

# Feasibility Analysis of Cross-cultural Competence Development in College English Textbooks – A Case Study of *New Horizon College English Textbook for Viewing, Listening and Speaking*

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 13 Aug 2024; Received in revised form: 15 Sep 2024; Accepted: 22 Sep 2024; Available online: 28 Sep 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords</b>— <i>English textbooks, cross-cultural competence, feasibility</i></p>	<p><i>Against the backdrop of increasingly frequent globalization and international communication, English serves not only as a tool for international exchange but also carries the function of disseminating and communicating diverse cultures. University English textbooks are not just tools for language learning but also crucial mediums for fostering students' cross-cultural communication skills. This paper examines the cultural content reflected in the textbook and its impact on students' cross-cultural communication abilities in the third edition of New Horizon College English Textbook for Viewing, Listening and Speaking (Third edition, Book 2) textbooks from a cross-cultural perspective. A framework of cross-cultural competence teaching for textbook analysis was constructed based on the previous research. The study analyzes the cultural content and its presentation in the textbooks according to the different dimensions of the framework, revealing significant differences in the selection and presentation of cultural content. Research findings show that the textbooks primarily focus on introducing English and American cultures while neglecting the diversity of other English-speaking countries and students' local cultures, resulting in a narrow cultural perspective. Furthermore, the depth and breadth of cultural content are insufficient to comprehensively develop students' cross-cultural communication skills. It is suggested that when using these textbooks for cultivating cross-cultural skills,</i></p>

attention should be given to diverse cultures, balancing the introduction of different cultures, incorporating students' local cultures, and helping them develop a global perspective. By enriching cultural content and implementing diverse teaching activities, students' cross-cultural understanding and communication skills can be enhanced, fostering international exchange and cooperation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

Cultural diversity is recognized as one of the characteristics of modern society, particularly in an era where the integration of multiple cultures within nations is commonplace. In this context, enhancing university students' English proficiency has become an essential objective of English language instruction in universities. The essence of foreign language education is cross-cultural education, and the development of cross-cultural competence has been incorporated into English language curriculum standards and teaching guidelines for primary, secondary, and tertiary levels in China, as noted by Zhang Hongling (2022). It is explicitly stated in The Guide for College English Teaching (2020) that one of the key tasks of college English courses is to conduct cross-cultural education, underscoring the importance of integrating cross-cultural education into English language teaching at the university level. College English textbooks, being significant carriers of learning content and vital mediums for teaching interaction and cultural knowledge transmission, play an irreplaceable role in cultivating undergraduate students' cross-cultural competencies.

*New Horizon College English for Viewing, Listening & Speaking* (hereinafter referred to as *New Horizon Listening*) is a textbook for English listening and speaking course employed by numerous universities, including our own institution, accompanied by an online synchronous course system. This textbook was developed and compiled under the guidance of constructivist learning and teaching theories of Piaget and Vygotsky, Schramm's bilateral model of communication, and cognitive theories, following the latest College English Curriculum Teaching Requirements (Trial

prescribed by the Ministry of Education. It aims to offer students more natural language input and output opportunities through authentic scenarios, genuine language, and a variety of exercises, enabling effective listening and speaking practice and eventually improving students' English listening and speaking skills, as well as communicative competence. Therefore, creating an English language environment for students and overcoming the limitations associated with teaching a foreign language in a non-English speaking context are deemed essential.

### 1.2 Significance of the study

Since Xu Guozhang first pointed out the lack of attention to the cultural factors of words in English teaching in China in 1980 and proposed that the cultural aspects of English-speaking countries should be fully paid attention to in English teaching, the cultural teaching of English in universities has been a difficult problem that experts and scholars have been working hard to solve (Xu, 1980). There are many problems in the cross-cultural teaching of English in universities, which can no longer meet the increasing demands of cross-cultural communication in today's world. Therefore, teaching reforms must be carried out, effective measures researched, and a practical system for cultivating cross-cultural communication abilities constructed (Chen, 2014). At present, there are many professional textbooks for cross-cultural communication courses for English majors, but there are few textbooks for the education system of general English in universities. Most of the existing textbooks incorporate cross-cultural content into comprehensive English textbooks, posing issues such as uneven presentation of cultural content, inadequate representation of Chinese culture, and lack of clear objectives in cross-cultural teaching design. Taking the textbook "*New Horizon Listening*" as an example, this paper summarizes the

cross-cultural content and its presentation in the textbook, investigates the presentation effect of the cross-cultural content in the textbook, analyzes the reasons for this presentation effect, and puts forward methods and suggestions to strengthen the presentation of cross-cultural content in the textbook.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Studies on foreign language textbooks in China

Foreign language teaching, particularly through textbooks, conveys knowledge at two levels. The first level is the linguistic knowledge itself, such as vocabulary, grammar, and phonetics; the second level involves non-linguistic knowledge conveyed through language, such as the history and culture of foreign countries, national history and culture, various humanities and social knowledge, as well as ideologies and moral values constructed and transmitted through the target language (Adamson,2004). Looking back at the development history of China's college English courses, the focus was solely on the first level until the College English Teaching Guide and Syllabus remained in that state until 1998. In 1999, the "College English Teaching Syllabus (Revised Edition)" (hereinafter referred to as the "Syllabus") was published, which clearly stated that "culture and language are closely linked, and a certain background knowledge of culture helps to promote language application" (Zhang & Ben,2014) and communicative competence. It further emphasized deepening the understanding of the world, drawing from and assimilating the essence of foreign cultures, and enhancing cultural literacy. However, the "Syllabus" focused only on acquiring elements of Western culture and failed to address the dissemination of Chinese historical and cultural values, leading to emerging problems with long-lasting impacts (Liu Yanhong,2015). Subsequent researchers used questionnaires and personal interviews to investigate students' cultural content needs in English textbooks. Studies found that textbooks primarily spread and indoctrinate Anglo-American culture and hoped that the issue of cultural imbalance could be resolved in future textbook

development.

China has the world's largest number of English learners, but there is a limited amount of research on college English textbooks (Zhao Qinghong,2011;Xu Jinfen,2011). Liu Huaning believes that the presence of Chinese culture in textbooks is insufficient, which is not conducive to the cultivation of students' cross-cultural communication skills. However, these studies have focused more on micro-level than macro-level research, and there are more subjective narratives than empirical research, resulting in personal opinions, feelings, and suggestions outweighing fact-based research conclusions (Liu Huaning,2013,p.69). Through surveys and personal interviews, Zhang Bei and Ma Lan(2004) concluded that the current objectives of college English learners have shifted from purely pursuing academic advancement and passing exams to learning English for professional needs and development, emphasizing professional goals in a domestic work environment. However, the current textbooks only meet students' needs to understand Western social culture and fail to fully satisfy the cross-cultural communication needs of Chinese English learners.

### 2.2 Studies on cross-cultural competence training

Research related to the cultivation of cross-cultural competence can be traced back to the 1950s. British scholars Spencer Oatey and Franklin (2009) defined cross-cultural communicative competence as "the skill of the communicator to engage in appropriate and effective verbal and non-verbal interactions in a context of cultural differences, while mitigating subsequent psychological burdens and communicative consequences." A proponent of communication capability theory, Spitzberg (2000) believed that cross-cultural competence is the ability to communicate appropriately and effectively in a specific context in order to achieve intended goals and satisfactory outcomes; broadly, cross-cultural competence is an impression, that is, the ability perceived by both parties in the communication, not the capacity perceived individually, but a mutually recognized ability demonstrated throughout the communicative process. The study of cross-cultural communication theory in China

began in the 1980s, with Professor Hu Wenzhong being the first to introduce the results of Western research on cross-cultural communication, providing a comprehensive introduction to the development of the field. Some scholars have defined cross-cultural communicative competence as “the capacities and qualities needed for successful cross-cultural communication; it is a bidirectional capability that includes not only an understanding of the target language culture but also an explicit awareness of one’s own native language culture.” (Chen Junsen, Fan Weiwei, Zhong Hua, 2016)

Cross-cultural education is not only necessary, but also very urgent. First of all, people encounter more and more cross-cultural problems and even conflicts in their daily work and life, and they must seek solutions. Secondly, although the media provide a large amount of information about foreign cultures, the information is fragmented, without historical background, cause and effect, and cannot make people deeply understand a certain culture. Finally, cross-cultural education is not only the need to solve practical problems, but also an indispensable part of humanistic education and critical thinking ability training. In a word, cross-cultural education should become an important part of citizenship education in the era of globalization, because in this era of increasing interdependence between countries, we must learn to live together and cooperate across cultures to face the increasing global challenges, so as to realize mutual learning among civilizations and create a better future for human civilization(Sun, 2016).

However, in current daily English teaching, there is no transmission of cutting-edge cross-cultural education concepts and education methods, and it often only focuses on the knowledge of rare words, key grammar and sentence patterns involved in English articles, while Western culture is often explained in a simple way, resulting in the “shallow” understanding of Western culture among college students (Shi, 2023). At the same time, limited classroom time cannot meet the reading teaching needs of English teachers in permeating cultural teaching. Teachers should carry out more activities to guide students to relate to the relevant contents of Eastern culture and

strengthen students’ understanding of cultural differences and Western cultural connotations (Chen,2023).

### **2.3 Studies on cross-cultural content presentation in college English textbooks**

#### **2.3.1 Research on cultural presentation in professional cross-cultural teaching materials**

Qu Yan takes Cross-cultural Communication: A Comparison of Chinese and English Cultures as an example to analyze the cultural content and ways presented in the textbook. In the selection of Chinese and foreign cultural content, the book pays attention to knowledge and richness, which reflects cultural diversity to a certain extent. Among them, part of Chinese culture focuses on the presentation of traditional culture, part of English culture focuses on the mainstream culture of British and American countries. When teaching materials present cultural content, they pay attention to surface cultural knowledge and lack the interpretation of deep cultural connotation. In terms of the presentation of culture, teaching materials are mainly presented through texts from the perspective of cultural comparison (Qu, 2022).

Based on the compilation characteristics of cross-cultural Communication English - Reading Course, Guo Weiji studies the cultural presentation path of the textbook. This textbook combines the instrumental and humanistic nature of college English and integrates cross-cultural communication elements into the general English teaching system. The selection of materials focuses on the comparison of different cultures in the world, in order to fully awaken students’ local cultural awareness and cross-cultural awareness. In the selection of materials to highlight the “cross-cultural” characteristics, in addition to some of the introduction of Western society, history and culture, but also to increase the selection of Chinese culture and Sino-Western cultural exchanges. (Guo, 2023)

#### **2.3.2 Research on cultural presentation in college general English comprehensive textbooks**

Nowadays, more and more scholars begin to pay attention to the presentation of cross-cultural content in general comprehensive college English textbooks. At present, the original foreign teaching

materials written and published in China or introduced in China are mainly based on British culture, which can only meet the needs of domestic non-English major college students to understand British and American social culture, but can not meet the needs of college students' cross-cultural communication. In addition, college English textbooks lack the accumulation of local Chinese cultural knowledge, and they have not paid due attention to the compilation of textbooks (Huang, 2018). At present, many general English teaching materials claim to attach importance to "culture" or "cross-culture", but in fact, the compiling concept is disconnected from the compiling practice, resulting in insufficient (cross-culture) prominence of the teaching materials (Li, 2023).

General English teaching materials play an irreplaceable role in cultivating students' cross-cultural competence. Li Jiajun takes the Comprehensive Course of Cross-cultural English for College as the object and uses the content analysis method to study it. It is found that the proportion of local culture in cross-cultural Course is relatively high. The cultural themes presented include both general culture and country-specific culture. The former shows the general rules of cross-cultural communication, while the latter provides a rich variety of specific national cultures (Li, 2023). Zhang Tiefu, Wang Kelen, Yuan Rui (2023) and others have carried out a cross-cultural analysis of the New Future College English Comprehensive Course. The author analyzes the cross-cultural elements embodied in New Future 3A from three dimensions: macro, meso and micro. The teaching material embodies the teaching goal of cultivating students' cross-cultural ability, integrating cross-cultural attitude, knowledge and skill training, integrating into the world's multi-culture on the one hand, and exerting the influence of local culture on the other hand. (Zhang, Wang & Yuan, 2023) Gu Linyu conducted a study on the cross-cultural presentation of New Horizon College English for Reading, Writing & Translation. The lack of systematic and balanced presentation of cultural themes exists in this set of textbooks, such as the incoherence of cultural themes in the articles and supporting exercises in one unit, the fragmentary cultural themes and the unbalanced

proportion of cultural themes among each unit. Gu Linhe analyzed the proportion of different cultures contained in the textbook in this book. The culture of the target language countries still accounts for a large proportion, especially the culture of the United States, while the culture of other English-speaking countries is largely ignored. American culture accounted for 48.20 percent, British culture 7.61 percent, and Canadian, New Zealand and Australian culture accounted for less than 3 percent. Although Chinese culture (11.08 percent) occupies the third most space in this book, it is less than a quarter of American culture (48.2 percent) (Gu, 2023).

At present, the cross-cultural research on teaching materials by major domestic scholars is mainly reflected in the study of the different countries especially English-speaking countries presented in the teaching materials, the distribution of different cultures in the selected teaching materials and the path of cultural presentation in the teaching materials. Most of the methods adopted are content analysis, which presents the culture and ways of presenting culture of different countries in the form of tables, and calculate the proportion of different cultures in the textbook. So far, studies on cross-cultural analysis of college English textbooks mainly focus on comprehensive textbooks for reading and writing, while few studies have ever chosen a listening and speaking textbook as a sample for case analysis. Therefore, by choosing *New Horizon Listening*, a widely used coursebook for college English study, as the case, this thesis is to analyze the culture presentation and cross-cultural design in the coursebook so as to explore the feasibility of cross-cultural competence development in language teaching.

### III. THE FRAMEWORK FOR CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE TEACHING

The essence of foreign language teaching is actually cross-cultural teaching. Cross-cultural content has been listed as necessities in the foreign language teaching in schools of all levels. In order to clarify and specify the cross-cultural goals for different levels of education, leading her team,

Zhang Hongling (2022) worked out a framework of reference for cross-cultural competence teaching in China's foreign language education. This framework was developed on the basis of learning taxonomies and development psychology, covering cross-cultural competence at elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and universities. At each level, specific goals of cross-cultural competence are clearly described from 3 dimensions and 9 components, including knowledge (foreign cultural knowledge, Chinese cultural knowledge, general cultural knowledge), attitudes (cultural awareness, national identity, global mindedness), and skills (cross-cultural experiencing, cross-cultural dialogue, cross-cultural exploration). This framework provides specific and clear reference for teachers at different levels to follow in cross-cultural competence cultivation, either in setting teaching objectives or design teaching activities.

Taking the framework as a major guidance, and combining the backgrounds and features of the *New Horizon Listening* textbook, a framework is worked out for analyzing the cross-culture competence development in the textbook, which is described as follows:

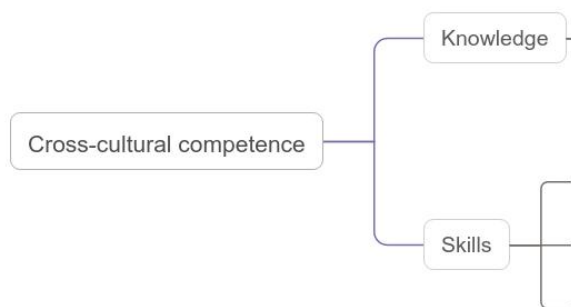


Chart 3-1 The framework of cross-cultural competence teaching for textbook analysis

In this framework, at the knowledge level, "foreign cultural knowledge" refers to knowledge related to history and geography, social culture, politics and economy, literature and art, etc. in foreign countries, including different lifestyles,

communication methods, thinking patterns and values. "Chinese culture knowledge" covers knowledge about Chinese history, traditional culture, philosophy, literary works, etc., understanding China's role in and contribution to the world development and the core values of the socialism. "General cultural knowledge" focuses on the knowledge in cross-cultural communication, cultural diversity, cultural identity and the value of a community with a shared future for mankind. At the skills level, "national identity" means the attitude towards national pride, and the ability to deal with the country bias, spread the good voice of China and set a correct image about China. "Global mindedness" refers to the awareness of the significance of globalization, conformity with a community of a shared future and willingness to participate in the global cooperation and management. "cross-cultural exploration" is concerned with being able to reflect after cross-cultural experiencing and the skills to deal with cultural differences tactfully and avoid cultural conflicts.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Research questions

This study aims primarily to answer the following three questions:

(1) What cross-cultural content does "*New Horizon College English for Viewing, Listening & Speaking*" have, and how is the cross-cultural content presented?

(2) How effective is the presentation of cross-cultural content in "*New Horizon College English for Viewing, Listening & Speaking*"?

(3) How to improve the cross-cultural content in the textbook to better enhance students' cross-cultural competence?

### 4.2 Textbook selection

This study will take the university textbook *New Horizon Listening (Third edition, Book 2)* published by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press as an example for analysis. *New Horizon Listening* is an English listening and speaking textbook used by many universities, including our own, and is equipped with an online

synchronous course system. This textbook is developed in accordance with the latest *College English Curriculum Requirements (Trial)* of the Ministry of Education under the guidance of Piaget's and Vygotsky's constructivist learning and teaching theories, Schramm's two-way communication model, and cognitive theory. It aims to provide students with more natural language input and output opportunities, achieve effective listening and speaking practice, and ultimately improve students' English listening and speaking skills and communicative competence through real-life scenarios, authentic language, and abundant exercises. One of the design purposes of this textbook is to create an English language environment for students, overcoming the limitations of teaching foreign languages in non-English environments.

#### 4.3 Questionnaire Design

An evaluation survey was conducted at Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology to assess the presentation of cross-cultural content in the course material. Since the material is a required textbook for non-English major students at Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology, the survey targeted all students at the institute. The questionnaire was distributed to students through the Wenjuanxing online survey platform in March 2024, resulting in a total of 260 questionnaires sent out, of which 237 were valid responses. The analysis of the presentation of cross-cultural content in the material will be conducted from three perspectives: questionnaire design, processing of questionnaire data, and analysis of questionnaire data.

The questionnaire consisted of 17 questions, with the 9th question serving as a validation check where selecting option B indicated a valid questionnaire. The 1st question aimed to assess the English proficiency of the respondents; questions 2 and 3 investigated the respondents' interest in cross-cultural issues; question 4 inquired about any past cross-cultural experiences of the respondents; questions 5, 6, and 7 analyzed students' comprehension of cross-cultural content in the material through specific case studies; questions 8, 10, and 11 aimed to gauge respondents' knowledge of cross-cultural concepts and understanding of cross-cultural implications;

questions 13, 14, and 15 examined the impact of different teaching designs on students' cross-cultural abilities; question 16 evaluated the effectiveness of role-play dialogues in enhancing cross-cultural abilities as compared to a control group from question 15; questions 12 and 17 assessed students' cross-cultural competencies.

#### 4.4 Analysis

This paper uses content analysis to address the issue, researching the main cross-cultural content related to viewing, listening, and speaking in "*New Horizon Listening*". Additionally, it investigates how cross-cultural content is presented in the "*New Horizon Listening*" textbook. A cultural information coding framework is developed through the extraction and analysis of cultural information points in the textbook. During the process of inputting cultural information points into Excel, country attributes, cultural themes, cultural dimensions, and presentation paths are identified and determined. After classifying and categorizing cultural information points, cultural themes are generated. Subsequently, the frequency and proportion of country attributes, cultural themes, cultural dimensions, and presentation paths of cultural information points are statistically analyzed. Combining with the "Chinese Foreign Language Education Cross-Cultural Ability Reference Framework" a deep text analysis of the cultural content presented in the textbook and the design of cross-cultural communicative activities in the textbook are conducted.

Using the obtained presentation paths and frequencies of cross-cultural content in the book *New Horizon Listening*, a questionnaire survey of students using the "*New Horizon Listening*" textbook is conducted to evaluate the cross-cultural educational achievements of the textbook. Utilizing data analysis software such as SPSS, the effectiveness of cross-cultural content presentation in the "*New Horizon Listening*" textbook is studied. Suggestions are proposed in educational theory on how to improve cross-cultural content and teaching methods in the textbook and enhance students' cross-cultural abilities.

## V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter begins to analyze the cross-cultural content of this textbook, and a major characteristic of this textbook is the organic combination of instrumental and humanistic elements in its nature.

### 5.1 Cross-cultural content and presentation of the textbook

The cross-cultural content and presentation of *“New Horizon College English for Viewing, Listening & Speaking”* are analyzed from a macro perspective. The preface of this textbook contains 6 occurrences of vocabulary related to cross-cultural communication skills or differences between Chinese and Western cultures, and 4 occurrences of vocabulary related to cultural understanding, cultural literacy, and cultural perception. In the “rationale” section, it is explicitly stated that one of the purposes of this textbook is to enhance cultural understanding and improve cross-cultural communication skills. In the “textbook features” section, it further explains how this textbook utilizes diverse forms of practice activities to cultivate language and cross-cultural abilities. It emphasizes that the language activities in this textbook focus on mental training, the development of cross-cultural awareness, inspiring student thinking through critical questions, guiding students to understand and express Chinese and Western cultural differences through comparative translation, and cultivating students’ ability to solve practical problems through real communicative tasks.

From the perspective of textbook structure analysis, each unit of this book is divided into six parts: Learning objectives, Opening up, Listening to the world, Speaking for communication, Further practice in listening, and Wrapping up. A large proportion of cross-culture elements are demonstrated in the part of “Listening to the world” as this part intends to present the diversity of different fields in the world.

#### 5.1.1 Learning objectives

In the first part of the Learning Objectives, the textbook provides clear, specific, measurable learning objectives to help students clarify their learning focus and facilitate self-assessment. Among all the objectives listed in the textbook, few

mentions the cultivation of cross-cultural competence; rather, it is more about self-reflection and exploration. For example, in Unit 7, “Time of Technology: A Blessing or a Curse” the learning objective is to talk about technology around us, without involving cross-cultural research.

#### 5.1.2 Opening Up

The second part, “Opening Up” introduces unit themes in a vivid manner through images, tests, discussions, and more, aiming to stimulate students’ interest and encourage them to delve deeper into and discuss the themes. It also includes famous quotes, such as using Aristotle’s quote in the first unit - “we learn by doing” to initiate discussions on learning within that unit. This method helps students understand and encounter different cultural concepts and values, thus enhancing their cross-cultural sensitivity and comprehension. Each of the eight units in the book respectively uses quotes from different countries to guide the target topics.

#### 5.1.3 Listening to the World

The third part, “Listening to the World” selects BBC audio and video materials, designs various listening and speaking activities, and provides listening skill explanations to effectively enhance students’ English listening skills. This part is further divided into three subsections: Sharing, Listening, and Viewing. In the Sharing section, BBC street interview videos are used to design around unit themes. The interviewees talk about personal experiences or express their views on specific topics, providing language models and sharing viewpoints for students. Through this activity, students can learn about different cultural knowledge; for example, in the second unit, the textbook describes the culture and history of Istanbul, Turkey through street interview videos. The listening section utilizes original audio materials in various forms, including dialogues, stories, interviews, lectures, and radio programs. This is followed by related listening exercises. The viewing section incorporates original foreign video materials to showcase the diversity of the world and various cultures, enabling students to perceive social phenomena and unique characteristics of different regions, and to help students broaden their

perspectives, enhance cultural understanding, and improve their communication skills. These designs help students understand the differences in cultures, and serve as materials for cross-cultural teaching.

#### 5.1.4 Speaking for Communication

The fourth part, "Speaking for Communication" is designed to improve students' oral abilities based on rich language input materials, through various oral activities and detailed explanations of oral strategies. This section consists of four subsections: Imitation (Books 1-2), Discussion, Role-play, and Public Speaking (Books 3-4).

In the Imitation (Books 1-2) part, authentic and commonly used oral expressions are selected from the original audio and video materials in the Listening to the World section, and recordings of British and American pronunciations are provided for students to imitate and practice, correcting pronunciation and optimizing intonation. By experiencing the differences between British and American English pronunciations, students gain insights into the distinctions between the two English-speaking countries, contributing to cross-cultural education.

The "Role-play" section involves scenario designs based on daily life situations, using original listening materials as input to stimulate speaking. This helps students organize their thoughts and improve their oral expression abilities. The textbook provides themes for students to perform scenarios from different perspectives, promoting cross-cultural education. However, this part overly emphasizes foreign culture, neglecting traditional Chinese culture, making cross-cultural education challenging. While students learn about cross-cultural communication and interaction between different foreign nationals through scenarios, they overlook Chinese traditional culture. For example, in the scripts of this part in Unit 2, there is no trace of Chinese culture, as it portrays a tourist asking for directions in a foreign city's carnival. This pattern is consistent across all eight units of this part. The section on group discussion adopts the approach of group activity tasks, guiding students to actively participate and cultivate innovative thinking and team consciousness through the activity process of

"material input, task decomposition, common discussion, and cooperative output".

This section should be the easiest to achieve cross-cultural education, but the themes in the textbook are more neutral, and the cross-cultural knowledge content in the materials is not obvious. For example, in the first unit, this section lists three articles on teaching methods: "learn by listening" (the teaching case of Stsiner school), "starting young" (Suzuki method), and "homeschooling" (British unemployed children). These three different regional teaching methods can easily be designed for cross-cultural education, but the teaching tips provided by the textbook are: "You can ask students to search for more information about different learning/teaching methods online, and then analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each method based on the information they get." There is no discussion about culture, but more about supplementing and discussing the topics. The cross-cultural education in this section of the textbook is insufficient. This section should involve the collaboration of student groups, taking on the roles of different countries, to engage in cultural exchanges around given themes. Taking the first unit as an example, the textbook lists different teaching methods, including those from Japan, England, and the United States. This provides an opportunity to guide teachers to pay attention to the differences in culture, and to help students understand the local thinking patterns and cultural characteristics through the teaching methods from different regions.

In the "Public Speaking" section (Books 3-4), the format of "explaining an example and then practicing" is used to teach students how to prepare speeches, use body language, and capture the audience's attention, aiming to train students' public speaking skills and academic abilities and to enhance their language application skills at a higher level. This approach can cultivate students' English public speaking abilities. In this module of the textbook, multiple ways of expressing the same purpose are provided, enriching students' means of expression and reducing communication barriers when facing unfamiliar cultural environments. This part of the textbook contains certain cross-cultural educational designs.

### 5.1.5 Further practice in listening

The fifth part, "Further practice in listening", includes three exercises: short conversations, long conversations, and passages. It provides rich listening materials related to the unit theme, gradually improving listening skills from levels 1 to 4. This section uses dialogues to cultivate cross-cultural competence. For example, in the "time out" long conversation in unit three, the conversation discusses the cultural characteristics of the 1960s: short skirts, bright colors, and bell-bottom jeans!

### 5.1.6 Wrapping up

The sixth part, "Wrapping up", corresponds to the learning objectives of this unit, making it convenient for students to examine their learning, reflect on the learning process, and cultivate habits of self-assessment and self-improvement. As the final part of a unit, it serves more as a summary, with no involvement in cross-cultural teaching content.

The analysis of the content organization of the unit shows that the textbook sets cultivating students' language skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating, as well as increasing knowledge, expanding horizons, enhancing abilities, and improving cultural literacy as the overall objectives of textbook writing. The aim is to help students effectively enhance their communicative abilities through thematic content, vocabulary distribution, exercise forms, etc., and

also guide students to identify diverse cultures, compare different cultures, delve into issues, and become high-quality talents with international perspectives and innovative spirits. The specific unit themes, structures, and design purposes are shown in Table 1. The analysis reveals that although each unit has a culture notes section in the "Listening to the world" module, the presentation of cultural topics that flash by in conversations is not ideal. For example, in the BBC interview in the first unit's "Listening to the world", out of fourteen sentences in the dialogue, only two mention the knowledge points from the culture notes section of this module. Out of a total of 195 words, words related to culture notes only appear twice, showing that the presentation of cross-cultural content is not prominent. The culture notes in this unit mention two cultural knowledge points, namely Swahili and kayaking. In the interview, there is only one sentence about Swahili, "I'm studying Swahili." Despite the use of authentic BBC interviews in the textbook, with abundant real language data, the cultural information is fragmented, with limited relevant content, making it difficult to achieve the goal of fostering cross-cultural competence. More specifically, the textbook is consistent in unit structure and actual content arrangement, with each unit having a "culture notes" section to supplement students' cross-cultural knowledge. In terms of unit content distribution, the cultivation of cross-cultural abilities is embedded in both "Listening to the world" and "Speaking for communication".

Table 5-1 Unit structure and module content in the textbook

Unit topic	Unit structure	Purpose of design
1. Life is a learning curve	Learning objectives	Present clear, specific and measurable learning objectives to help students clarify their learning priorities and facilitate students' self-evaluation
2. Journeyer into the unknown		
3. Time out	Opening up	Introduce unit topics in vivid forms such as pictures, tests, and discussions
4. Life under the spotlight	Listening to the world	BBC audio and video materials are selected to design rich listening and speaking activities, supplemented by listening skills explanation, to effectively improve students' English listening skills
5. Urban pulse		
6. Climbing the career		

ladder 7. Time of technology: A blessing or a curse	Speaking for communication	Based on rich language input materials, oral activities are designed with detailed oral strategy explanation to improve students' oral ability
8. Discovering your true identity	Further practice in listening	Provide rich listening materials related to the topic of the unit, and improve listening skills step by step through practice
	Wrapping up	It is consistent with the Learning objectives of this unit, so as to facilitate students to examine their learning situation, reflect on the learning process, and cultivate the habit of self-evaluation and self-improvement

In addition to the textbook, a synchronous online platform called “Unipus” is provided accordingly with the purpose of helping with students’ autonomous learning, enhancing interaction between teachers and students, and provide multiple ways of assessment. Corresponding to the textbook, Unipus provides additional resources for listening and speaking in addition to the identical parts with the textbook, among which two sections “Talk about China” and “View the world” focus on the ideological and moral education, and at the same time cater to the goal of cross-cultural communication. “Talk about China” provides a video or audio materials about the relevant Chinese traditional culture or development, while “View the world” offers materials from the perspective of the global culture or development. In the two sections, the online platform provides ideological and moral education resources related to the topics of the different units, which precisely make up for the lack of Chinese local culture in terms of the cross-cultural aspects, thus making it complementary with the physical textbooks. Although the two sections are not closely connected in its design, by utilizing the online platform, students can gradually form a comparative view between the Chinese culture and the foreign culture, thus acquiring cross-cultural awareness subconsciously. Additionally, teachers can reorganize and integrate textbook content based on the speaking topics, combining relatively isolated small topics into a more macroscopic one, which can better stimulate students' thinking depth and breadth, significantly enhancing the cultivation of cross-cultural competence in teaching materials.

## 5.2 Effects of cross-cultural content presentation in New Horizon Listening

In cross-cultural studies, different cultural perspectives often require the use of various research methods. The cultural analysis in the current textbook employs multiple methods such as quantitative content analysis, symbolic analysis, critical discourse analysis with content analysis aligning closely with the cultural elements under consideration. Establishing a cultural analytical framework by defining coding frameworks across four dimensions is crucial when using content analysis to examine cultural elements in the textbook: cultural classification by country, cultural classification by level, determination of cultural themes and determination of presentation pathways (Li, 2023). This article will also analyze cross-cultural elements based on these four dimensions and the framework constructed in Chart 3-1.

### 5.2.1 Analysis of cross-cultural elements from country distribution

*New Horizon Listening and Speaking* textbooks typically contain scenarios and dialogues from various cultural backgrounds, which may include English-speaking countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, as well as cultural elements from non-English-speaking countries. Through this design, students can learn different English accents and usages while gaining insight into the uniqueness of various cultures within specific contexts. Cortazzi & Jin (1999) categorize the cultural perspective represented in textbooks into source culture (local culture), target language culture (English native language culture), and

international culture (mentioning specific countries that are neither local nor target language cultures). Building on this, Rashidi & Meihami (2016) introduce the concept of culture neutral, referring to cultures that do not fall into the previous three categories, without specific national affiliations.

This paper will make statistics on the countries involved in the textbook with reference to their theories, and include them in the following table: The words that show regional culture in the listening materials and dialogue training of the textbook are counted once.

Table 5-2 Regional culture distribution in the textbook

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
local culture	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
English native language culture	6	5	3	10	9	6	2	5
international culture	6	9	10	2	7	3	1	0
Cultural neutrality	3	3	4	0	1	2	4	1

In each unit of the textbook, regardless of the topic, there will always be cross-cultural content. However, different topics will result in varying cultural frequencies. For instance, in the second unit, "Journey into the Unknown", the material lists a wide range of natural and cultural heritages from different regions, hence the frequency of international culture is higher. On the other hand, in the fourth unit, "Life under the Spotlight", the material extensively features British and American celebrities such as Obama, Misha Barton, and Raynulf Fainss. Overall, through the frequency analysis, it is evident that there is a minimal presence of local culture, with students primarily focusing on learning about British and American cultures, thereby not meeting the intended cross-cultural teaching objectives of the textbook.

there are marked differences in the political culture between democratic and authoritarian countries, affecting citizens' political participation and societal attitudes. Different political systems lead to varying degrees of economic development and economic structures, which significantly influence culture.

### 5.2.2 Analysis of the cross-cultural elements from content design

Historical events and processes shape a country's or region's cultural identity and values. For example, colonial history has a profound impact on the culture of many countries. The geographical environment also determines people's livelihood, social structures, and relationship with the natural environment, thereby influencing the formation and development of culture.

According to the *Framework of Reference for cross-cultural Competence Teaching in China's Foreign Language Education* (Zhang&Wu, 2022), cross-cultural competence cultivation should cover knowledge mainly in the field of politics and economy, history and geography, lifestyle habits, literature and art, as well as knowledge related to globalization.

Literary works serve as important carriers of culture, reflecting the thoughts, values, and emotions of specific societies. For instance, Shakespeare's plays and Chinese classical literature embody the essence of different cultures. Art forms such as painting, music, and dance are not only expressions of culture but also crucial mediums for cross-cultural exchange.

Cross-cultural elements should encompass political economy, historical geography, literature and art, lifestyle habits, and globalization. The political systems and policies of different countries and regions deeply influence culture. For instance,

In terms of lifestyle habits, different dietary habits reflect a region's agricultural production methods, climate conditions, and social customs. For example, the rice culture in Asia contrasts with the bread culture in Europe. Social etiquette in different cultures, such as greeting customs and gift-giving practices, reflects societal values and interpersonal relationship patterns.

Cross-cultural understanding signifies the era of globalization and internationalization, embracing

the concept of a shared human destiny and advocating for national participation in international cooperation and global governance.

The following part is the analysis of the cross-cultural elements of the textbook in terms of politics and economy, history and geography, literature and art, lifestyle habits, and globalization:

Table 5-3 Cultural theme distribution in the textbook

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
Political economy	1	1	0	0	1	2	1	0
Historical geography	1	5	2	1	3	5	2	3
Literature and art	4	3	3	1	2	3	4	2
Living habits	5	2	4	3	4	4	5	3
Globalization	1	3	1	3	2	2	4	1

Moreover, the analysis highlights a notable concentration on lifestyle habits and literature and art within the cross-cultural elements of the textbook. This emphasis signifies a deliberate focus on these aspects, while other domains such as politics and economy, history and geography, and globalization exhibit a comparatively lower emphasis in the material.

### 5.2.3 Analysis of cross-cultural elements from exercise design

In reference to the theoretical framework (Chart 3-1), a cross-cultural teaching activity design should encompass three aspects: national identity, global mindedness, and cross-cultural exploration.

National identity concerns the development of students' individual cultural identity. Reflected in the design of teaching activities, it aims to provide students with opportunities to engage with and learn about foreign cultures, compare Chinese and foreign cultures, encourage exploration of the profound Chinese culture, and nurture a strong identification with Chinese culture.

Global mindedness is essential for global citizenship education, guiding students to appreciate the diversity of world cultures, understand common human values, grasp the significance of building a community of shared future for mankind, address global issues, and prepare for future participation in global

The vocabulary that appears in the listening materials and dialogues of the textbook that reflect these categories will be recorded in the table once.

Based on the table, it is evident that the cross-cultural elements in this textbook focus more on lifestyle habits and literature and art, with some lack of emphasis on other aspects.

governance on behalf of their country.

Inter-cultural exploration demands students to autonomously learn and explore culture issues. Due to time constraints in foreign language classroom teaching, it is impossible to cover all knowledge and skills comprehensively. Therefore, in the design of cross-cultural capability teaching activities, emphasis should be placed on cultivating students' ability to autonomously explore, reflect, and innovate in cross-cultural learning. For instance, the "Wrapping Up" segment of teaching activities is aimed at developing students' cross-cultural exploration skills.

The textbook's six teaching activity sections— Learning Objectives, Opening Up, Listening to the World, Speaking for Communication, Further Practice in Listening, and Wrapping Up— focus more on global mindedness for global citizenship education and cross-cultural exploration, with some shortcomings in addressing the fundamental aspect of national identity. While in the synchronous electric version, two parts called "World Story" and "China Talk" are specially added as the moral education elements, which can well serve the cross-cultural purpose of national identity and global mindedness.

In terms of activity design, most activities focus on practice of language practice and some open-ended questions and complicated tasks are

also designed to stimulate students' interest, activate their creativity, and cultivate their critical thinking abilities, with some emphasis on cross-cultural communication. The following table is a list of activities in each section and their

demonstration of the cross-cultural competence cultivation in terms of the three dimensions: national identity, global mindedness and cross-cultural exploration.

Table 5-4 Cross-cultural skills design in the physical textbook

	Blank filling	Multiple choices	Questions	Role play	Group discussion	Presentation
national identity	Unit 2 (P29)	Unit 2 (P25)	Unit 5 (P81)	Unit 6 (P100)	Unit 5 (P85)	Unit 2 (P20)
global mindedness	Unit 5 (P79)			Unit 7 (P118)		
cross-cultural exploration			Unit 5 (74)	Unit 4 (64)		

In Unit 5, "Urban Pulse", there is a clear demonstration of cross-cultural content during the activity where students listen to dialogues and fill in a form. Three dialogues describe three cities and compare Dubai, Tokyo, and Sydney using a table, fostering students' global perspectives. This case is a typical example in the textbook where cross-cultural content is combined with language skill teaching design.

However, it should be noted that not all exercises aim to develop cross-cultural competence. Referring to the table above, it can be seen that there are many blanks. The exercises in these units focus more on simple language skill training. The main reason for this phenomenon is that even though cross-cultural competence can be developed through various activities, the design that most clearly achieves this is often closely related to the unit's theme.

Taking the activity on page 79 where students listen to dialogues and fill in a form as an example,

this part is cleverly integrated with the theme of Unit 5, achieving the teaching goal of developing cross-cultural competence. However, in different units, due to varying topics, the integration with cross-cultural aspects differs, and consequently, the development of cross-cultural competence that can be achieved varies. For instance, in Unit 1, "Life is a Learning Curve", this part focuses more on the development of language skill techniques.

### 5.3 Questionnaire analysis

The first question assessing students' English proficiency in 237 valid questionnaires revealed that 199 individuals were at College English Level 4, accounting for 83.97%; 15.61% are at College English Level 6; 0.42% is at Professional English Level 4; and nobody is at Professional English Level 8. This aligns with the main research focus of the questionnaire: the overall English proficiency of students at Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology taking Listening and Speaking courses, validating the data of the questionnaire.

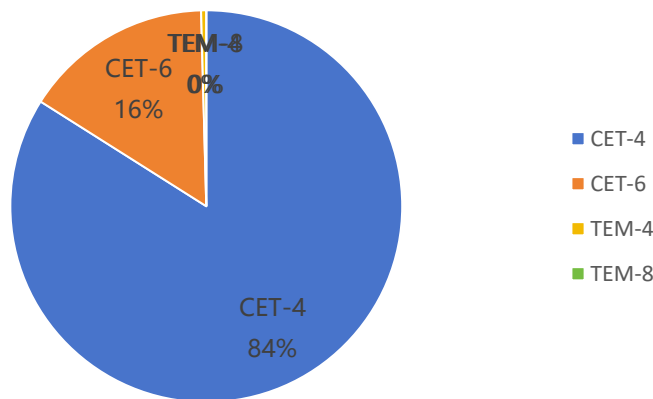


Chart 5-1 Q1 English proficiency distribution

The third question investigated the cross-cultural willingness of the respondents. Option B and C are close in its proportion, taking up the largest part, while Option A and D only constitute 4% and 5% respectively. It shows that the

majority of individuals are not opposed to engaging in cross-cultural communication; rather, most students are willing to engage in cross-cultural exchanges.

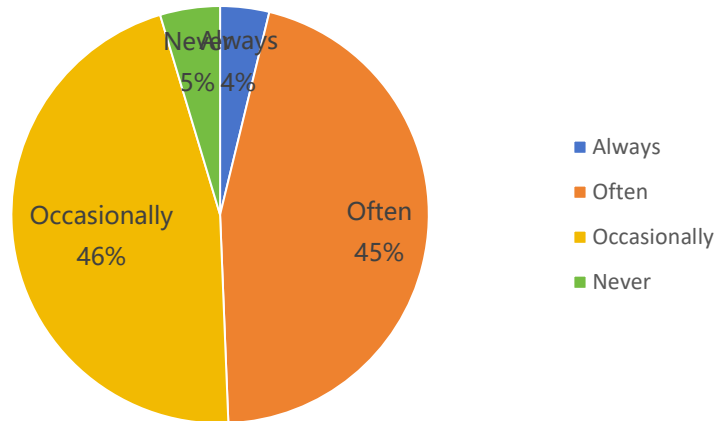


Chart 5-2 Q3 Willingness to talk with foreigners

The second and fourth questions aimed to explore whether the respondents had engaged in cross-cultural activities and their cross-cultural demands. Starting from Question 5 to 17, all the five options range from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. The result of Question 2 reveals that almost 90% students have little interaction with native speakers of English, while Question 4 shows that approximately three fourths of them don’t have overseas travel experience. The figures indicate that despite the willingness shown in the data of the

third question to engage in cross-cultural contact with foreign friends, the actual frequency of interactions with foreign friends is limited due to real-life constraints. Additionally, in daily life, most individuals do not have significant cross-cultural demands, which appears to be a reason why students are not actively learning cross-cultural skills. This is also evident in questions 12 and 17 where students' cross-cultural abilities are notably lacking.

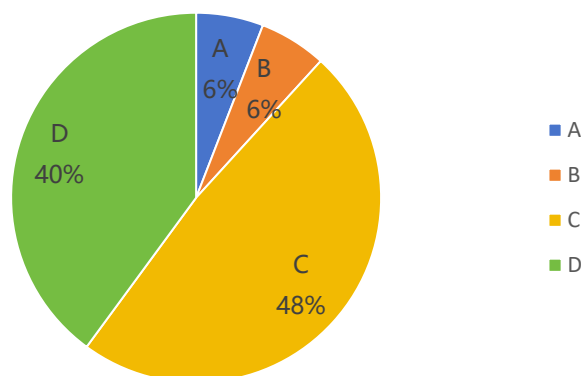


Chart 5-3 Q2 Frequency of communication with foreigners

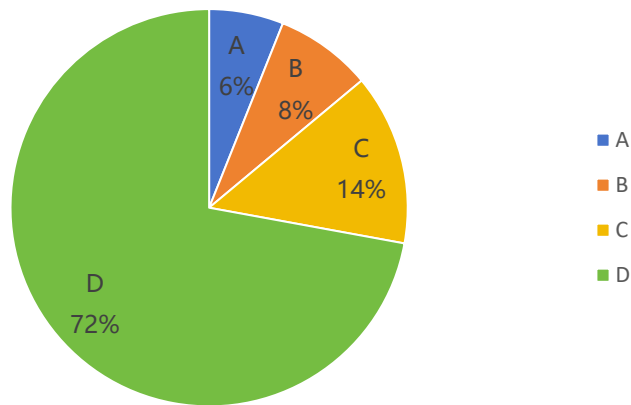


Chart 5-4 Q4 Frequency of overseas travelling

Questions 12 and 17 are related with students' ability to explain Chinese culture to foreigners, which is a crucial goal in cross-cultural communication. The results, however, show that a large percentage of the respondents (80% and 61% respectively) don't have the confidence to talk

about Chinese culture in English. It can be observed that even though students have learned some theoretical knowledge on cross-cultural aspects and possessed cross-cultural awareness to some extent, completing cross-cultural tasks remains a significant challenge.

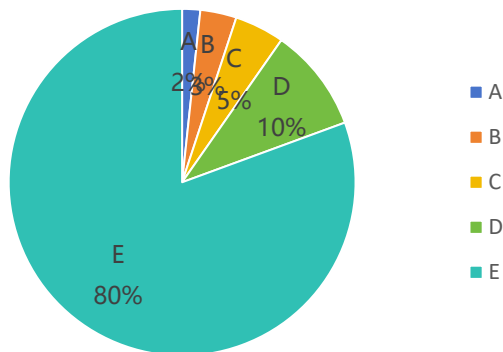


Chart 5-6 Q17 Effects of simulated dialogues

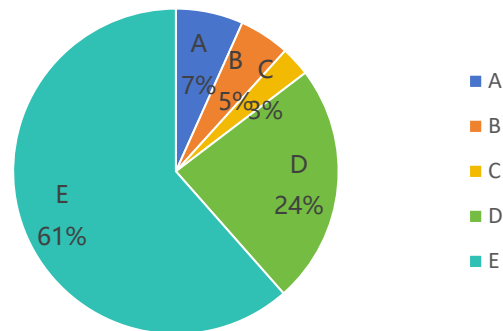


Chart 5-5 Q12 Effects of textbook study

The 5th, 6th, and 7th questions analyze students' grasp of specific cross-cultural content in textbooks through specific cases. The three questions revolve around Unit 1, and the questions 5, 6 and 7 are all about the specific design of cross-cultural content in the textbook of Unit 1. Question five asks about the Mbira, question six about Swahili, and question seven about Brazilian culture. Results show that around 90% of the

respondents still don't know about Swahili. Question 7 reveals that about 80% don't acquire the culture knowledge about Brazil. This indicates that students generally can grasp the cross-cultural knowledge points in the textbooks, showing that the reason for the poor performance in cross-cultural abilities is not due to the foreign cultural knowledge points in the textbooks.

Table 5-5 Students' understanding of specific cross-cultural knowledge

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Question 5	48	20.2%	170	71.7%	6	2.5%	5	2.1%	8	3.3%
Question 6	51	21.5%	116	48.9%	43	18.1%	17	7.1%	10	4.2%
Question 7	2	0.8%	15	6.3%	178	75.1%	10	4.2%	32	13.5%

Questions 8, 10, and 11 aim to understand whether the respondents comprehend the meaning of cross-culturalism and the necessary theoretical knowledge. In question nine, differences in expression were identified; question ten inquired about understanding cultural differences; question eleven asked about cross-cultural art, investigating from the dimensions of discovery, understanding, and application. The table clearly shows that as the investigation deepens, the level of identification

also declines. It is evident that the data is concentrated on option Strongly agree, indicating that for the majority of students, understanding different cultural points and the necessary skills for cross-culturalism can be achieved through textbook learning and teacher instruction on cross-cultural education. This once again demonstrates that the poor presentation of cross-cultural competence is not due to the foreign cultural knowledge points in the teaching materials.

Table 5-6 Students' comprehension of cross-cultural knowledge

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Question 8	158	66.6%	50	21%	6	2.5%	7	2.9%	16	6.7%
Question 10	156	65.8%	48	20.2%	9	3.7%	11	4.6%	13	5.4%
Question 11	126	53.1%	87	36.7%	10	4.2%	11	4.6%	3	1.2%

Questions 13, 14, and 15 focus on studying the impact of different teaching designs on students' cross-cultural competence. It is apparent that different teaching design elements have varying effects on students' cross-cultural competence development, indicating that students' perception

at the design level is not as strong as in questions 8, 10, and 11. In terms of teaching design, the data predominantly favors option B, highlighting that the instructional activity design for cultivating cross-cultural competence in the teaching materials is inadequate.

Table 5-7 The impact of cross-cultural teaching design

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Question 13	146	61.6%	70	29.5%	9	3.7%	5	2.1%	7	2.9%
Question 14	32	13.5%	130	54.8%	50	21%	17	7.1%	8	3.3%
Question 15	163	68.7%	56	23.6%	5	2.1%	8	3.3%	5	2.1%

Question 16 serves as a control group with Question 15, presenting the evaluation of the effectiveness of the group simulation dialogues, which are the most effective in fostering cross-cultural competencies. A clear comparison with Question 15 reveals that group simulation dialogues are more effective in cultivating

cross-cultural competencies. This further illustrates the differential impact of various teaching design elements on fostering students' cross-cultural competencies, indicating that the lack of designed teaching activities is a primary reason for the poor presentation of cross-cultural competencies in the material.

Table 5-8 Effects of group simulation dialogues

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Question 15	5	2.1%	5	2.1%	5	2.1%	5	2.1%	5	2.1%
Question 16	99	41.7%	95	40%	19	8%	10	4.2%	14	5.9%

In the questionnaire, it is evident that there are issues with the presentation of the cross-cultural competence development of the textbook. Questions 12 and 17 reveal that students have negative perceptions about their ability to engage in cross-cultural communication. Despite the presence of cross-cultural educational cultivation in the textbook, at the students' perception level, they only perceive differences in cultures and still remain distant from being able to truly engage in cross-cultural interactions. Moreover, the textbook falls short in addressing some cultural differences. For instance, in questions 5, 6, and 7, and in the first unit's cross-cultural knowledge points related to foreign musical instruments and languages, students demonstrate a stronger cross-cultural perception compared to their understanding of cultural connotations. Questions 8, 10, and 11 indicate that although students are willing to engage in cross-cultural activities, the materials provided by the textbook limit their ability to develop their own cross-cultural competence.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This chapter aims to summarize the findings of this study, the limitations and implications of this paper, and suggestions for further research. The main conclusions of this chapter come from text analysis and quantitative analysis.

### 6.1 Main Findings

The presence of cross-cultural content in this textbook is evident. Data collected from the text and exercises indicate that the textbook aims to help students understand other cultures through storytelling and various forms of activities. However, analysis of student surveys on the use of this textbook shows that the effectiveness of its cross-cultural content is inadequate. Students are able to perceive different cultures through the textbook but struggle with actual cross-cultural communication. The textbook includes exercises

such as listening activities, simulated dialogues, group discussion and presentation, but these mainly focus on language skills of listening and speaking rather than developing cross-cultural competence. As revealed by the survey, students, despite developing cross-cultural awareness, are unable to articulate Chinese culture in front of foreign friends through learning with the textbook. The cultivation of cross-cultural competence is insufficient, as the instruction in the textbook only achieves the goal of cross-linguistic teaching, not the target of cross-cultural education.

Firstly, in terms of the breadth and depth of content, the textbook covers cultural cases from different countries and regions. However, in terms of depth, it may focus on some superficial aspects of certain cultures, lacking exploration of deeper cultural values and beliefs.

Secondly, from a practical perspective, the cross-cultural knowledge and skills provided by the textbook may not be directly applicable to everyday cross-cultural communication and solving real-world problems. Although the textbook offers some practical cross-cultural communication strategies and tips, it does not help students avoid cultural conflicts and communicate effectively in practice.

From the perspective of interactivity and engagement, the textbook includes a variety of interactive exercises and activities such as case studies, group discussions, role-plays, which can enhance student engagement and interest. If supplemented with cross-cultural guidance, it can greatly help achieve the goal of developing cross-cultural competence.

In terms of cultural sensitivity and inclusivity, while the textbook clearly aims to promote cross-cultural understanding, in some cases, descriptions of specific cultures may not be so comprehensive, and the activities designed may stay superficial in terms of cross-cultural

competence dimensions mentioned in the framework, therefore requiring more specific information presented and more complicated cross-cultural activities designed.

“*New Horizon Listening*” is a widely used English teaching material that has different degrees of advantages and limitations in terms of cross-cultural content. Its diverse content and interactive activities play a positive role in enhancing students’ cross-cultural communication skills, but there may still be room for improvement in terms of content depth, cultural sensitivity, and inclusivity. Encouraging teachers to combine external resources and activities to deepen students’ understanding and application of cross-cultural knowledge when using this material, while updating and optimizing the content in a timely manner to reflect the diversity and dynamic changes of global cultures, is key to improving teaching effectiveness.

## 6.2 The significance of the findings

The results of this study clearly indicate that there is an imbalance in the design proportion of cross-cultural content in textbooks, with a focus mainly on introducing English and American cultures, providing an overview of other cultures rather than genuine cross-cultural education. For teachers using this textbook for cross-cultural teaching, additional adjustments should be made in classroom design. It is essential to specifically select or develop concrete cross-cultural communication case studies from the textbook, organize students to analyze cultural differences, communication barriers, and resolution strategies within these case studies. Activities such as group presentations or reports can be designed to well integrate the listening and speaking skills with the cross-cultural elements. Cross-cultural communication training can also be conducted based on textbook topics, using texts or scenarios from the textbook as a starting point for enhancing cross-cultural communication skills through scenario simulations. By selecting suitable dialogues or situations from the textbook, teachers .

Attempt different communication strategies across various cultural contexts. As a leading textbook for college English listening and speaking

course, the cross-cultural teaching goals can be achieved with better selection of culture-related materials and better design of the various activities incorporating cross-cultural competence into the English listening and speaking skills.

## 6.3 Limitations of this study

Some limitations of the study are obvious. The quantitative analysis in this paper lacks depth, making it challenging to provide a more objective and measurable assessment of the teaching effectiveness of the textbook. In terms of qualitative analysis, advanced softwares such as ATLAS.ti, Nvivo and MAXQDA can be used to more accurately and scientifically evaluate the cross-culture elements in the textbook. Additionally, there is a lack of comparative analysis; it does not compare “*New Horizon Listening*” with other similar English textbooks to understand its relative strengths and weaknesses in terms of cross-cultural teaching content. Through comparative analysis, a more comprehensive evaluation of the market position and teaching value of the textbook can be achieved. Furthermore, this set of textbooks consists of multiple volumes, but this study only examines one volume, which is not comprehensive enough.

Moreover, there is a lack of teacher feedback; the article does not mention teachers’ actual experiences and feedback on the textbook. Teachers, as the main users of the textbook, provide crucial feedback for assessing its practicality and acceptability. Including their feedback can make the assessment results more comprehensive and aligned with actual teaching scenarios. With the advancement of technology and evolving educational concepts, the digitization of textbooks and online resources are becoming increasingly important. The evaluation does not mention whether the textbook provides online resources and auxiliary tools, and how these resources can be utilized to optimize cross-cultural teaching. Examining these factors can provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the suitability and effectiveness of the textbook in today’s digital teaching environment.

## 6.4 Recommendations for further research

In order to further improve the accuracy of research results, future studies could involve

in-depth interviews with teachers and students from different backgrounds to more effectively evaluate the cross-cultural content presentation effects of the textbook. Advanced softwares can be applied to present a well-organized evaluation based on grounded theory. Additionally, designing more tests to assess students' cross-cultural competence will better evaluate the cross-cultural content presentation effects of the listening, speaking, and reading materials. Furthermore, comparing this textbook with other similar ones in the market would allow for analysis of its strengths and weaknesses in terms of content, teaching methods, and cross-cultural communication design.

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