentioned earlier, approximately 900 to 1050 words are taught in three years. Of those words, 490 words are specifically selected by the Ministry of Education.

First, I compared those 490 words with the lists provided by two sources: (1) the General Word List of English Words (West, 1956) and a list of 500 words selected by the program leaders at an in-service training program in Honduras.

1. With respect to the General Word List, only seven words in the textbook series are not included on the list. (Note: The G.S.L. does not include names of persons, places, and countries as well as days of the week, and interjections (except for "please"). Thus, those words included in the 490 words are not included in the above number).

i.e., (1) classroom, (2) holiday, (3) Mr., (4) Mrs., (5) o'clock, (6) hers, and (7) him.

2. Concerning the list of 500 words, 158 out of 490 words are not included.

Second, I classified those 490 words according to grammatical categories (e.g., Nouns). Rodgers (1969 cited in Nation, 1990) found that Nouns were the easiest to learn, and Adjectives were next. Verbs and Adverbs were the most difficult to learn. If this is the case, it is interesting to find out the distribution of the above four grammatical categories.

490 words
(selected by the Ministry of Education)

grade	1	2	3	Total
grammatical cat.				
NOUNS	84	49	28	161 (32.9)
ADJECTIVES	23	34	12	69 (14.1)
VERBS	43	33	17	93 (19)
ADVERBS	16	8	6	30 (6.1)
PRONOUNS	25	0	5	30 (6.1)
PREPOSITIONS	12	11	4	27 (5.5)
NOUNS/ADJECTIVES	42	0	0	42 (8.6)
CONJUNCTIONS	0	4	0	4 (0.8)
OTHERS *	27	7	0	34 (6.9)
TOTAL	272	146	72	490

* includes articles, adjectives/pronouns etc.

It looks as if the number of the Adjectives are fewer than that of the Verbs at a glance. However, there are 42 words classified as Nouns/Adjectives on the list. Since both the grammatical functions are taught at schools, it is possible to assume that the actual number of the Adjectives is 69 + 42, whereas the actual number of the Nouns is 161 + 42. If this is the case, the quantitative order of the four categories (from the highest to the lowest) is: Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs, and Adverbs. This is an optimal order if we assume Rodger's findings to be correct since the easiest grammatical categories should be taught most.

Next, the words excluding the above 490 words are checked. (I only checked the words introduced in the NH and OW series against the General Service List.) I found that 138 and 115 words in the NH and the OW series respectively are not included on the G.S.L. The words that are not included are: names (persons, places, and countries) and numerals. Thus, the majority of the words provided in the junior high textbooks series seem to correspond to the words listed on the G.S.L. Let us now compare the total number of words included in each textbook series.

textbooks grades	Optionally Selected Words ²					
	N.C.	O.W.	Sun.	N.E.	N.H	T
1	62	86	72	68	89	84
2	197	219	206	226	214	122
3	230	278	283	245	271	188
Total	489	583	561	539	574	398

As we can see from the Table, the OW series introduce the most words (583), whereas the Total series supplies the least (398). The difference amounts to 185 words. This discrepancy is significant since the total number of words learned in junior high schools is around 1000.

Next, I examined the distributional differences for the above words in respect to grammatical categories. The following Table displays the findings in the present study.

		Distribution (Grammatical categories) ³					
textbooks		N.C.	O.W.	S.	N.E.	N.H.	T
grammatical							
categories							
	NOUNS	261	348	289	288	352	226
	ADJECTIVES	88	68	74	65	60	44
	VERBS	102	133	152	143	111	98
	ADVERBS	17	19	29	26	25	13
	PREPOSITIONS	7	4	3	5	7	2
	INTERJECTIONS	5	4	6	5	7	6
	PRONOUNS	7	4	4	4	8	3
	AUXILIARIES	2	2	2	1	2	2
	CONJUNCTIONS	0	1	2	2	2	0
	TOTAL	489	583	561	539	574	398

As we can see from the above Table, the absolute number of words for each category differs among the textbooks. For instance, the OW series presents the most nouns, whereas the Total series supplies the least. The difference amounts to 122 words. Of those 185 word differences we observed between the two textbooks, about 66 % of the differences comes from the Noun category.

The major categories found in all the textbook series are the following: (1) Nouns; (2) Verbs; (3) Adjectives; and (4) Adverbs. It is interesting to note that the number of adjectives is about half the number of verbs in each of the textbook series (except for the NC series). The NC series introduces about the same number of adjectives and verbs. It is also important to denote that the numerical ratio of nouns/adjectives to that of verbs/adverbs for each of the series differs: 3 to 1 for the NC series; 2.8 to 1 for the OW series; 2.3 to 1 for the S series; 2 to 1 for the NE series; 3 to 1 for the NH series; and 2.4 to 1 for the NC series. It means that the NH series and the NC series put more emphasis on Nouns/Adjectives categories than the other textbook series (the NE series being the least). It is, however, important to examine the total number of words introduced in the four categories as well as the above ratios in terms of the grades (levels). Therefore, I further classified the words categorically in respect to levels. The following is the findings for the first-year textbook of each series.

Distribution (Grammatical Categories)

-- First-Year Textbooks --

textbooks grammatical categories	NC1	OW1	S1	NE1	NH1	T1
NOUNS	46	71	52	54	70	64
ADJECTIVES	9	7	9	7	8	5
VERBS	3	3	7	4	3	10
ADVERBS	0	1	2	0	2	1
PREPOSITIONS	0	1	0	0	1	1
INTERJECTIONS	4	3	2	3	5	3
TOTAL	62	86	72	68	89	84

On the whole, The total number of words introduced in each series does not differ significantly. All the textbooks provide more adjectives than nouns. Thus, the quantitative order of the four categories (from the highest to the lowest) is: Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs and Adverbs. However, the number of the words included in each category differs noticeably. For instance, NH 1 and OW 1 supply 70 and 71 nouns respectively, whereas NC 1 provides only 46 nouns. Furthermore, if we examine the numerical ratio of Nouns/Adjectives to that of Verbs/Adverbs for each of the textbooks, NC 1 and NE 1 have the highest ratios (18 to 1 and 19 to 1 respectively), whereas S 1 and Total 1 have the lowest (7 to 1 and 6 to 1). It is also important to note that NC 1 and NE 1 do not include adverbs at all.

The following Table displays the distribution of the second-year textbook of each series.

Distribution (Grammatical Categories)

-- Second-Year Textbooks --

textbooks grammatical categories	NC2	OW2	S2	NE2	NH2	T2
NOUNS	100	118	105	109	128	61
ADJECTIVES	29	30	25	31	25	14
VERBS	50	56	53	63	46	38
ADVERBS	7	10	13	15	10	3
PREPOSITIONS	5	1	2	3	2	0
INTERJECTIONS	0	0	2	1	1	2
PRONOUNS	4	1	4	3	0	2
AUXILIARIES	2	2	2	1	2	2
CONJUNCTIONS	0	1	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	197	219	206	226	214	122

Concerning the absolute number of words in each of the textbooks, Total 1 has significantly fewer words compared with the other textbooks. All the textbooks present more Verbs than Adjectives. The numerical ratio of the Nouns/Adjectives to the Verbs/Adverbs for each of the textbooks is

also calculated, and shows that almost all the textbooks have similar ratios (appr. 2 to 1) except for NH 2. NH 2 has a 3 to 1 ratio. Furthermore, the above ratios found in the second-year textbooks are drastically compressed when compared with those found in the first-year textbooks. It indicates that the second-year textbook of each series, in general, places more emphasis upon Verbs/Nouns than the first-year textbook.

Let us examine the distribution of the third-year textbook of each series.

Distribution (Grammatical Categories)

textbooks grammatical categories	-- Third-Year textbooks --					
	NC3	OW3	S3	NE3	NH3	T3
NOUNS	115	159	132	125	154	101
ADJECTIVES	50	31	40	27	27	25
VERBS	49	74	92	76	62	50
ADVERBS	10	8	14	11	13	9
PREPOSITIONS	2	2	1	2	4	1
INTERJECTIONS	1	1	2	1	1	1
PRONOUNS	3	3	0	1	8	1
CONJUNCTIONS	0	0	2	2	2	0
TOTAL	230	278	283	245	271	188

The absolute number of words introduced in each of the textbooks differs. Concerning the Noun category, Total 3 and NC 3 provide fewer words than the rest of the textbooks. The same thing can be said about the Verb category. However, all the textbooks supply more Verbs than Adjectives.

If we check the numerical ratios of N/A to V/AD, S 3 and NE 3 have the highest ratios (2.8 to 1 and 2.4 to 1), whereas NC 3 and NH 3 have the lowest (1.6 to 1 and 1.7 to 1).

It is also important to note that the above ratios found in NC 3, OW 3 and T 3 are higher when compared with those found in NC 2, OW 2, and T 2, whereas the opposite phenomenon was observed in the other third-year textbooks.

Overall Similarities/Differences Regarding Lexical Selection

1. The majority of the words included in all the textbook series seem to correspond to the words on the General Service List of English Words.

2. As a whole, the OW and the NH series provide the most words (1073 and 1064 respectively), whereas the T series supplies the least (888).

3. As a whole, the quantitative order of the four grammatical categories (from highest to lowest) found in the first-year textbooks is NOUNS, ADJECTIVES, VERBS, AND ADVERBS, whereas the order of ADJECTIVES and VERBS reversed in the second- and the third-year textbooks. (Only NC 2 has the same order as was found in NC 1).

4. If we assume Rodger's findings to be correct, the following can be said about the textbook series in respect to grades (levels). Regarding the first-year textbooks, NC 1 and NE 1 seem to have the most proper proportion of the four grammatical categories, whereas S 1 and T 1 have the least. Concerning the second-year textbooks, NH 1 seems to have the most proper proportion of the categories, whereas the other 5 textbooks do not have any significant differences. With respect to the third-year textbooks, NH 3 seems to have the most proper proportion of the categories, whereas

S 3 and NE 3 have the least.

As a whole, the NH series seem to be the best among all 6 textbook series in terms of the lexical selection.

Suggestions to the Textbook Writer Regarding Lexical Selection

Recent research indicates that "first language learners add between 1000 and 2000 words per year to their vocabulary, or 3 to 7 words per day" (Nation, 1990:11). Compared with the above figures, all the textbook series introduce between 300 and 350 words per year. This is about one third of the first language learners'. It is of course difficult to match the native speakers' rate of vocabulary learning. The rate of Japanese students' vocabulary learning is nonetheless extremely low. More words should be taught at Junior High Schools. This suggestion is supported by a research finding in that "the number of words required for the university entrance examination is between 6-7000 words" (Kitao, 1979 cited in Mather, J. C., 1984:46). It means that the students have to memorize about 1600 to 2000 words a year in High Schools. This rate of vocabulary learning is too high even compared with that of native speakers.

The numerical ratio of Nouns/Adjectives to Verbs/Adverbs should be taken into greater consideration. The ratios found in the second-and the third-year textbooks are drastically compressed when compared with those found in the first-year textbooks. This indicates that much more nouns and adjectives should be taught in the last two years of the junior high school. This suggestion is partly supported by a research finding. Yoshida (1978:388) found that the number of Nouns included in English textbooks used in Japan was only one third of that provided in English textbooks used in West Germany and France.

Final Comments

Even though the Ministry of Education explicitly outlines the grammatical and lexical content of textbooks, I found many significant differences in the 6 textbook series. Since no school or teacher has the authority to adopt the textbook they like, the findings in the present study will serve as a guide for the teacher to grasp those differences so that the teacher using one particular series will know what other areas should be emphasized in class.

I hope that the suggestions I have made in the present study will help the textbook writer make decisions for the future modifications of the textbook series. Many other valuable suggestions are available for the textbook writer. This is the time for the textbook writer and the Ministry of Education to work together for the improvement in the Junior High School Textbooks.

References

- Baxter, J. 1980. "The Dictionary and Vocabulary Behavior: A Single Word or a Handful?" TESOL Quarterly, xiv (3), 325-336.
- Henrichsen, L. E. 1989. Diffusion of Innovations in English Language Teaching: The ELEC Effort in Japan, 1956-1968. Greenwood Press, Connecticut.
- Imura, M. 1978. "English teaching Policies for Lower Secondary Schools". The Teaching of English in Japan. Eichosha, Tokyo, 134-140.
- Ishizutani, S. 1983 (Feb.). "Nyushi Eigo to no Kanren: Kohkoh Nyushi". Modern English Teaching, 103-110.
- Ito, K. 1978. "Traditional Methods and New Methods: A Study on the Methods Suited for the Japanese". The Teaching of English in Japan. Eichosha, Tokyo, 204-219.
- Kiyokawa, H. 1983 (Feb). "Kiso Eigo Goi, Rengo". Modern English Teaching, 81-90.
- Rogerson, H. D., Davis, B., Hershelman, S. T., & Jasnow, C. 1988. Words for Students of English: A Vocabulary Series for ESL (vol. 1). University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh.
- Mather, J. C. 1984. "English Language Education in Japan: Historical and Macro Issues in the Teaching of English in Schools". Language Learning and Communications, 3(1), 41-50.
- Nation, I. S. P. 1990. Teaching and Learning Vocabulary. Newbury House, New York.
- West, M. 1953. A General Service List of English Words. Longman, Green and Co., London.
- Wittrok, M. C. & Carter, J. F. 1975. "Generative Processing of Hierarchically Organized Words". American Journal of Psychology 88 (3):489-501.
- Yoshida, K. 1978. "Development of Materials: A Comparison of Nouns Used in English Textbooks of Japan, France, and West Germany". The Teaching of English in Japan. Eichosha, Tokyo, 386-401.

1 Some exercises are designed for multiple purposes (e.g., for speaking and writing). Those exercises are marked off twice as having two different exercises.

2 Only the words included on the word lists are counted. Some textbook series (especially, the Total series) introduce words in Appendices which are not listed on the word lists. Since those words are provided for individual study, I excluded them from the above Table.

3 Names of persons and abbreviated or contracted words (e.g., I'm) are excluded. The words which have inflectional suffixes (-s) or derivational suffixes (-ing) are also omitted. Furthermore, some words included in the word lists provide two grammatical functions (e.g., "brown" as a noun and an adjective). Those words are counted twice as having two separate functions.