



Analyzing High School English Textbooks in Japan and Korea

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Abstract

It cannot be denied that intercultural understanding is and communication activities are crucial in the process of learning English at elementary school, junior high school, high school, and so on. This paper analyzes the high school English textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (henceforth, MEXT) in Japan and Korea from the perspective of intercultural understanding and communication activities. It elucidates the types of the articles, the countries the materials deal with, the purposes of the materials, and the numbers of four communicative activities. Then it discusses the characteristics of those issues. The result of the research shows the materials contain various kinds of categories, many articles concerning English-speaking countries. Furthermore, there are some differences between the Japanese textbooks and the Korean textbooks that were examined. For example, the Japanese textbooks contain many cultures of their own, while the Korean ones contain fewer cultures of their own. Finally, the paper suggests the future direction of the materials in order to facilitate the better intercultural understanding and communication activities in the global world.

Keywords: textbook, cultural understanding, communication activities

INTRODUCTION

The Japanese educational system and the Korean educational one have been similar in some points for many decades. As Kawai (2004) points out those points, there have been some common points such as a history of the school curriculums and the government policy in English education. Therefore, it is quite valuable to compare English education at Japanese high school with English education at Korean high school through the English textbooks. Some findings can be expected by comparing the Japanese textbooks and the Korean textbooks. The comparative research will give us some insight into our view of the Japanese textbooks.

Guidance of the ministry concerning the Japanese high schools is revised for the first time in about ten years, and the textbooks based on the new government guidelines for teaching have been used since 2013 at high schools all around Japan. The overall objective in English education is described as follows by the government guidelines. The Courses of Study (2010) says that the objective is to develop students' communication abilities such as accurately understanding and appropriately conveying information,

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ideas, etc., deepening their understanding of language and culture, fostering a positive attitude toward communication through foreign languages. Therefore it is essential to consider the elements and topics of culture issues in the textbooks and communicative activities because one of the objectives is to deepen students' understanding language and culture and develop students' communicative abilities through English such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Studies of English textbooks

Various quantitative and qualitative studies of English textbooks have been performed from various perspectives in various countries (e.g. Alptekin, 1993; Martin Cortazzi & Lixian Jin, 1999; Chakravati, 2008; Recorari et al., 2012; Weninger & Kiss, 2013). Aleptekin (1993) presents the topic of the White House frequently treated in the American textbooks. Recorari et al. (2012) investigated attitudes of over 1,000 students at three Swedish universities toward English language textbooks in tertiary education and discussed implications for the English as a foreign language as a second language classroom. In this way, the importance of the English textbooks has been debated and discussed for a long period, although situations or styles in which students learn English differ from country to country. Weninger and Kiss (2013) states that reflexive involvement with cultural information and representation is insufficient if the purpose of foreign language learning is to foster intercultural citizenship and a critical understanding of their own culture and other cultures in a global world, and have presented a semiotic framework that stresses the meaning potential that image, text, and task produce in teaching material.

As to the English textbooks in Japan, Hino (1988) pointed out the tendency of the Japanese English textbooks. He stated that the Japanese Government had employed many American topics for a long period except the second world war because Japan followed the American style in multiple ways. Schneeer (2007) also indicated the strong effect of the political power on the information of English textbooks used at Japanese schools. In this way numerous researches have been performed concerning the subject matters treated in the English textbooks under the previous government guidelines in Japan. It can be summarized as follows about tendencies of the subject matters which high school level English textbook have treated.

In the field of the cultural topics expressed in high school English textbooks in Japan, some findings were reported. First, many articles about daily life are contained in the English textbooks of high school (Muroi, 1999; Muroi 2004; Yamanaka, 2004). According to Yamanaka (2004), as a result of investigating ten English textbooks used at high school and classifying the information presented in the textbooks into the cultural categories, it was reported that about half of the lessons treated the contents about daily life. Second, many English-speaking countries, such as Britain, the United States, and Australia were frequently taken in the lessons (Muroi, 1999; Muroi 2004; Yamanaka, 2006). For instance, Muroi (2004) examined top ten high school English

textbooks of an adoption rate and stated that 24 % of the textbooks treated those countries. Yamanaka (2006) analyzed nine of a junior high school English textbooks (*Crown* 1-3, *New Horizon* 1-3, and *Sunshine* 1-3) and 10 textbooks of English I used at high school, and stated many of the subject articles and words concerning English-speaking countries, such as the United States, Britain, and Australia were expressed in those textbooks. Thirdly, Takeda et al. (2006) stated there were clear different levels in vocabulary between the Japanese English textbooks for the Japanese third grade students and the ones for the Japanese high school students who have the first grade, while there are not such differences in the Korean English textbooks. Lastly, so Japanese utterance and articles about Japan were described in the Japanese high school textbooks. The fact was reported in the results of Muroi (1999), Muroi (2004), and Yamanaka (2006).

Teaching of Culture and Communicative Activities in EFL classes

Cultural issues and communicative tasks have been debated and discussed for many decades in not only in Japan but also in other countries. Byran (1990) indicated four components in teaching culture; language learning, language awareness, cultural awareness, and cultural experience. He insisted that balance and cohesion of the four components should be crucial because they are supportive elements for each other. Seelye (1985) suggested seven goals of cultural instruction such as the sense, functionality, cultural conditioned behavior and interaction of language and social variables and some tips in teaching cultural issues in the classroom according to cultural backgrounds of the students. The factors of the seven goals in cultural teaching are required in the global world, so it is preferable to contain those elements in some materials or communicative activities in the textbooks in a global context.

In Japan, the guideline of the ministry says that one of the purposes of English Education is to deepen intercultural understanding and improve communicative abilities of English. As is mentioned before, as regard to materials, teachers should take up topics that lead to deepen the intercultural understanding and lead to communicative activities. Furthermore, it is important to facilitate positive attitudes toward communication through English, although it is often said that many Japanese students at high school are very bad at speaking English.

Cultural Materials for Japanese and Korean EFL Learners

It is true that the English textbooks have main sources for teaching cultural issues all over the world. It is clear that those materials can have great effects on students learning English and direct those students in some forms. The importance of contents of those textbooks earns students a high priority in the EFL classroom. The present investigation attempts to gain more specific and valuable information for teaching cultural issues in the EFL environment. A better understanding of English textbooks used at Japanese high schools and Korea high schools may assist EFL teachers and curriculum materials' designers to provide English teaching materials that suit English learners not only in Japan but also in other countries.

Cortazzi and Jin (1999) represents three types of cultural information: target cultural materials, source cultural material, and international target cultural materials. These factors will be examined as the purposes for the cultural materials. McKay (2000) suggested the implication for cultural materials in the classroom. She states that selections of contents depend on the background and goals of the students and teacher, but in EFL contexts like Japan, contents provide students with the chance to learn more about their own culture and master English to explain culture to others.

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In this paper based on these considerations, the materials were examined in terms of intercultural understanding and communication activities. The definition "intercultural understanding" is defined along with the government guidelines for teaching in this paper. Five of the present textbooks in Japan and Korea are chosen to analyze from a viewpoint of cross-cultural understanding and communicative activities. Then the characteristics of the contents treated in the textbooks will be made clear in this research.

PURPOSE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

There are two main goals in this study. First, the present study aims to perform a comparative analysis of cultural materials shown in the main passage of English textbooks used in the course of English in Japan and Korea and find out differences and similarities between them. Second, the research aims to compare the exercises concerning communicative activities in Japan and Korea in terms of intended skills of exercises consisting of speaking, writing, reading, listening, and integrated abilities of them. The research task of this paper is to show clearly what kind of subject matters and communicative activities are seen in five of the Japanese and Korean textbooks by investigating those textbooks based on the present course of study. The following points are viewpoints of analysis for the research task. Research questions are shown as followings.

1. What fields of contents are presented in the cultural materials?
2. What regions are informed in the materials in terms of use of English?
3. What are the purposes of the materials treated in the textbooks for cultural learning?
4. What is the rate of concrete culture and abstract culture in the cultural subject matters for intercultural understanding?

5. How and to what extent are communicative activities presented in terms of intended skills of exercises made up of four skills such as reading, listening, writing, and speaking in the textbooks?

METHOD

Materials

In Japanese high schools, the English course for high school students is divided into seven subjects: Basic Communication English, Communication English I , II , III, English expressions I , II , and English conversation. The class of Communication English I is worth three credits. The objects applicable to analysis in this research are top five in sale of the high school English textbooks that are approved by MEXT in the course of Communication English I , and five Korean English high school textbooks that are taught in the subject of English I . This research focuses on the main passage in the materials and communicative activities or exercises shown in 5 Communication English I textbooks.

Procedures

The first research question is what kind of contents are treated in the cultural materials? The contents of the cultural articles were classified into the following twelve categories in Table 1.

Table 1. Cultural Categories and Content

Categories	Content
Manners and Customs	seasonal events / general customs
	the origins or meanings of events or behaviors
	viewpoints and thinking patterns of one culture
Daily Life	food / clothes / family life
	items related to daily affairs
Geography & History	climate / sightseeing places / traffic / industry
	historical explanation
	past events / historic events of one country
Natural Science	products / energy / scientific development
	information technology
Human Right	handicapped people / racial discrimination
	equality
Stories	novels / old legends
language and communication	languages / non-verbal communication / greeting
	facial expressions
School Life	classes / subjects / school events / conversation
	between student
environment	protection of the earth / pollution
	green energy
youth culture	anime / comic books

war	Stories concerning war / Past events in war
biography	Person's history

The second research question is about the number and the rate of the areas treated in the textbooks. The countries shown in the cultural materials are classified, which is based on the division suggested by Kachru (1990). Kachru (1990) suggest three areas concerning the use of English. In his division A is called Inner Circle, B is called Outer Circle, and C is called Expanding Circle. His division was adopted for the analysis of the second question. When one lesson contains two areas like A and B, it is counted as both points.

A. The countries in which English is used as a native language (Inner Circle and e.g. the United States, Britain, Australia, etc.)

B. The countries in which English is used as an official language (Outer Circle and e.g. Singapore, India, etc.)

C. The countries in which English is used as a foreign language (Expanding Circle and e.g. Japan, South Korea, China, Thailand, etc.).

The third research question is about the types of the purposes for intercultural understanding. The following four purposes are used for the analysis: A) understanding other cultures, B) self-culture understanding, C) global understanding, and D) Comparison.

The fourth research question is about the number and the rate of concrete culture and abstract culture in the cultural materials. The concept shown in Ashikaga, T., Fukita, R., & Ikuta, Y. (2001) and Ikegami (2002) is used in this paper. The visible things such as building and festivals are classified as concrete culture. The invisible things such as a sense of values, human relations, and personal views are classified as abstract culture.

The fifth research question is about the number of the communication activities in exercises or activities in the textbooks.

RESULTS

Contents of the Materials for Intercultural Understanding

Figure 1 shows the numbers of the twelve categories in ten textbooks.

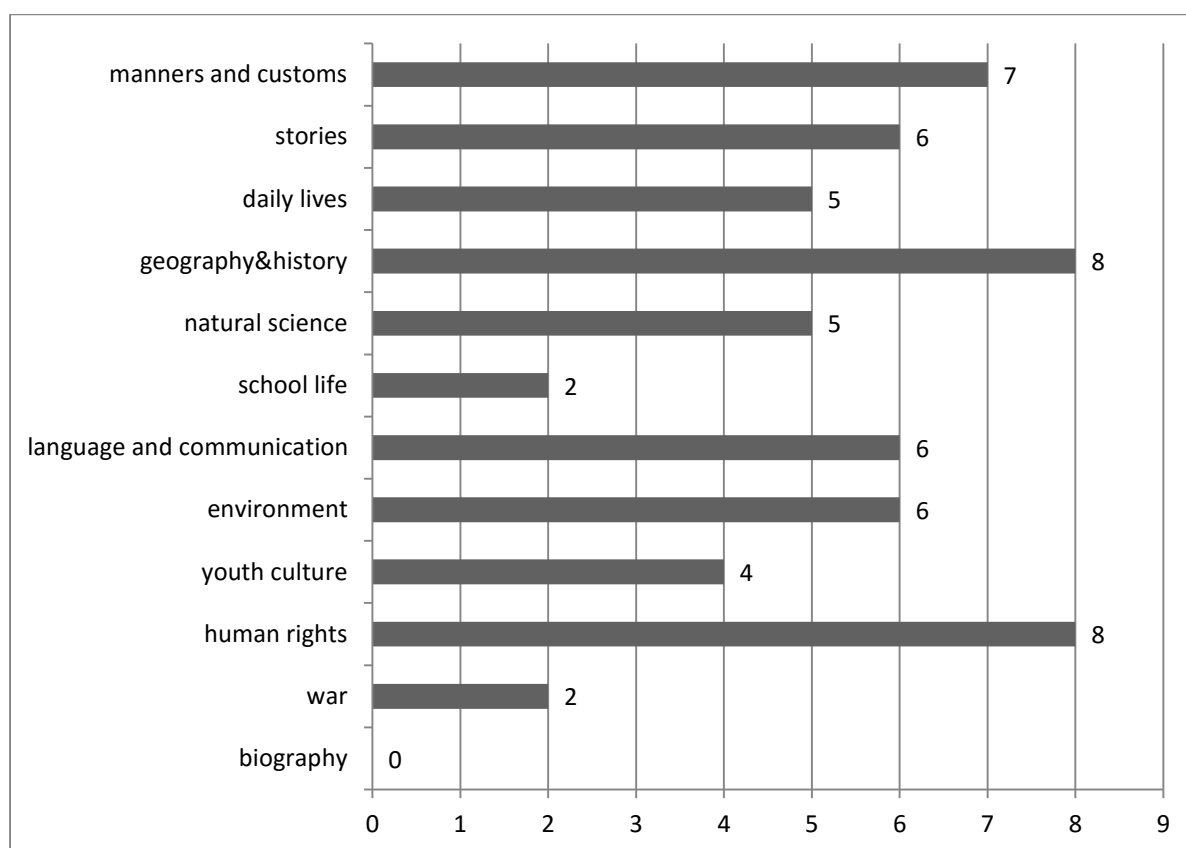


Figure 1. Categories of the cultural materials in the Japanese textbooks

As shown in Figure 1, there are many articles about manners and customs, human rights, and geography & history in the Japanese textbooks. There are few topics about school life, war, and a biography. Because various categories are seen, it is possible for students to learn various topics through the textbooks. Therefore, students will get a wide scope of information on the cultural issues through the textbooks.

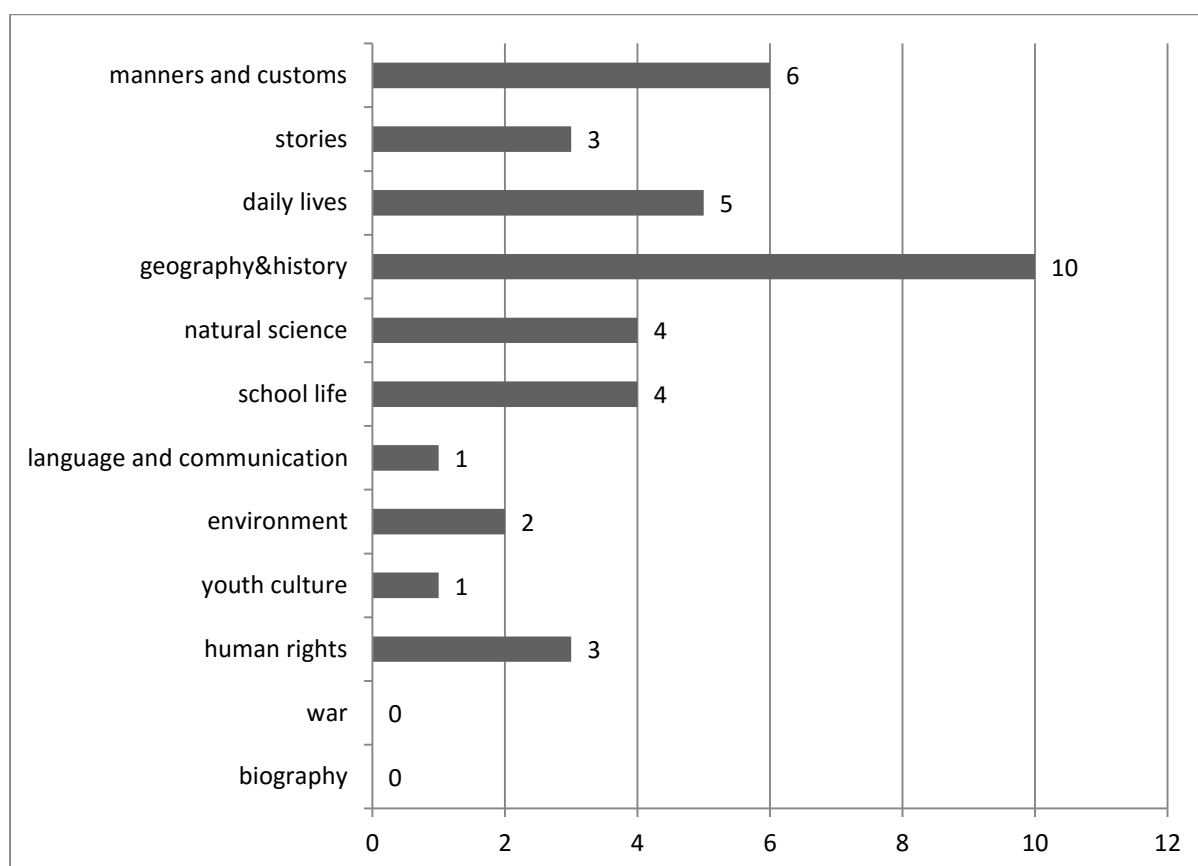


Figure 2. Categories of the cultural materials in the Korean textbooks

As shown in Figure 2, there are a lot of articles about geography & history and manners and customs in the main passage of the Korean textbooks. There are few topics about language and communication, environment, war and youth culture. There are no topics about war and biography. Compared with the Japanese textbooks, the total number of the lessons is seven or eight in each English textbook. The total number is smaller than that of the lessons in the Japanese textbooks. However, there are many small passages or exercises following the main passages, which will make it possible for students to get a wide scope of information and engage in communicative activities through the textbooks as well.

Region and nations of the Materials

Figure 2 shows the number of three regions, Japan, and unknown materials in total. When the main passage in the lessons includes some information concerning two categories, they are both counted.

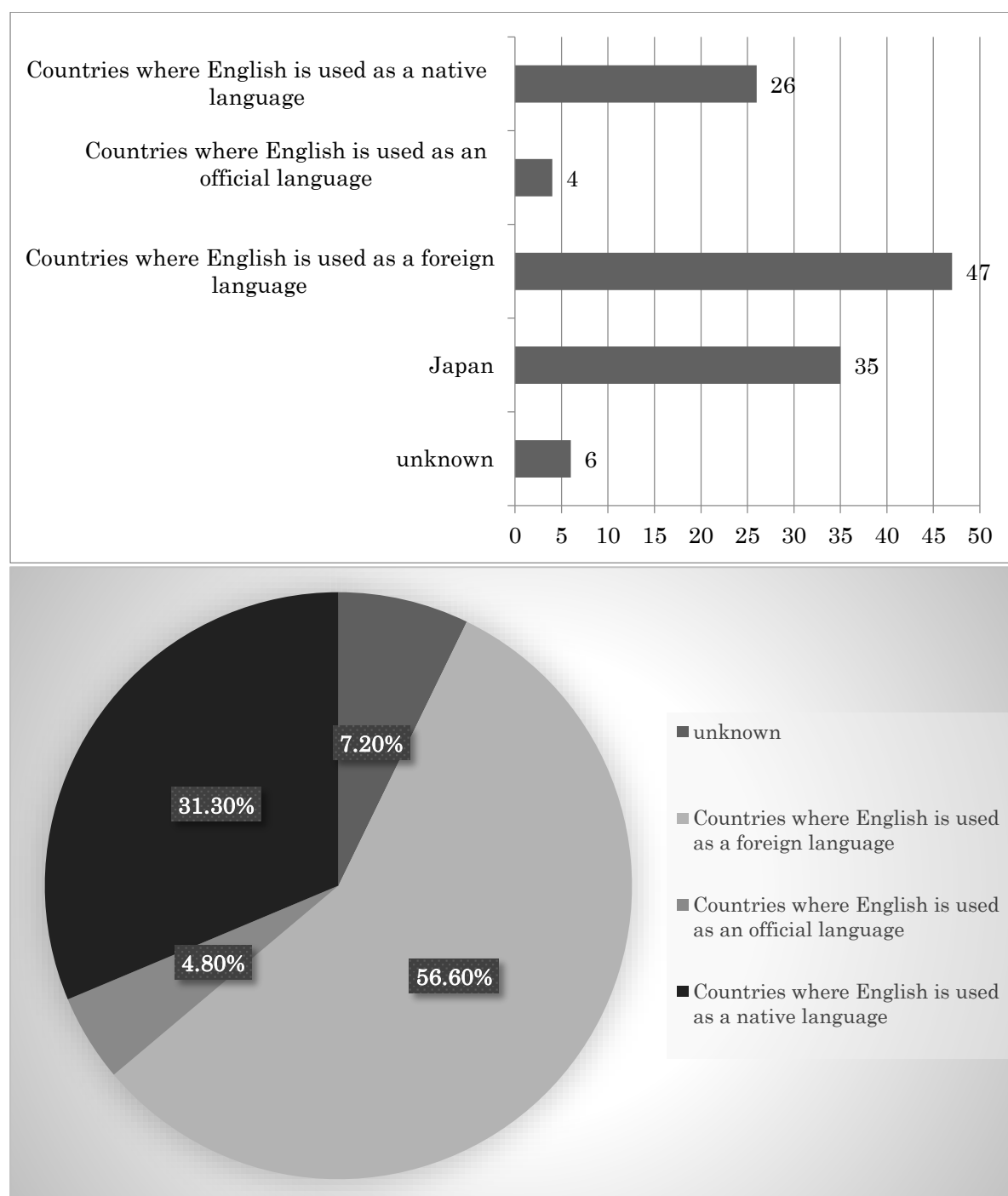


Figure 3. Areas treated in the cultural materials in the Japanese textbooks

As shown in Figure 3, the topics concerning nations where English is used as a foreign language are treated most frequently in the Japanese textbooks. The number of the lessons is 47, which is bigger than the number of nations where English is used as a native language. The ratio accounts for 56.6 %. Japan also occupies many of the lessons nations where English is used as a foreign language in total because the textbooks are aimed at Japanese students. The number of the lessons is 35. The rate of the lessons is 42.1 %. On the other hand, the number of the lessons concerning nations where English is used as an official language is only 4, which is so small. The rate of it is 4.8 %.

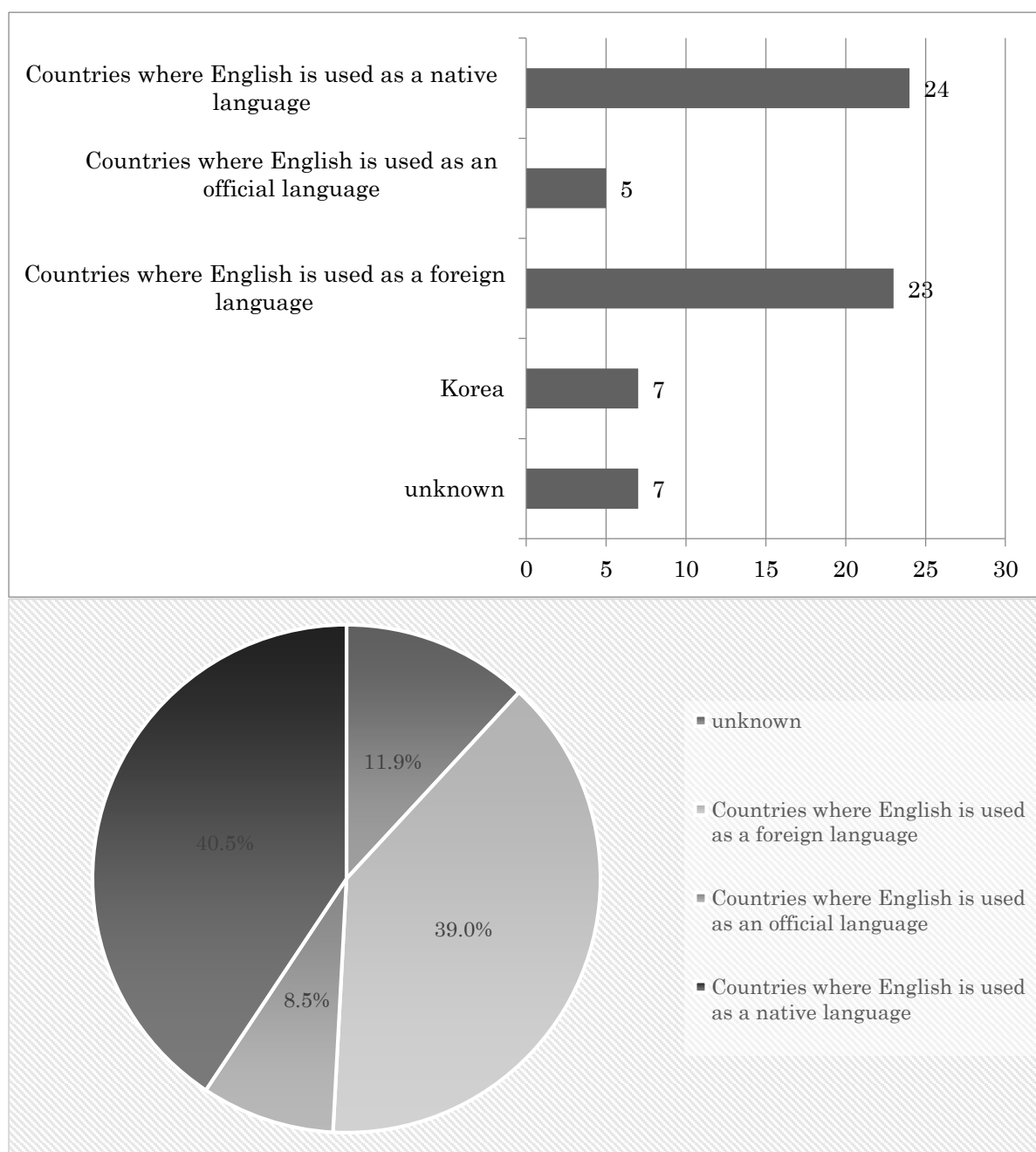


Figure 4. Areas treated in the cultural materials in the Korean textbooks

As shown in Figure 4, the topics concerning nations where English is used as the first language are frequently treated in the Korean textbooks. The number of the lessons is 24, which is much bigger than the number of Korea where students who use the textbooks study English. The ratio accounts for 40.5 %. Next, the number of the lessons where English is used as a foreign language is 23. The rate of the lessons is 39 %. The number is almost as big as the number of countries where English is used a native language. This is different from the trend of Japanese textbooks because the number of the nations where English is used as a foreign language is much larger than the number of the nations where English is used as a native language. On the other hand, the number of the lessons concerning nations where English is used as an official language

is only 5, which is so small. The rate of it is 8.5 %. As can be seen in the Japanese textbooks, nations such as India and Singapore, where English is used as an official language, are not frequently used in the Korean textbooks. The number of Korea, the students' home country is 7. The ratio of it is 11.9 %.

Purpose of the Materials

Figure 5 shows the number of the four categories of the purposes of the materials in Japanese English textbooks. When one lesson seems to have two purposes, they are both counted.

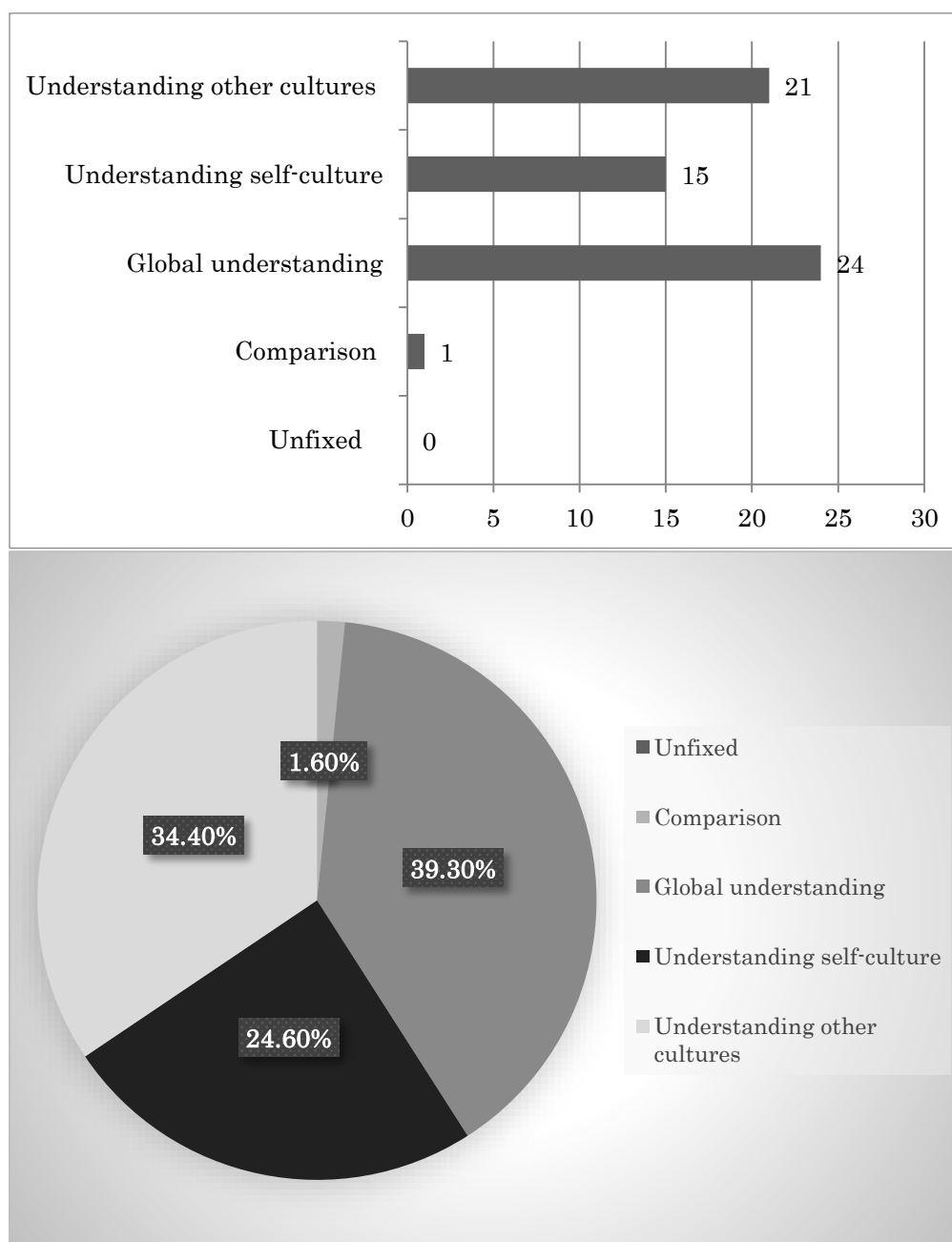


Figure 5. Purpose of the cultural materials in the Japanese textbooks

As shown in Figure 5, the number of global understanding is 24, which accounts for 39.3 % and it is bigger than other purposes in the Japanese textbooks. The number of

understanding the self-culture is 15. The ratio is 24.6 %. The number is smaller than the numbers of understanding other cultures and global understanding. On the other hand, the number of comparison is only 1, which is so small. The ratio is only 1.6 %. The materials for global understanding such as war, environment, and so on were frequently treated in the high school textbooks in Japan in order to heighten students' awareness of being Japanese citizens living in a global community. This can be a good trend for promoting students' cultural awareness.

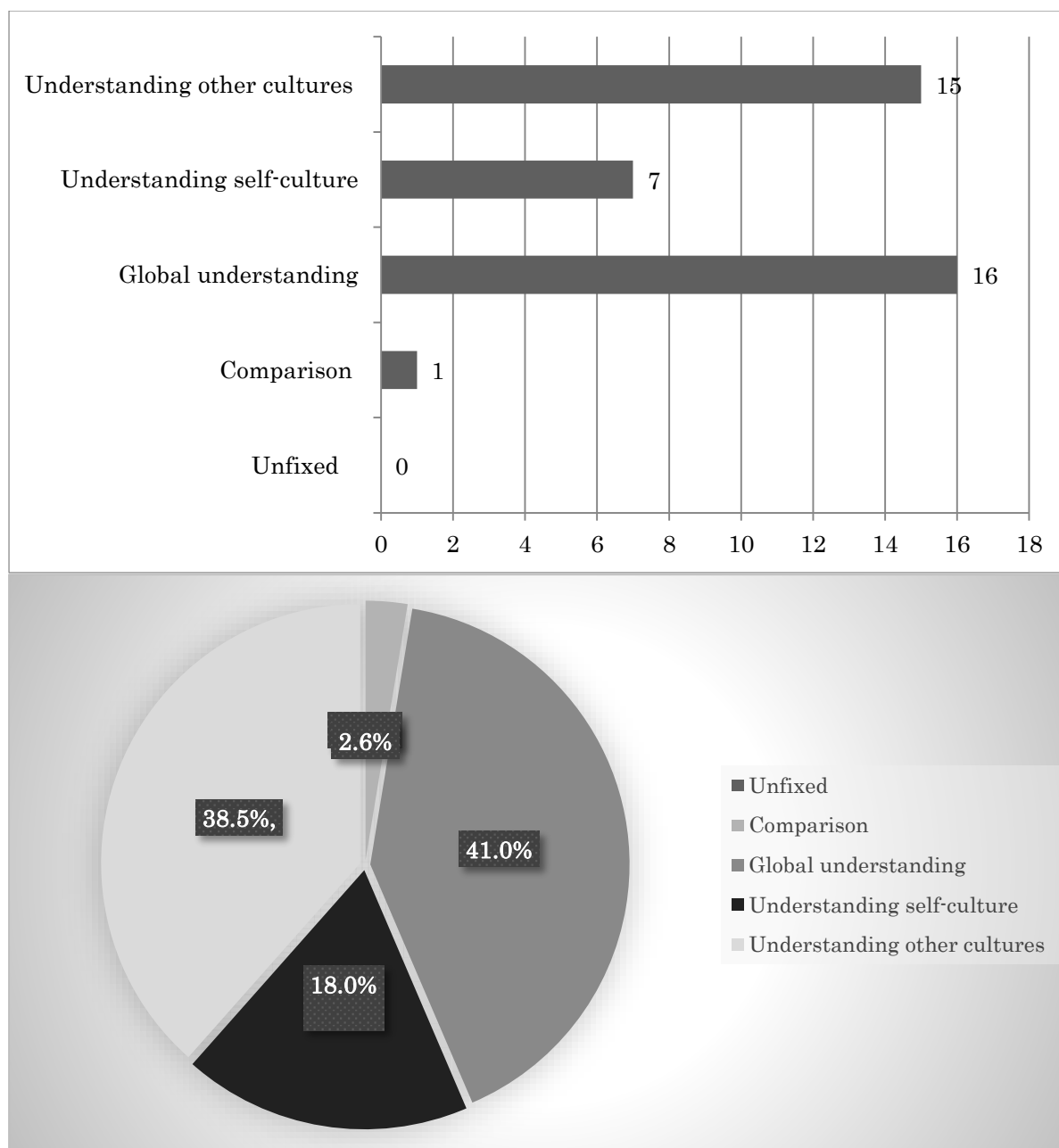


Figure 6. Purpose of the cultural materials in the Korean textbooks

As shown in Figure 6, the number of global understanding is 16, which is almost as big as the number of other purposes in the Korean textbooks. The ratio accounts for 41.0 %. The number of understanding other cultures is 15. The rate is 38.5 %. Those two factors are frequently treated, which is similar to the Japanese textbooks. Yet, the number of

understanding self-culture is 7. The ratio is 18 %, which is smaller than the numbers of global understanding and understanding other cultures. On the other hand, the number of comparison is only 1. The ratio of comparison is 2.6 %, which is smaller than any other factors in the Korea English textbooks.

Comparison of Concrete Culture and Abstract Culture

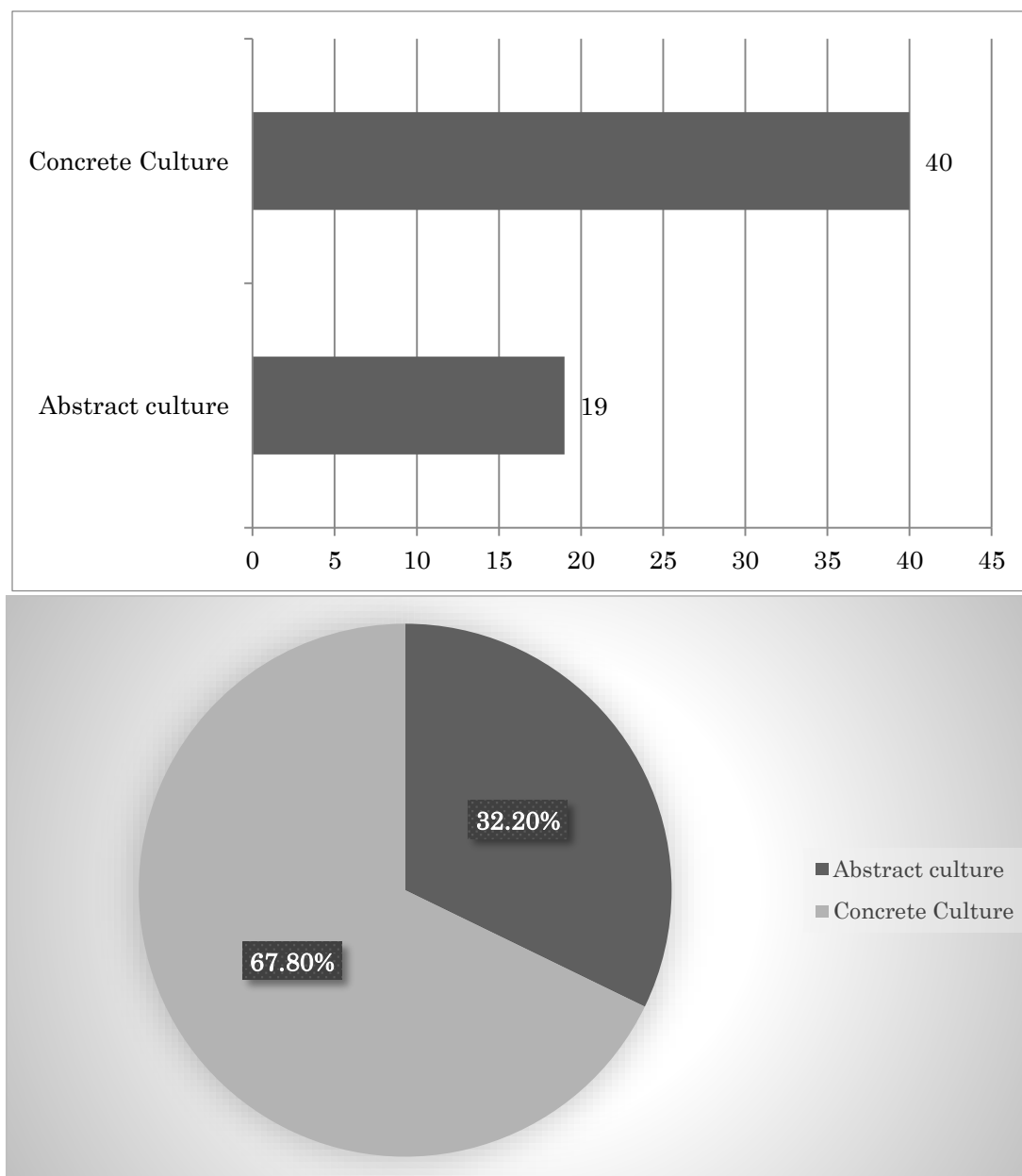


Figure 7. Comparison of concrete culture and abstract culture in the Japanese textbooks

Figure 7 represents the number of concrete culture and abstract culture in the cultural materials for intercultural understanding included in the Japanese English textbooks used at high school. The number of the abstract culture is 19, which is not big, and the ratio is about 30 %. On the other hand, the number of concrete culture is 40. The ratio is about 70 %. Thus, it can be inferred that Japanese high school students have many chances to learn concrete cultural elements that are different from their own and have some opportunities to study abstract cultural values through the textbooks.

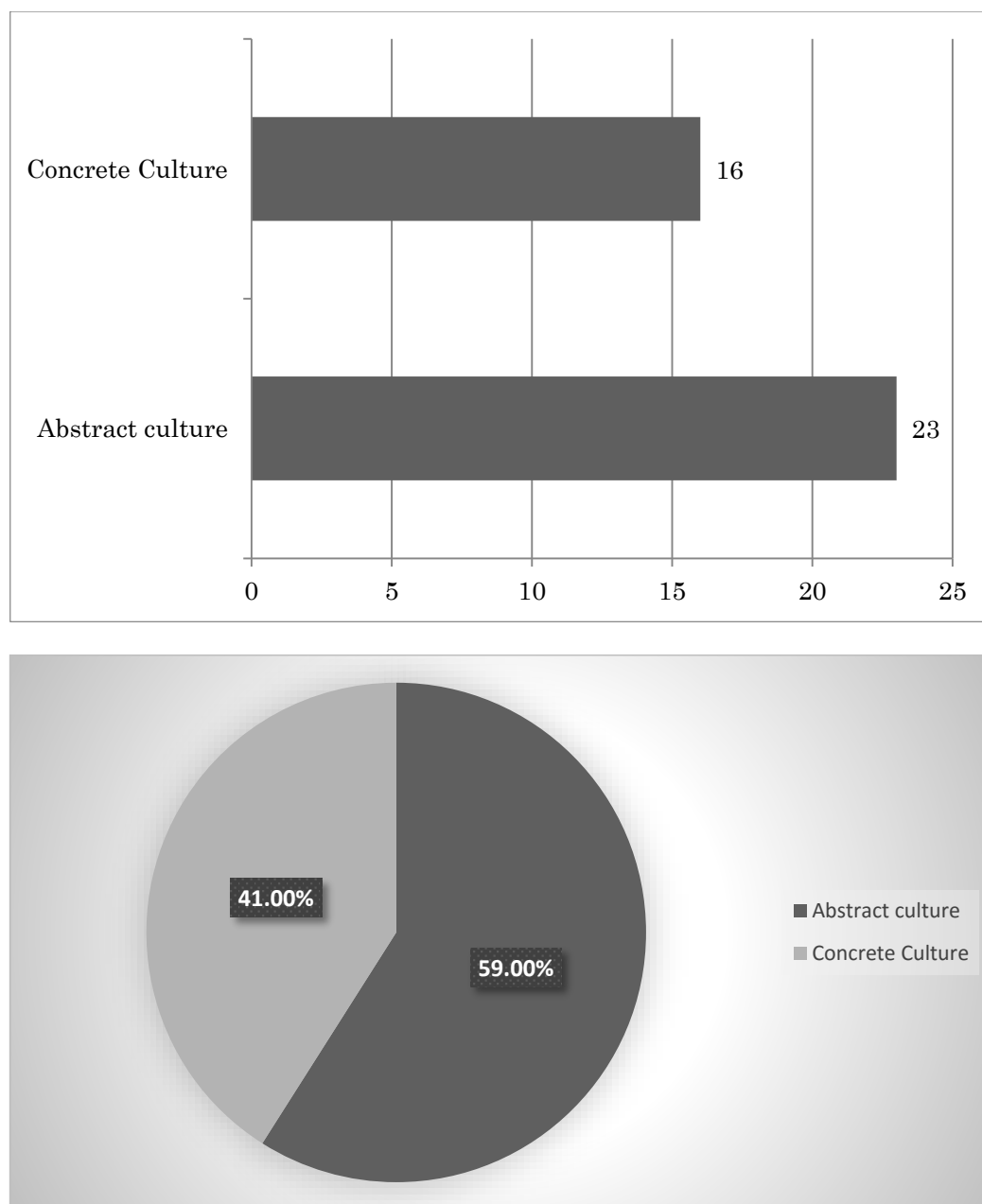


Figure 8. Comparison of concrete culture and abstract culture in the Korean textbooks

Figure 8 represents the number of concrete culture and abstract culture in the cultural materials for intercultural understanding included in the Korean high school textbooks. The number of the concrete culture is 16. The rate is 41 %. On the other hand, the number of the abstract culture is 23. The rate accounts for 59 %. It is bigger than the number of the concrete culture, which is different from the Japanese textbooks because more is focused on the concrete culture rather than the abstract culture in those textbooks. The Korean textbooks put more focus on the abstract culture.

Communication Activities Intended for Four Skills

The exercises or activities in the textbooks were examined in this analysis. Twelve distinctions were made in analyzing intended skills of exercises or activities. Figure 9 shows the number of the intended skills for four abilities such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening in the Japanese high school textbooks.

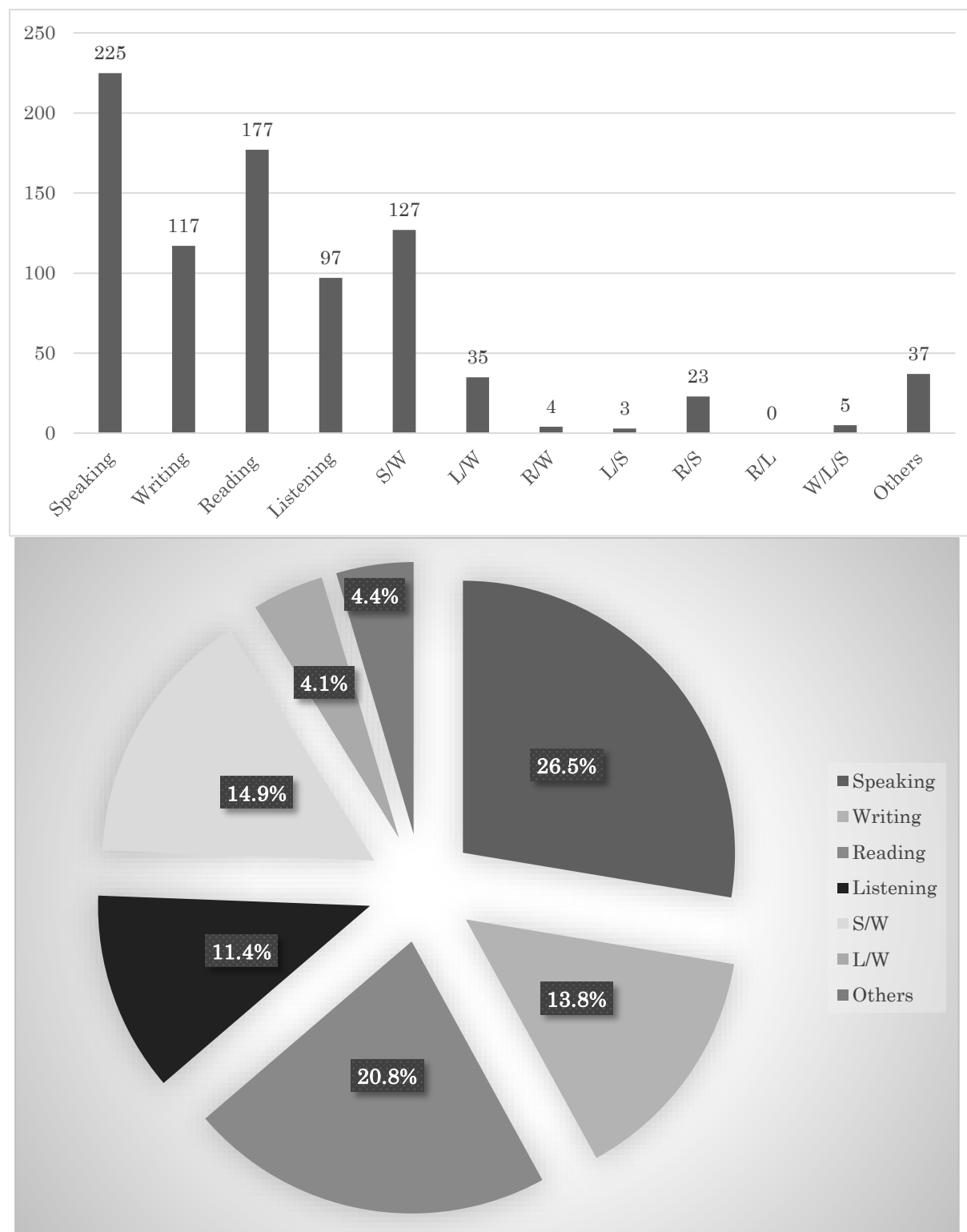


Figure 9. Communication activities intended for four skills in the Japanese textbooks

The number of speaking is 225, which is biggest in the twelve categories. The rate accounts for 26.5 %. The next biggest category is reading whose number is 177. The ratio is 20.8 %. Compared with other factors, there are a lot of exercises of speaking and reading in the Japanese textbooks. Next, the exercises of writing and the combination of speaking and writing follow. The number of writing is 117. The rate is 13.8 %. The number of the combination of speaking and writing is 127. The ratio account for 14.9 %. However, the number of exercises intended for other combinations is so small. For instance, the number of the combination of listening and writing is 35. The ratio is only 4.1 %. The number of the combination of reading and speaking is 23.

Likewise, twelve distinctions were made in analyzing intended skills of exercises or activities in the Korean textbooks. Figure 10 represents the number and ratio of the intended skills such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening in the Korean high school textbooks.

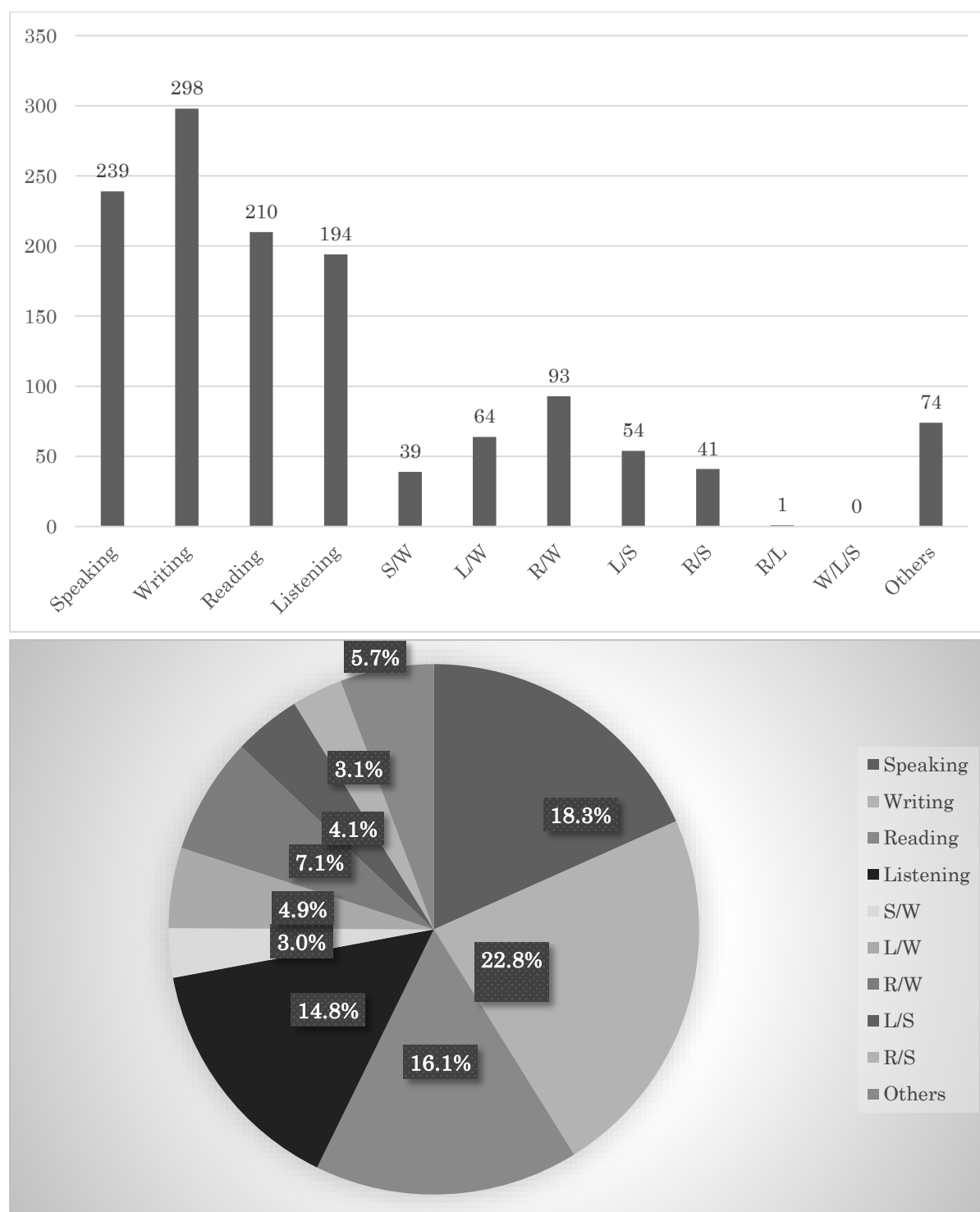


Figure 10. Communication activities intended for four skills in the Korean textbooks

There are many exercises of speaking, writing, reading, and listening. The number of writing is 298, which is biggest in the twelve categories. The rate accounts for 22.8 %. The next biggest category is speaking whose number is 239. The ratio is 18.3 %. The third largest one is reading whose number is 210. The ratio is 16.1 %. The fourth biggest one is listening whose number is 194. The ratio is 14.8 %. Compared with other factors, there are a lot more exercises of speaking, writing, reading, and listening in the Korean textbooks.

Next, the exercises of the combination of reading and writing follow. The number of those activities is 93, which is much smaller than the number of each of four abilities such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening. The ratio accounts for 7.1 %. The number of exercises intended for other combinations is so small. The number of the exercises of a combination of listening and writing is 64, which accounts for 4.9 %. The number of the exercises of combination of listening and speaking is 54, which accounts for 4.1 %. The number of the exercises of a combination of reading and speaking is 41, which accounts for 3.1 %. The number of the exercises of a combination of speaking and writing is 39, which accounts for 3.0 %. The number of the exercises of a combination of reading and listening is only 1.

Next, see Table 1. This table represents the comparisons of the averages of five categories such as reading, listening, speaking, writing, and integrated exercises that consist of those abilities per lesson between the Japanese textbooks and the Korean textbooks. The table tells us how different the Japanese textbooks and the Korean textbook that were selected for the research are.

Table 1. Communication activities between two groups; Comparisons of the averages per lesson between Japanese English textbooks and Korean ones

	N	M	SD	t- value	df	p	95CI
Reading							
Japan	59	3.00	2.30	5.465	96	< .01	[1.52-3.52]
Korea	39	5.38	1.80				
Listening							
Japan	59	1.56	1.04	15.085	96	< .01	[2.97-3.86]
Korea	39	4.97	1.18				
Speaking							
Japan	59	3.81	2.76	4.333	96	< .01	[1.25-3.34]
Korea	39	6.13	2.30				
Writing							
Japan	59	1.98	3.04	9.956	96	< .01	[4.60-6.72]
Korea	39	7.64	2.24				
Integrated							
Japan	59	3.25	2.81	7.126	96	< .01	[3.00-5.31]
Korea	39	7.41	2.85				

As can be seen in the average of exercises intended for reading per lesson, the number of activities for reading in the Korean textbooks was bigger than the Japanese textbooks. The average of reading per lesson is 3.00 in the Japanese textbooks, while the average of reading per lesson is 5.38 in the Korean ones. There was a statistical difference between them. A statistical difference was also found in the average of numbers per lesson for listening per lesson. The average of listening per lesson is 1.56 in the Japanese textbooks, while the average of listening per lesson is 4.97 in the Korean ones. The difference was larger than the number of reading activities. As to the average number of speaking, there was also a statistical difference between the two groups. The average of speaking per lesson is 3.81 in the Japanese textbooks, while the average of speaking per lesson is 6.13 in the Korean ones. As to the average number of writing, there was also a statistical difference between those groups. The average of writing per lesson is 1.98 in the Japanese textbooks, while the average of writing per lesson is 7.64. The divide was larger than the divides of reading and speaking activities. As to an average number of the integrated activities, there was a statistical difference between them. The average of integrated activities per lesson is 3.25 in the Japanese textbooks, while the average of integrated activities per lesson is 7.41 in the Korean ones. It is clear that more activities of reading, listening, speaking, writing, and integrated communication are treated in each lesson in Korean textbooks than in Japanese textbooks.

DISCUSSION

According to the results of the research, the contents of intercultural understanding and communicative activities in the high school textbooks are summarized. First, all the lessons or sections are described as contents including concrete culture or abstract culture, and the categories of the contents in the main passages are presented in numerous fields from the daily lives to customs and manners, history & geography, traditional cultures, environment, war, and so on in both the Japanese and Korean textbooks. This indicates that students who use both textbooks get a wide array of knowledge through the contents and prepare for their future life in the global world. Therefore, teachers have a great responsibility of teaching the cultural issues useful for their future. They should try to help students comprehend the values or the personal ways of thinking behind the behaviors relating to topics in the textbooks because increasing humanity is also crucial in English education.

Secondly, many of the regions shown in the textbooks are nations where English is used as the first language in both the Japanese and Korean textbooks. However, the ratio of those nations in the Japanese textbooks is about 30 %, which is smaller than the ratio in the Korean textbooks. Too much is focused on Japan in the Japanese textbooks, while much is not focused on Korea in the Korean textbooks. Few lessons concerning the countries where English is used as an official language are treated in both textbooks. The contents of the articles are taught in the subject of English, so many topics of nations where English is used as a mother's language are shown in the textbooks. However, English is established as an international language, so it is desirable to

increase the topics of countries except Japan belonging to Expanding Circle and make students get aware of the fact English is the international language spreading all over the world because English is used as a communication tool in a lot more countries where English is used as the foreign languages than ones where English is used as the first language. This point is discussed in Kachru (1990), Kamiya (2008) and Nakagawa (2011). They suggest English Education in terms of World Englishes and insist that English should be focused as the international language, not as only American English.

Thirdly, the numbers of the purpose of global understanding and understanding other cultures are not so different from each other in both the Japanese and Korean textbooks. These factors are greatly important for teaching cultural issues. However, the number of understanding self-culture in the Japanese textbooks is much larger than that of the Korean textbooks. This means that much is focused on their own culture in the Japanese textbooks. Considering of the global perspective, more should be focused on nations other than Japan because students need to know more foreign issues in their future.

Fourthly, the number of concrete culture is bigger than the number of abstract culture in the Japanese textbooks. On the other hand, the number of abstract culture is bigger than the number of concrete culture in the Korean textbooks. This means that the Korean textbooks put more focus on the abstract culture than the Japanese ones.

Finally, when communicative activities in the Japanese and the Korean textbooks are compared, the numbers of four abilities are well balanced in the Korean textbooks. The numbers of the four activities in the Korean textbooks are bigger than those activities in the Japanese textbooks. Statistical differences were found in the average of numbers per lesson for each four ability and integrated abilities per lesson. There are more activities relating to the theme of the lessons in the Korean textbooks. It is possible that Korean students can promote communicative tasks naturally.

CONCLUSION

From the result of this investigation, it can be inferred that various kinds of topics suitable for high school students are presented in both Japanese and Korean English textbooks, although the numbers of abstract culture and concrete culture are different. This characteristic can be said to be preferred because they need to follow the ministry's guideline. However, one point needs to be considered and changed for the better. There are still biases because too much is focused on nations in Inner Circle and Japan in the Japanese textbooks. There is a marked lack of focus on nations in the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle except Japan in comparison with the nations in the Inner Circle in the Japanese textbooks. According to the "white paper on tourism" (2015) from the government, the number of travelers who visit Japan has been increasing in number recently, and the total number of foreign travelers visiting Japan in 2015 is 19,740,000. According to the report, foreign travelers visiting Japan are dominated by China, South Korea and Taiwan. Canada and Australia account for only several percent of the visiting foreigners. There it would be beneficial for high school

students to learn a variety of cultures concerning those nations because there is a great possibility they will come across people from those nations in the future.

However, as can be pointed in Yamanaka (2004) and Yamanaka (2006), there are no detailed instructions in the Ministry of Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology about the nations, the purpose, and so on. Although teachers are required to take up appropriate topics of various countries in the world, there is no specific information that is useful in choosing nations. It can be sometimes confusing to pick up the topics or make plans for cultural understanding or communicative tasks because culture means a very wide meaning. It would be better if there were clear instructions on the teaching of cultures or ideal communicative activities in these courses.

Finally, some limitations of this study should be noted. English textbooks are not the only way of teaching culture or performing communicative activities in classes. It is possible for students to learn the cultural issues in other ways such as school events and general studies. For instance, students can engage in outdoor events and learn culture. However, it is true that the contents of the textbooks can have a great effect on the stage of cultural learning and getting English communicative skills. Therefore, more research will be required for English textbooks. Further discussions are preferred.

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