

TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES AND RECONTEXTUALIZING LEARNING MATERIAL: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF GLOBAL CHINESE LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS USED IN SRI LANKA

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Abstract

Despite the abundance of studies investigating translanguaging pedagogy, recontextualizing learning material has rarely been a concern of recent studies. The present study employs content analysis and critical discourse analysis to examine two global CFL textbooks used in Sri Lanka to evaluate their compliance with translanguaging practices. Three imperative aspects of translanguaging pedagogy, namely representation of culture, instruction language, and nationalism and socio-cultural polarization were the key areas of concern in content analysis. In the culture domain analysis, references from the textbooks were fed into 10 child codes and 3 parental codes in NVivo12. The results demonstrated that there is a critical inequity in the representation of local and global cultures in the textbooks which is especially distinct in the interlocutors and their nationality options. Socio-cultural polarization of the source culture with the West was evident in the critical discourse analysis and adaptation was predominantly promoted as a unilateral affair where the foreign learner continually adapts to the target culture. The study proposes that contextual sensitivity and ideological impartiality should be ensured in recontextualizing textbooks for translanguaging practices in Sri Lanka from three aspects, namely incorporation of L1 into textbooks, integration of multiculturalism and freeing textbooks of ideological and hegemonic practices.

Keywords: global textbook, localizing, native language repertoire, Sri Lanka, teaching Chinese, translanguaging

Introduction

Owing to the digitalization of intercultural communication and migration, linguistic diversity has increased on an unprecedented scale along with the dramatic socio-cultural transformations in recent decades. However, while globalization and the subsequent spread of languages are not novel phenomena, what is new about these are the scale and pace at which they occur in the modern world (Coupland, 2012). While globalization is often perceived as having a

positive correlation with linguistic diversity, it also has undesirable consequences on multilingualism where the linguistic commodity market' has accommodated only popular lingua franca (Block & Cameron, 2002). Even though formal colonization has long been non-existent, the aftereffects of colonization are still persistent in multiple aspects within many communities including language education. As claimed by Vaish (2010), there is an enormous influence of postcolonial theory on applied linguistics, resulting in an ambiguity in the difference between colonialism and globalization. There is a growing demand for conceptualizing multiple language acquisition in contrast to the traditional L1, L2, and L3 models to suit modern multilingual contexts (Otwinowska & Angelis, 2014). Every paragraph should be single-spaced with indentation in each paragraph. This section also elaborates on the literature reviews/theoretical construct of the research. You should tell readers the kinds of research, journal articles, and books you use in analyzing your data.

Translanguaging has emerged as an alternative approach to traditional immersion education which Mc Carthey et al. (2020) describe as an 'ideology that embraces bilingualism and reacts against the notion of language compartmentalization and separation'. Despite the significant shifts that have occurred in language education over the globe, especially in terms of the role of L1 and its culture in language education, second and foreign language education in Sri Lanka is still fundamentally reliant on traditional immersion approaches. The consequences of the indifference towards cultural, sociolinguistic, and native language domains of the learners by adhering to conventional immersion approaches are reflected through the low competency in L2 and L3 among Sri Lankan adult learners. Colonial ideologies are still widely dominant in Sri Lankan language education where the learners' native language repertoires are paid the least attention. The diverse linguistic needs of the emerging multilingual Sri Lankan community have not been catered to, and neither have such dynamics been adequately investigated in recent research.

Chinese language is among the newest foreign languages introduced to the Sri Lankan education system and has a brittle research history where most aspects of pedagogy have been largely neglected. One of the key issues within the field is the extensive use of global textbooks where English becomes the link language between the learner, the textbook, and the teacher (Dassanayake, 2021). Global textbooks are often laden with ideological content and can contribute to the weakening of the socio-linguistic spirit of learners through the neglect of their native language repertoire (Dassanayake, 2022). The present research is a corpus-based study that examines the aptness of two CFL textbooks in Sri Lanka to be used in multilingual contexts, namely Hanyu Jiaocheng and New Practical Chinese Reader. Despite the wide use of these textbooks in teaching Chinese to Sri Lankan learners, their suitability in the local context has never been adequately examined.

Literature Review

Language ideology and politics of textbooks

The cultural political dynamics of language have existed throughout the history of the world in different historical contexts (Fortier, 2022). Although

colonialism has seen its material extinction with the emergence of neoliberal and postmodern thought, colonization has extended its virtual presence into even larger boundaries through language. Apart from the physical and economic exploitation, manipulation of the discursive domain of cultural definition is an essential process in colonization (Pennycook, 2017). The politics of language have played a vital role in recolonizing the decolonized settlements in the 21st century which has distributed unequal moral space for speakers with 'impure language elements' (Shapiro, 2011) in using popular lingua franca. In South Asia, which was a central workspace during the colonial era for the Portuguese, Dutch, and English colonizers, language became an essential tool for the 'epistemological invasion', especially for the British. Thus, 'the command of language became the language of command' as claimed by Chavan (2013). In the case of Sri Lanka, language politics have played a significant role in reshaping the language policy, planning, and education dynamics of Sri Lanka.

Language textbooks have often acted a favorite moderator of the popular lingua franca and their ideologies than the lesser popular languages. Zhang and Song (2022, p. 122) have revealed that some EFL textbooks are biased in the identity options provided in them and texts include a limited number of non-western interlocutors. In a similar study, Curdt-Christiansen (2008) has revealed that textbook content is often laden with cultural and moral values which have made gaining literacy a non-neutral process. As claimed by Ulum and Köksal (2019), culture representation in textbooks is often biased by inclusion of the producers' own ideologies implicitly and explicitly in textbooks. In addition, while inner circle cultures are dominant in textbooks, outer circle cultures are often marginalized. Language education in underdeveloped countries is often vulnerable to the hegemonic practices of popular lingua franca driven by stronger economies. Teachers in peripheral communities tend to overestimate imported pedagogical philosophies which undermine the alternative styles of thinking, learning, and interacting of local communities (Canagarajah, 1999).

National languages are often being used as a permission to citizenship which undermines multilingualism by confining marginalized languages to private corners (Fortier, 2022). In a similar study situated in the context of China, Liu et al. (2022) propose that elementary Chinese language textbooks in China offer a limited representation of the ethnic multilingualism of contemporary China in a centralized effort towards national identity construction among minority groups. Anand and Lall (2022) have illustrated how the Indian government has used textbooks as a 'medium of political communication contextualizes the discourse of citizenship'. As claimed by Hagai et al. (2014), a similar situation has occurred in Cambodian textbooks aimed at constructing and propagating Vietnamization in favor of the allies of the Cambodian government. In the case of Sri Lanka, it has often been the foreign ideologies that have taken the upper hand over language textbooks since there has not been a satisfactory evaluation criterion for selection or development of second and foreign language textbooks in Sri Lanka.

Three key trends could be identified from these findings related to the ideology of textbooks in the recent history of the world. Firstly, textbooks are widely used for commercial purposes together with common lingua franca and the strong economies of the world. Secondly, textbooks are manipulated to spread

dominant ideologies across the globe which challenge the thinking patterns of economically and politically weaker communities. Thirdly, they are being used by governments across the world to undermine the linguistic and cultural dynamics of minor ethnicities. As a remedial measure to the first two concerns, localization of textbooks is often suggested by researchers which can simultaneously foster the learners' source, target, and international cultural awareness (Kirkgöz & Ağçam, 2018). The third could be better identified as a form of assimilation, in which the native culture is portrayed as the primary ideal culture to which others must conform to (Molek-Kozakowska & Pogorzelska, 2018).

Multilingualism, multiculturalism, and translanguaging pedagogy

While it is widely accepted that the world has been largely multilingual throughout its known history, the important question is how contemporary multilingualism differs from its earlier phases in the history. As claimed by Aronin and Hufeisen (2009) contemporary multilingualism is 'suffusive', 'liminal', and 'complex' compared to the past. One of the key causes of this transformation in contemporary multilingualism is the changes in patterns of mobility and migration in a globalized world. Contemporary migrants are often linked with more than one community which is less unified than before (Saint-Georges, 2013). As claimed by Aronin and Singleton (2012), the contemporary existence and social behavior complemented by language use demonstrate significant differences from those of previous generations. They are associated with time-space dimensions, interrelationship with the local and global, geographical and social mobility, transcendence of territorial and social boundaries, technological breakthroughs, and intense focus on identity issues (Aronin & Singleton, 2012). Multilingual approaches to education have emerged as an alternative to monolingual and immersion approaches of the twentieth century. They acknowledge the hybrid language practices of multilingual learners and new pedagogical approaches are much needed to cater to their requirements (Kirsch & Duarte, 2020). Especially, there is substantial evidence to support the fact that foreign language classes could benefit from multilingualism, and they should consider taking language diversity into account and perhaps even to foster such dynamics (Bonnet & Siemund, 2018). Multilingual education extends the boundaries of traditional monolingual approaches to the promotion of social justice, inclusiveness, and harmonious existence where minority and indigenous learners are offered greater equity in education. Immersion education through dominant languages could result in socially, psychologically, economically, and politically harmful consequences to less competent learners (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009).

One of the key recent developments in second and foreign language studies is the dichotomy between the early psycholinguistic and the newly-fledged sociolinguistic approaches to L2 acquisition. The sociocultural space of Second and Foreign Language acquisition is increasingly gaining attention with intercultural competence becoming a key goal of language learning (Arabski & Wojtaszek, 2013). While the traditional views on the flow of culture in language learning were unidirectional where culture has minimal influence on the language learning process, the contemporary approaches to culture, triggered by sociocultural approaches, perceive culture as residing in meanings and shapes

accumulated by our linguistic resources (Hall, 2015). The CEFR companion volume recognizes developing competencies for democratic culture such as valuing cultural diversity and accepting otherness as important goals of language learning and the framework has included a special scale for facilitating a pluricultural space in language learners (Council of Europe, 2018). Regrettably, the intricate relationship between cultural dynamics and learning experiences in Sri Lanka has not been thoroughly explored or researched, leaving the roles of local and foreign cultures largely unexamined.

The traditional approaches to language education such as the 'Direct Method' were rooted in the ideology that the learners' native language repertoire is to be kept separated from the target language to avoid interference (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015). This was challenged by the multilingual turn, which perceived the native language repertoire of learners as a constructive toolkit and the learners' L1 as not only essential components of the learners' identity and self-esteem, but also a foundation for second language learning (Coelho, 2012). As claimed by Levine (2011), the assumptions that the use of L1 in the language classroom could lead to the fossilization of errors or pidginization and that L1 use could minimize L2 use in the classroom are conventional myths. The emergence of translanguaging was one of the significant pedagogical overhauls that redefined the roles of L1 and native culture in second and foreign language learning.

In contrast with the traditional monolingual approaches which compartmentalize languages and assign each language a separate space, translanguaging perceives all languages learnt by the learner in a single multifunctional space (Fu et al., 2019). It is reality-based, and the language learner is encouraged to use the full language repertoire including the historically accumulated and culturally developed clusters of knowledge in communication (Lubliner & Grisham, 2017). Translanguaging makes multiple cultural, linguistic, and literate discourse practices available in the classroom (Juvonen & Källkvist, 2021), and as a transformative and collaborative practice, it operates beyond the issues of heritage languages to involve the development of communicative repertoires and practices in transnational and global workspaces (Mazzaferro, 2018).

Recent developments in translanguaging pedagogy have been spotlighted by many researchers in the pedagogy of second and foreign languages and it has been approached from different perspectives. According to Donley (2022), the research sphere on translanguaging has also spread across a wide range of topics including translanguaging as a natural phenomenon in multilingual spaces, as identity enactments, and as classroom practices and concrete pedagogical frameworks. Since translanguaging perceives the learners' and teachers' language repertoire in its entirety as a rich resource for enhancing language competence, it allows a wide range of spaces to interplay and interact within the classroom including the socio-cultural and literary resources of the learners. As claimed by Charalambous et al. (2020), Veliz (2021), and Wang (2022), translanguaging could also be perceived from a social justice perspective as it has the potential for promoting inclusiveness and harmonious existence between learners of diverse sociocultural and linguistic settings.

It could be inferred from the literature presented above that global textbooks laden with political, ideological, and commercial purposes could be less promising toward a translanguaging pedagogy. Based on empirical data from a case study in China, Fang et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of incorporating different cultural content in textbook design and curriculum development to suit translanguaging. A more serious issue is that global textbooks are least capable of sponsoring a classroom atmosphere that could employ the native language repertoire of the learners since they only include translations in the popular lingua franca. Learners are struggling in an identity crisis and it is rare that a global textbook may foster national and global identities from a balanced perspective (Çetin Köroğlu & Elban, 2020).

Method

A brief overview of the corpus

The corpus used for this study consists of two textbook volumes, namely Hanyu Jiaocheng (hereafter referred to as HJC) published in the year 2006 by the Beijing Language and Culture University Press and New Practical Chinese Reader (hereafter referred to as NPCR) published in the year 2003 by the same publisher. The primary statistics of the textbooks are demonstrated in Table 1. These two textbooks were selected based on their wide usage in Sri Lanka for teaching Chinese as a foreign language.

Table 1. Rudimentary Statistics of Hanyu Jiaocheng Book Series
(Lessons, Vocabulary and Topics)

Name	No of units	Target Vocabulary Strength		No of topics
		Main	Supplementary	
Hanyu Jiaocheng Volume 1 Part 1	15	311	68	24
Hanyu Jiaocheng Volume 1 Part 2	15	461	94	30
Hanyu Jiaocheng Volume 2 Part 1	10	426	27	20
Hanyu Jiaocheng Volume 2 Part 2	10	389	51	21
Total	50	1587	240	95
New Practical Chinese Reader Vol 1	14	428	92	14
New Practical Chinese Reader Vol 1	12	530	179	12
Total	26	958	271	26

A Brief Overview of Hanyu Jiaocheng: This textbook has been compiled in two volumes. Each lesson consists of five components, namely the Text, New Words, Notes, Grammar, and Exercises. Out of the total of 50 units, 31 units consist of a supplementary reading passage for which a supplementary vocabulary list is also provided except for the very short passages in the preliminary lessons. HJC does not accompany a workbook and exercises are merged into the lessons themselves. The first two pages of Volume 1 Part 1 and Volume 2 Part 1 consist of a preface written only in Chinese.

A Brief Overview of New Practical Chinese Reader: Each lesson of this textbook series consists of six components, namely Text and New Words, Notes, Drills and Practice, Reading Comprehension and Paraphrasing, Grammar, and Chinese Characters. Each lesson includes a short passage called ‘Cultural Notes’ which introduces an aspect of Chinese culture, lifestyle, or society written only in English. NPCR is designed with a workbook and an instructor’s manual.

Data Analysis

The study included a two-phase analysis of the corpus using content analysis and CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis). Content analysis is a key method used in textbook analysis (i.e., Abdulridha Obaid et al., 2019; Fang et al., 2022; Lu et al., 2022; Zhang & Song, 2022). Representation of different sources and foreign cultural groups and nationalities in the world were analyzed in the total of 76 units in both volumes. References from the textbooks were extracted into three parental codes, namely ‘Power-Distance’, ‘Collectivism vs. Individualism’, and ‘Intercultural Competence’ which consisted of a total of 10 child codes using NVivo 12. The coding metric was adapted from Hofstede and Hofstede (2004) and Akbana and Yavuz (2022). A Critical Discourse Analysis was conducted on the 76 lesson texts of the two volumes, especially in terms of socio-cultural polarization represented in the textbooks. Critical discourse analysis takes linguistic and psychosocial approaches one step further by analyzing the data from a decidedly critical stance (Williamson et al., 2018). Textually-oriented Critical Discourse Analysis offers the researcher a framework in which characteristics of texts can be related to wider social practices through mediating effects of discourse practices (Hastings, 2012).

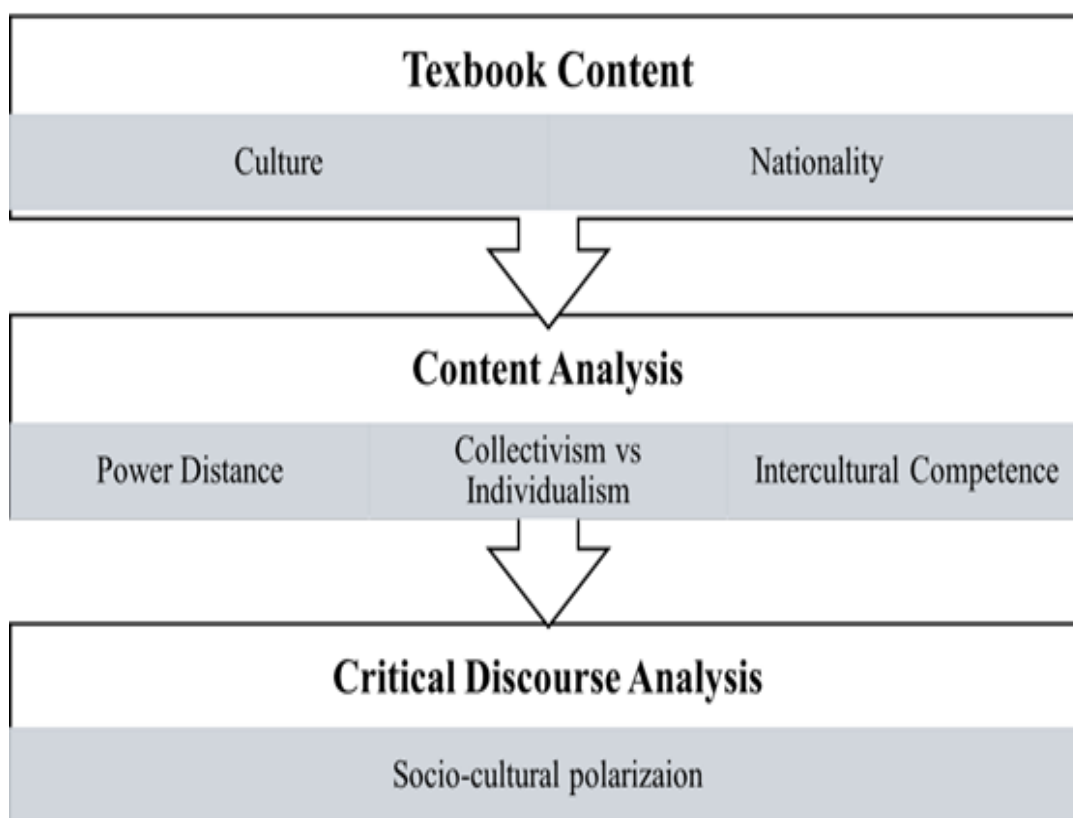


Figure 1. Data analysis process

Findings and Discussion

Instruction language

Examination of the instructional features of the corpus has revealed several significant differences between the two textbooks. HJC starts with a preface to the book which is only provided in Chinese while NPCR provides an English translation of the Chinese preface. The preface in NPCR is much more detailed than HJC which elaborates on the target group of the textbook, the aims and objectives, features, and the layout. A similar situation could be observed in the content page of HJC where content is only provided in Chinese whereas NPCR provides a Chinese English bilingual content section. It is mentioned in the preface that the NPCR is designed for teaching Chinese to native English speakers and for those who learn English as a second language. In contrast with HJC which does not provide unit ILOS, NPCR has provided the learners with the learning outcomes of each lesson at the beginning in the English language.

When considering the complexity of instruction language, NPCR has the upper hand over HJC since it uses plain language less laden with complex linguistic and technical terminology which could be in advantage for learners with low L2 competence which is evident in the phonetics section of HJC and NPCR. In page no 3 of HJC book 1, a long description of articulation of phonemes in Chinese language is provided with linguistic terms in Chinese. The same notes are also translated into English using complex linguistic terms such as ‘labio-dental fricative’, ‘unaspirated voiceless alveolar plosive’, ‘alveolar lateral’ and ‘voiceless

velar fricative’ etc. The same situation could be observed in the grammar section where complex grammatical terminology in Chinese and English are used to describe grammar aspects. A critical question arises as to the need of including complex instructions in Chinese language in the first volume to novice learners who have no knowledge of even Chinese beginner Chinese characters at such early stages. On the contrary, the passage called ‘Culture Notes’ given at the end of each lesson in NPCR is only given in English. In the New Words section of NPCR, a word category list is provided in English while the same in HJC is provided only in Chinese characters.

Representation of identity and nationality

In general, the representation of cultures in both textbooks lacks diversity. References to countries are limited to United States, England, and Russia etc. major powerhouses in the world. One of the significant findings is the exclusion of India and the omission of any references to South Asia.

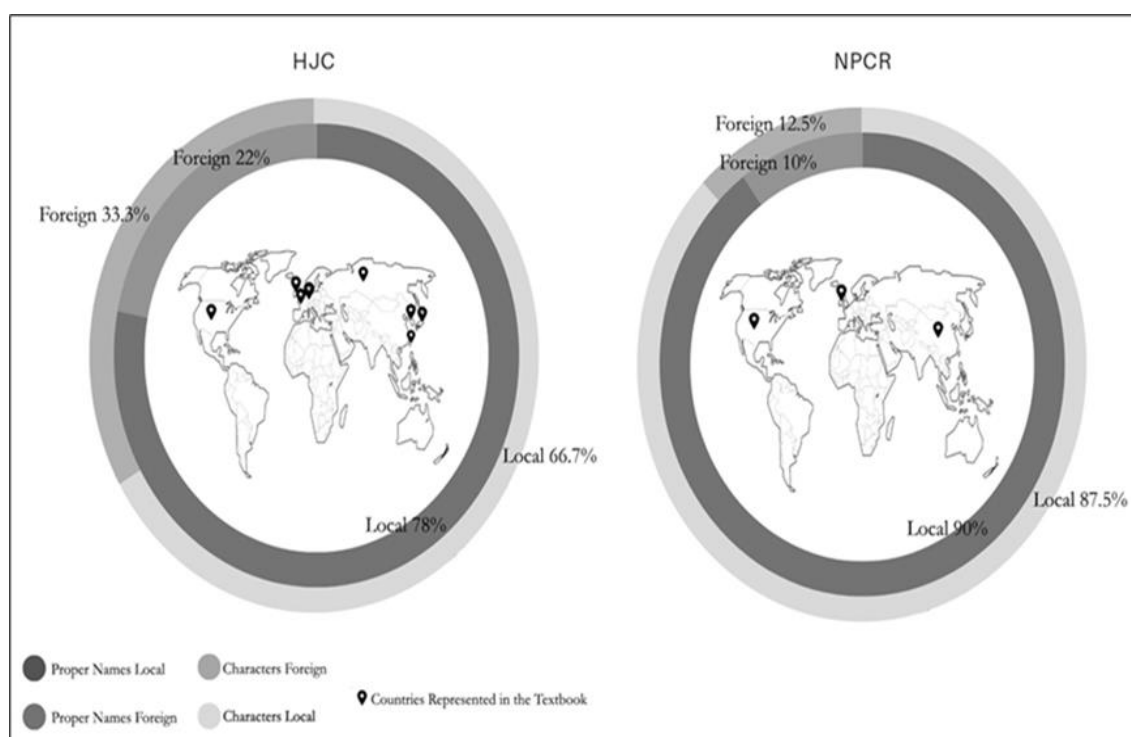


Figure 2. Representation of countries and local and foreign cultures in HJC and NPCR

Further, the rupee, one of the major currencies used in the world is also excluded in the list of currency vocabulary of both textbooks. This marginalization of South Asian culture is particularly evident on page 166 of NPCR volume 1 in the cultural note about loanwords in Chinese. It is mentioned that “Most loanwords in Chinese come from English, French, Japanese, or Russian”. Nevertheless, the second largest number of loanwords and the second most influential type of loanwords in Chinese (Yi & Jiayu, 2022) originated from Sanskrit along with the

“influx of Buddhist terms from Sanskrit and various words from Central Asian languages” during the period from Eastern Han to the Tang Dynasties (Miao, 2005). A considerable number of loanwords that originated from Sanskrit such as Dhyana(meditation), Karma, Samgha, Bodhi(enlightenment), Yaksha(devil) etc. are frequently used in modern Chinese too. Therefore, the authenticity of the above sentence in NPCR is questionable.

Table 2. Incorporation of culture into the textbooks (Part I)

Code	Description	Key
Power-Distance		
Equity and Equality	Topics and contexts that promote equity and equality	1
Linguistic Imperialism	Topics that Promote multilingualism	2
Collectivism vs. Individualism		
Inclusiveness	Promotion of inclusiveness	3
Minorities	References to minority cultures and communities	4
Tolerance of otherness	Tolerance of differences	5
Coexistence	Promotion of harmonious existence	6
Diversity	References to other cultures and multiculturalism	7
Intercultural Competence		
Globalization and Modernization	Promotion of globalization, digitalization, and modern life	8
Intercultural Awareness	Appreciation of other cultures	9
Adaptation	References that promote adaptation and flexibility	10

		Units Incorporated			
		NPCR		HJC	
Key	Unit Numbers	<i>n</i>	%	Unit Numbers	<i>n</i> %
1	(i)8, (i)11, (i)11	3	10%	(i)3, (i)11, (i)26	3 6%
2		0	-	(i)11, (i) 25, (i)28	3 6%
3	(i)1, (ii)15, (ii)22	3	10%		0 -
4	(ii)20	1	3.33%	(i)11	1 2%
5	(i)9, (i)11, (i)14, (ii)20, (ii)21, (ii)22	6	20%	(i)6, (i)11, (i)15, (i)27, (i)28, (i)29, (ii)10, (ii)11, (ii)12	9 18%
6	(i)4, (i) 7, (i)14, (ii)20	4	13.3%	(i)6, (i)14, (i)15, (i)21, (i)22, (ii)6, (ii)11, (ii)12	8 16%
7	(ii)18	1	3.33%	(i)26, (ii)1, (ii) 7, (ii)11	4 8%
8		0	-	(i)22, (ii)11, (ii)12	3 6%
9	(i)11, (ii)20	2	6.66%	(i)22	1 2%
10		0	-		0 -

* i – Volume 1 ii – Volume 2

From Table 2 it could be observed that apart from ‘Tolerance of otherness’ and ‘Coexistence’, references to all other codes record a very low percentage in both textbooks. One of the significant findings of the content analysis is that despite the highly diverse culture in China with 56 officially recognized ethnic groups spread over 9 million square kilometers of land, there is a very limited number of references to minority cultures, languages, and lifestyle apart from the mainstream Han nationality.

Patriotism and socio-cultural polarization

While there is an over-demonstration of patriotism and loyalty towards China, its culture, and recent developments, limited attention is directed toward developing multiculturalism in learners. It could be observed that the passage named “Cultural Notes” in NPCR is aimed at upholding Chinese nationalism and patriotism. While some passages such as ‘Traditional Chinese Painting’, ‘Holidays and Festivals in China’, and ‘Classical Chinese Poetry, Prose and Novels’ are aimed at enriching the cultural knowledge of learners, it is a question how some content of passages such as ‘Educational System of China’ and ‘Transportation in China’ are relevant to learning Chinese language or culture. While there are many references to the foreign characters adapting and blending with Chinese culture, society and lifestyle, there are very limited number of references of the opposite happening. The content analysis has found several indications of socio-cultural polarization of China with the West in NPCR, especially evident in the section named ‘Cultural Notes’ at the end of units.

Discussion - towards inclusive CFL textbooks for translanguaging practices in Sri Lanka

The data presented above clearly indicate that global textbooks hardly comply with the dynamic demands of translanguaging pedagogy. While recognizing that global textbooks cannot realistically be adapted to suit every linguistic and socio-cultural context, the production of localized textbooks is identified as a workable countermeasure. However, as clearly stated by (Fang et al., 2022) incorporating translanguaging into textbooks is a challenging task in the Asian context where top-down language policies are still dominant. The present study discusses developing textbooks to suit translanguaging practices in teaching Chinese as a foreign language in Sri Lanka from three perspectives to ameliorate the issues in global textbooks raised in the data analysis.

Incorporation of L1 into CFL textbooks

Since teaching material, especially textbooks plays a major role in the language classroom, it is of paramount importance to incorporate L1 into textbooks to support translanguaging practices. Incorporation of L1 will assist in developing plurilingual awareness of learners based on cross-linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge and plurilingual pedagogy which promotes the parallel use of languages (Nupponen et al., 2019). Incorporation of L1 into CFL textbooks becomes a decisive factor in the Sri Lankan context for several reasons. Firstly,

although English is L2 in Sri Lanka which may seem an ideal situation for using global textbooks with English instructions, it is a critical question whether all learners can comprehend the English instructions in such textbooks. According to Shepherd and Ainsworth (2018), 58.2% of the sample English language learners that they have used for their survey in Sri Lanka are at CEFR level A1 while another 29.2% are at level A2. Secondly, as it has been discovered in the data analysis, the instruction language in some crucial sections of the sample textbooks is beyond comprehension for low L2 competency learners.

As claimed by Lo and Lin (2018), the use of L1 in L2 and FL classroom has become a question of ‘how’ rather than a question of ‘why’. Gorter et al. (2013) propose that trilingualism is a viable solution for accommodating minority languages, national languages, and English. Production of trilingual textbooks incorporating Sinhala/Tamil, English, and Chinese instructions would not only offer better chances of grasping but also allow wider spaces for cross-linguistic and cross-cultural awareness. Translations in L1 could be integrated into the vocabulary, notes, and grammar sections of textbooks along with L2 translations. However, necessity and clarity should be considered in translating into L1 since in some cases learners are more familiar with L2 terms than L1 terms owing to infrequent use of L1 terms. This phenomenon is especially relevant to technical terms and linguistic terms since the English equivalents of such terms are more popular among learners than their L1 counterparts. L1 could also be used to dispel ambiguity where some English translations are contextually inaccurate. For example, the word ‘xiǎoqū’ which means ‘community’ in Chinese is translated as ‘estate’ in Volume 2 Unit 11 of HJC. The English word ‘estate’ planted in the Sri Lankan context during the colonial era refers to tea or rubber estates which most learners may find contradictory with the context in the lesson. L1 could be used to dispel such ambiguous terms and to provide footnotes on culture-loaded terms alien to the learners.

Integration of multiculturalism – A horizontal perspective towards local, target, and global cultures

As proposed by UNESCO (2017), textbook writers should ensure that textbooks and other learning materials provide a fair and accurate representation of cultures. One of the critical issues in global textbooks, as evidenced by the present study is that minority and lesser popular cultures are often neglected in them. Thus, as claimed by Kirkgöz and Ağçam (2018), a good balance is required between local, target, and international cultures in teaching material to increase learners’ awareness of the social conventions of other cultures. Vocabulary is one of the key areas where local textbook writers have the potential to incorporate multiculturalism into textbooks. Culture-loaded terms, proper names, etc. could be included as supplementary words in cases where they could hinder learners’ acquisition of the target language and culture in the main vocabulary. It should be ensured that textbooks avoid presenting religions as uniform and timeless systems and that there is no overrepresentation of some genders (UNESCO, 2017). Character design is a key area where multiculturalism is portrayed in a language textbook. Features and categories around characters such as age, gender, nationality, and race, the voicing agency of characters such as their social practices

and participation in public life, and the role of characters in the narrative are key concerns in character design (Canale, 2022). From a bird's-eye view, the textbook producers should ensure inclusiveness which is a prime principle of translanguaging pedagogy.

Textbooks free of ideological and hegemonic practices

Language teaching and learning are located within complex webs of political and historical contexts and sociolinguistic practices largely mediated through textbooks which make them ideologically non-neutral (Curdt-Christiansen & Weninger, 2018). Thus, while acknowledging that most textbooks are not neutral, it is a primary obligation of textbook writers to ensure the optimal neutrality of textbooks. Ideologies could range from the personal level of textbook writers to national, regional, and global levels. They could also take diverse forms such as prejudice against or favoritism of ethnic groups, religions, countries, or regions. The findings of the present study demonstrate that China's polarization with the West and patriotism towards China are visible in cultural texts. The translanguaging model transcends national boundaries and embraces the world as a whole and learning communities are aimed at developing 21st-century global competence and becoming global citizens in an interconnected society (Fu et al., 2019). Thus, translanguaging pedagogy demands textbooks devoid of ideological practices that ensure equity and equality, inclusiveness, social justice, and harmonious existence for learners of different linguistic, and socio-cultural settings.

Chinese language education is relatively new to Sri Lankan context and its hegemonic outlook has not yet been significantly influential in Chinese language education due to its limitations. However, English education in Sri Lanka could shed some light on how ideological and hegemonic practices have operated in Sri Lankan language education, which also has some relevance to Chinese language education since English medium instruction is dominant in Chinese language programs and learning material. Half a century after liberation from colonial rule, colonial ideology and linguistic imperialism are still lingering in Sri Lankan English education largely in forms of native speakerism and elitist identity. This could be related to the 'new language hierarchy' triggered by the colonial educational system in Sri Lanka (Coperehewa, 2011). Translanguaging pedagogy perceives all participatory languages as equal elements in learners' linguistic repertoire, unlike the monolingual approaches which perceive target language as the only benefactor. Thus, incorporating the translanguaging model into textbooks would assist teaching learning process to drive away superior language ideologies and provide a safe space for all learners to equally contribute to and engage in the teaching-learning process.

Conclusion

The present study examined a corpus of two CFL textbooks used in Sri Lanka from a translanguaging stance using content analysis. As evidenced by the study, there is a critical discrepancy in the representation of local and global

cultures in the textbooks which is especially distinct in the interlocutors and their nationality options. The present study examined a corpus of two CFL textbooks used in Sri Lanka from a translanguaging stance using content analysis. As evidenced by the study, there is a critical discrepancy in the representation of local and global cultures in the textbooks which is especially distinct in the interlocutors and their nationality options. Adaptation is predominantly promoted as a unilateral affair where the foreigner always adapts to the target culture whereas the opposite rarely occurs. There are evidence of socio-cultural and political polarization of China with the west in the textbooks which have affected their neutrality.

In a general sense, the present study proposes that contextual sensitivity should be ensured in producing textbooks for Sri Lankan Chinese language learners, which is the foundation for the design of language materials since language learning is contextually dynamic (Widodo et al., 2017). More specifically, the study proposes a framework from three perspectives: incorporation of L1 into textbooks, integration of multiculturalism, and freeing textbooks of Ideological and hegemonic practices for designing translanguaging-oriented CFL textbooks. While the findings of the present study would be instrumental in adapting and designing more inclusive textbooks for teaching Chinese in Sri Lanka, it has its own limitations and there is much room for further studies on the topic. Textbooks account for only one category in the typology of learning material and there is room for discussion on how other types of CFL learning material confirm with translanguaging pedagogy. It is of paramount importance to address the existing issues in the CFL material as there have been many paradigm shifts in 21st century language education globally which the Sri Lankan language education at large has not yet paid adequate attention.

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