

The Meaning of Elementary and Kindergarten Teachers' Instructions for Education Toward International Understanding

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Introduction

In 1952, a drive for Education Toward International Understanding was accepted at the 7th UNESCO General Assembly. Forty-some years have passed since then, and educators have been taking a growing interest in Education Toward International Understanding. In recent elementary through high school education in Japan, Education toward International Understanding is no longer considered a special type of education. Rather, this kind of education has been incorporated into everyday Japanese education. Therefore, there is a need for good and effective international awareness materials which are already familiar to children. Foreign picture books may be useful as one teaching material for Education Toward International Understanding. Such picture books feature different cultures, thoughts, and more, in order to assist Japanese children to understand foreign cultures, and also their own Japanese culture. The definitions of foreign picture books in this paper are: 1) ones which are authored by foreign writers (and which include materials or stories about Japanese people); and 2) ones written about foreign subject matter, by Japanese authors. These two types are books which are considered useful in assisting Japanese children to understand foreign cultures.

In many Western countries, picture books are used in language art classes; but also in classes of Arithmetic, Science, Social Studies, and in other classes and of course are used as materials to teach understanding of different cultures as well.

What is the case in Japan? How are picture books used as materials to teach International Understanding, in Japanese Kindergartens and Elementary schools? The purpose of this research is to determine these things. The writer would like to clarify how Japanese teachers select picture books; and how they use these books in their classes. By doing this, we can more fully understand the actual conditions regarding Instruction Toward International Understanding in Japanese schools.

The project team (which consisted of Kindergarten teachers, and scholars of children's literature and picture books) in 1992 and 1993 conducted a survey regarding picture book usage among Japanese Kindergarten teachers, Elementary school teachers, and parents who have young children.

In a previous paper, the writer presented the results of a survey from the viewpoint of early English education. In this paper the writer will present the results of a survey based on cross tabulation; and will analyse the following matter. The writer will also determine tendencies of instruction methodologies, and thoughts of teachers who intend to use picture books in order to have their students understand foreign cultures.

Outline of survey

Investigation 1. Purpose: to investigate the awareness of Japanese teachers of practical uses of picture books as one teaching material for accelerating education toward International Understanding.

Investigation 2. Purpose: to investigate actual conditions regarding the ways in which Japanese teachers use picture books in their classes.

The data was analysed using χ^2 -test.

Implementation

The survey was conducted from November 1992 through March 1993.

The subjects were teachers (Kindergarten and Elementary school), and parents in Tokyo. 661 people were surveyed.

Kindergarten teachers: 147

Elementary school teachers: 211

Parents: 303

Ages of those surveyed:

Teachers in their 20's: 69

... 30's: 120

... 40's: 116

... 50's: 45

Parents in their teens: 1

... 20's: 14

... 30's: 213

... 40's: 75

... 50's: 1

Results

I. Correlation between "The Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials" and the contents.

1. Correlation with the contents

(TABLE 1) Correlation between

① "The Choice of Using Picture Books as Teaching Materials" and ② "The Choice of Well-known Fables, Myths, and Fairy tales".

$$\chi^2 = 55.6795$$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	31 (29.8)	36 (34.6)	37 (35.6)	104 (100.0)
Neutral	11 (8.5)	69 (46.5)	58 (45.0)	129 (100.0)
Negative	7 (6.3)	22 (19.6)	83 (74.1)	112 (100.0)
Total	49 (14.2)	118 (34.2)	178 (51.6)	345 (100.0)

TABLE 1 shows that Japanese teachers who choose picture books depending on their usefulness as teaching materials, have a tendency to choose well-known fables, myths, and fairy tales. This tendency is found in present Japanese language textbooks for lower grades. "The Big Turnip" is considered to be one such example.

(TABLE 2) Correlation between ① “The Choice of Picture Books Which Contain Elements for the Teaching of Manners” and ② “The Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials”

$$x^2 = 65.0606$$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	17 (34.7)	18 (36.7)	14 (28.5)	49 (100.0)
Neutral	12 (10.2)	55 (46.0)	51 (43.2)	116 (100.0)
Negative	6 (3.4)	44 (24.6)	129 (72.1)	179 (100.0)
Total	35 (10.1)	117 (33.8)	194 (56.1)	346 (100.0)

(TABLE 3) Correlation between ① “The Choice of Picture Books Which Contain Factors for the Teaching Discipline” and ② “The Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials”

$$x^2 = 39.9757$$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	24 (49.0)	19 (38.8)	6 (12.2)	49 (100.0)
Neutral	30 (25.4)	57 (48.3)	31 (20.3)	118 (100.0)
Negative	23 (13.0)	73 (41.2)	81 (45.8)	177 (100.0)
Total	77 (22.4)	149 (43.3)	118 (34.3)	344 (100.0)

TABLE 2 and TABLE 3 show that Japanese teachers who intend to choose picture books as teaching materials, have a tendency to choose picture books which contain elements illustrating discipline. The correlation between “The Choice of the Picture Books Which Contain Elements of Teaching Discipline ” and “The Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials” is especially high.

(TABLE 4) Correlation between ① “The Choice of Picture Books with Emotionally Moving Stories” and ② “The Choice of Using Picture Books as Teaching Materials”

$$x^2 = 39.9757$$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	42 (85.7)	6 (12.2)	1 (2.0)	49 (100.0)
Neutral	76 (64.4)	37 (31.4)	5 (4.2)	118 (100.0)
Negative	94 (52.6)	64 (35.8)	21 (11.7)	179 (100.0)
Total	212 (61.3)	107 (30.9)	27 (7.8)	346 (100.0)

TABLE 4 shows that there are quite a few teachers who would like to produce impressions on their students with the picture books. This seems to be because there is less opportunity for the children to encounter to be impressed in their daily lives.

2. Correlation between “Motivation of Choosing Picture Books” and the tendency

(TABLE 5) Correlation between ① “The Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials” and ② “Choice of Picture Books which Value Texts More than Pictures”

$$x^2 = 14.4644$$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	25 (21.6)	44 (37.9)	47 (40.5)	116 (100.0)
Neutral	14 (9.1)	55 (35.7)	85 (55.2)	154 (100.0)
Negative	10 (13.2)	19 (25.0)	47 (61.8)	76 (100.0)
Total	49 (14.2)	118 (34.1)	179 (51.7)	346 (100.0)

(TABLE 6) Correlation between ① “Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials” and ② “Choice of Picture Books Recommended by the Ministry of Education, or Other Organizations, As Being Good Books”

$$x^2 = 11.5138$$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	26 (18.4)	47 (33.3)	68 (48.2)	141 (100.0)
Neutral	14 (12.7)	46 (41.8)	50 (45.5)	110 (100.0)
Negative	8 (8.6)	25 (26.9)	60 (64.5)	93 (100.0)
Total	48 (14.0)	118 (34.3)	178 (51.7)	344 (100.0)

(TABLE 7) Correlation between
 ①“Choice of Picture Books which Contain Fantasy Stories” and ②“Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials”
 $x^2=9.00413$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	47 (95.9)	2 (4.1)	0 (0.0)	49 (100.0)
Neutral	94 (79.7)	23 (19.5)	1 (0.8)	118 (100.0)
Negative	157 (87.7)	20 (11.2)	2 (1.1)	179 (100.0)
Total	298 (86.1)	45 (13.0)	3 (0.9)	346 (100.0)

(TABLE 8) Correlation between
 ①“Choice of Picture Books Containing Elements Incorporating Child Psychology” and ②“Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials”
 $x^2=8.47914$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	44 (89.8)	4 (8.2)	1 (2.0)	49 (100.0)
Neutral	87 (74.7)	25 (21.4)	5 (4.3)	117 (100.0)
Negative	125 (70.2)	40 (22.5)	13 (7.3)	178 (100.0)
Total	256 (74.4)	69 (20.1)	19 (5.5)	344 (100.0)

TABLE 5 through TABLE 8 show that each TABLE has a slight correlation with either a 1% or a 5% significant difference. Though there seems to be a problem about the viewpoint of choice of picture books, since teaching materials for understanding toward International Understanding tends to depend on valuing text more than pictures.

(TABLE 9) Correlation between
 ①“The Choice of Picture Books with Emotionally-Moving Stories” and
 ②“Choose the Picture Books with the Intention of Having Students Understand Foreign Cultures”
 $x^2=15.9123$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	115 (55.0)	60 (28.7)	34 (16.3)	209 (100.0)
Neutral	39 (39.8)	39 (39.8)	20 (20.4)	98 (100.0)
Negative	8 (30.8)	7 (26.9)	11 (42.3)	26 (100.0)
Total	162 (48.6)	106 (31.8)	65 (19.5)	333 (100.0)

As mentioned above there is a correlation between “The Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials” and “The Choice of Picture Books with Emotionally Moving Stories”. TABLE 9 shows that there is also a correlation between “Picture Book Choices of Teachers Who Intend to Have Students Understand Foreign Cultures” and “The Choice of Picture Books with Emotionally- Moving Stories”. Therefore the results show that these teachers have a desire to have the students hold communion with warm, emotionally moving stories, through picture books.

(TABLE 10) Correlation between
 ①“Choose the Picture Books with the Intention of Having Students Understand Foreign Cultures” and ②
 “Choice of Well-known Stories, Myths, and Fairy Tales”
 $x^2=16.7064$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	58 (59.8)	31 (32.0)	8 (8.2)	97 (100.0)
Neutral	58 (47.2)	41 (33.3)	24 (19.5)	123 (100.0)
Negative	44 (39.6)	34 (30.6)	33 (29.7)	111 (100.0)
Total	160 (48.3)	106 (32.0)	65 (19.6)	331 (100.0)

Myths and folk tales reflect the history of a country, the people living in that country, and their thoughts and cultural backgrounds and cultures. Therefore there is a correlation between the aim of teachers who intend to have students understand foreign cultures, and choice of well-known stories, myths, and fairy tales.

(TABLE 11) Correlation between
 ①“Choose the Picture Books with the Intention of Having Students Understand Foreign Cultures” and ②“The Choice of Picture Books Which Contain Factors for the Teaching of Discipline”
 $\chi^2=24.9524$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	50 (66.7)	18 (24.0)	7 (9.3)	75 (100.0)
Neutral	67 (47.2)	54 (38.0)	21 (14.8)	142 (100.0)
Negative	44 (38.6)	34 (29.8)	36 (31.6)	114 (100.0)
Total	161 (48.6)	106 (32.0)	64 (19.3)	331 (100.0)

(TABLE 12) Correlation between
 ①“The Choice of Picture Books Which Contain Elements for the Teaching of Manners” and ②“Choose Picture Books with the Intention of Having Students Understand Foreign Cultures”
 $\chi^2=24.9524$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	20 (60.6)	9 (27.3)	4 (12.1)	33 (100.0)
Neutral	51 (54.0)	38 (33.0)	14 (12.4)	13 (100.0)
Negative	80 (43.0)	59 (31.7)	47 (25.3)	186 (100.0)
Total	161 (48.5)	100 (31.9)	65 (19.6)	332 (100.0)

TABLE 11 and 12 show that there is a correlation between “the teachers who intend to have their students understand foreign cultures” and “Choice of Picture Books Which Contain Factors for the Teaching of Discipline”. The result shows that Japanese teachers who intend to choose picture books to have the students understand foreign cultures have a consciousness about the importance of teaching the existence of different cultures.

(TABLE 13) Correlation between
 ①“Choose Picture Books with the Intention of Having Students Understand Foreign Cultures” and ②“Have Children Read Picture Books on a Great Variety of Topics”
 $\chi^2=16.1746$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	149 (50.9)	95 (32.4)	46 (6.7)	293 (100.0)
Neutral	9 (36.0)	9 (36.0)	7 (28.0)	25 (100.0)
Negative	4 (28.6)	2 (14.3)	8 (57.1)	14 (100.0)
Total	162 (46.8)	106 (31.8)	64 (19.3)	332 (100.0)

There is a correlation between “Teachers Who Intend to Have Students Understand Foreign Cultures” and “Have Students Read Picture Books on a Great Variety of Topics”. To have students better understand foreign cultures means to give more opportunity for students to read picture books contain foreign cultures. TABLE 13 shows that the teachers who intend to have students understand foreign cultures have a tendency of having students read picture books on a great variety of topics.

(TABLE 14) Correlation between
 ①“The Recognition of Devices used in Picture Books” and ②“Choice of Picture Books with the Intention of Having Students Understand Foreign Cultures”
 $\chi^2=15.8905$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	93 (59.2)	60 (38.2)	4 (2.5)	157 (100.0)
Neutral	46 (44.7)	53 (51.5)	4 (3.9)	103 (100.0)
Negative	27 (42.9)	28 (44.4)	8 (12.7)	63 (100.0)
Total	168 (51.4)	141 (43.7)	16 (5.0)	323 (100.0)

The history of picture books in Western countries, for example, is much longer than that in Japan. During the long history of picture books in Western countries, many devices have been practiced, invented, created and studied. TABLE 14 shows that the teachers who intend to have students understand foreign cultures study foreign picture books, and read a lot of them.

(TABLE 15) Correltaion between
 ①“Choose Picture Books with the Intention of Having Students Understand Foreign Cultures” and ② “Choice of Picture Books which Value Text”
 $\chi^2=11.2022$

② \ ①	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Positive	64 (57.7)	24 (21.6)	23 (20.7)	111 (100.0)
Neutral	61 (42.1)	59 (40.7)	25 (17.2)	145 (100.0)
Negative	36 (47.4)	23 (30.3)	17 (22.4)	76 (100.0)
Total	161 (48.5)	106 (31.9)	65 (19.6)	332 (100.0)

As mentioned before there is a correlation between “Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials” and “Choice of Picture Books Which Value Texts More Than Pitures”. TABLE 15 shows that there is also a correlation between “Choose Piture Books with the Intention of Having Students Understand Foreign Cultures” and “Choice of Picture Books which Value Text More Than Pitures”. Therefore not only teachers who believe in the use of picture books as teaching materials but also teachers who intend to have students understand foreign cultures have a tendency of valuing texts more than pictures when they choose books.

Conclusion

1. Picture Book Choices of Teachers Who See Picture Books as Teaching Materials

(A) Japanese teachers who were surveyed focus on picture books which contain useable subject matter, such as manners and discipline. Therefore, correlation between “Choice of Well-known Stories, Myths, and Fairy Tales” and “Choice of Picture Books as Teaching Materials” is shown to be quite high. This explains why picture books which contain Japanese morality stories are willingly selected by the teachers. Picture books which contain elements of manners or discipline tend to emphasize text more than pictures. Therefore, Japanese teachers have a strong tendency to choose picture books with emotionally-moving stories; picture books recommended by the Ministry of Education (or other organizaions) as being good books; picture books which contain fantasy stories; and also picture books containing elements which incorporate child psychology.

These results show that of those who use picture books in classes, the greatest percentage of Japanese teachers themselves read picture books in classes (Kindergarten teachers: 97.1% ; Elementary school teachers: 93.8%), as compared to other activities done with picture books. On the other hand, other activities, such as having the students make “Kamishibai”, perform plays or dramas (Kindergarten teachers: 12.9% ; Elementary school teachers: 17.1%);or have students make their own picture books (Kindergarten teachers: 15.8% ; Elementary school teachers: 21.8%) are not practiced as much in classes.

(B) There is no correlation shown between “Choose Picture Books as Teaching Materials” and “Have Children Read Picture Books on a Great Variety of Topics.” Nor is there a

correlation between “Choose Picture Books as Teaching Materials” and “Have Children Read the Same Books Repeatedly”. From these results, it does not seem that Japanese teachers who choose picture books from the point of view of usability as teaching materials deem it important to have children read the same picture books repeatedly, or to have them read picture books on a great variety of topics. Since there is no correlation shown between “Choose Picture Books as Teaching Materials” and “Picture Books Should be Read Not Only in Kindergartens and at the Elementary School Lower Grade Level, But Also at Higher Grade Levels”, such teachers’ usage of picture books as teaching materials seems limited only to lower graders in Elementary school, and to Kindergarten pupils.

2. Picture Book Choices of Teachers Who Intend to Have Students Understand Foreign Cultures (A) General Tendencies regarding Choices of Picture Books

Similar to the results in 1 (A) above, when choosing picture books, teachers who intend to have students understand foreign cultures tend to consider the quality of the text as being important. There is no significant difference shown between “Choose the Picture Books for the Intention of Having Students Understand Foreign Cultures” and “Choose Picture Books Based on the Quality of Pictures”. However, there is a slight correlation between, with a significant difference of 5%, between “Choose Picture Books Based on the Quality of Texts.”

In addition, there are significant correlations (with some differences) between “Choose the Picture Books Based on the Quality of Texts” and “Recommended Picture Books”, “Well-known Stories, Myths, and Fairy Tales”, “Impressive Books”, “Picture Books Which Contain Discipline”, “Have Children Read Picture Books on a Great Variety of Topics”, and “Picture Books Should be Read Only in Kindergarten and at the Elementary School Level, But Not at Higher Grade Level.”

Based on the results of this research, the writer believes that usage of picture books should be increased in classes at Japanese Elementary schools and Kindergartens.

3. Wider Usage of Picture Books as Teaching Materials

Picture books are very helpful in introducing foreign food; clothing and shelter; different races; and different expressions and gestures. Japanese teachers can learn a great deal about wider usage of picture books as teaching materials in classes, from colleagues in foreign countries. Therefore, the writer believes it advisable to soon conduct the same kind of survey in Elementary schools and Kindergartens in the United States; and then to compare the results with Japanese results. Results from this proposed U.S. research, and subsequent comparative research, will be reported at a later date.

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APPENDIX

A QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT PICTURE BOOKS

Picture books provide the sustenance for a child's development. And when giving guidance and attention to our children no small amount of consideration must be given to the stage of growth of the child. With this in mind, we would ask you to complete the following questionnaire regarding your influence and value using picture books in kindergarten, grade school and at home. The data gathered from this survey will help us to study the value of using picture books for educational purposes. This survey was created by kindergarten and elementary school teachers from the Tokyo area in Japan.

It is not necessary to name your school or the persons completing this survey. A quick response will be appreciated. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

HOW TO ANSWER

Follow these instructions and write the number of your answer in the boxes on the right.

Choose no more than three answers.

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1) Dictionary | 2) Illustrated text | 3) Picture book |
| 4) Newspaper | 5) Other | |

If your answer is not among the choices, you may write the appropriate answer in the parentheses.

MISCELLANEOUS

Please draw your answers from relevant experiences in the last year only.

[1] How many damaged picture books must be replaced in the course of a year? Please exclude comic books or comic type magazines from your definition of this term.

- | | | | |
|------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1) 0 | 2) Under 50 | 3) 51-100 | 4) Over 100 |
|------|-------------|-----------|-------------|

[2] How many picture books are there from other countries in the school library?

- | | | | |
|------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 1) 0 | 2) Under 100 | 3) 101-200 | 4) 201-300 |
| 5) 301-500 | 6) Over 500 | | |

READING ENVIRONMENT, OPINIONS ABOUT PICTURE BOOKS, GUIDANCE

(You may choose as many answers as you like for these questions)

[3] What sort of environment is created to generate for reading picture books?

- 1) A special reading corner just for picture books

- 2) Mixed in the classroom library corner
- 3) Expand the number of picture books in the school library
- 4) Display posters and bulletins about new books in order to generate interest
- 5) Pamphlets and PA announcements about books to generate interest
- 6) Handmade posters and book related crafts on display

[4] What do you think is a good way to elevate understanding of picture books?

- 1) Make picture books a topic of discussion in communiques with parents
- 2) Promote reading of picture books through a special reading group of parents and children
- 3) A picture book reading week
- 4) A specific time set aside for story telling time
- 5) Sustained silent reading time
- 6) Other

[5] Before you actually discover the contents of a picture book, what aspect of the book are you most interested in viewing?

- 1) Color and design of the book cover
- 2) Title
- 3) Author
- 4) Publisher
- 5) A pop-up or paper fold-out book
- 6) Pocket sized book, or one with an unusual binding
- 7) Size of letters, layout of text
- 8) Construction (plastic pages, cloth, ridged pages, paper)
- 9) Other

[6] What sort of illustrations in picture books do you find appealing?

- 1) One that leaves you feeling warm and friendly
- 2) One that is surrealistic
- 3) Ones that are drawn to specifically suit children's tastes
- 4) One that has artistic quality
- 5) One that is comical or humorous
- 6) One that visually suits the story
- 7) Other

[7] What sort of text is desirable?

- 1) One that is warmhearted and funny

- 2) One that is fun to read aloud
- 3) One that increases a student's vocabulary or other language skills
- 4) One that utilizes repetition
- 5) One that has a catchy rhythm and cadence
- 6) One that uses dialect and jargon
- 7) Font, size and shape of the letters
- 8) Other

[8] With regards to educational value, what method do you used to interest students in picture books?

- 1) Reading (aloud) for listening purposes
- 2) A picture-story show
- 3) One that emphasizes creativity and originality
- 4) A dramatization of true events
- 5) Slides, video, other audio visual aids
- 6) Other

[9] What do you think about letting students borrow picture books?

- 1) On a regular basis
- 2) Sometimes
- 3) There is no demand for borrowing books
- 4) There is no framework for borrowing books
- 5) Only from the school library
- 6) Other

For question [10] through [19] below, choose only one from these six answers to respond to each question.

- 1) Always
- 2) Fairly often
- 3) With equal regularity
- 4) Seldom
- 5) Never
- 6) Unknown

[10] When choosing a picture book, the importance you assign to the quality of pictures themselves is the deciding factor.

- [11] When choosing a picture book, the importance you assign to the quality of the text is the deciding factor.
- [12] When choosing a picture book, you act on the recommendation that the book has received, and its popularity as the deciding factor.
- [13] When deciding on the subject matter, you choose well-known fables, myths, and fairy tales:
- [14] When deciding the subject matter, you choose according to its content as related to subject area being taught at the time.
- [15] When deciding on the subject matter, you choose according to the emotional and social level of the child and the book's ability to portray the world realistically.
- [16] When deciding on the subject matter, you choose according to the enriching ideas and creations in the books.
- [17] When deciding on the subject matter, you choose according to its humanistic value, and ability to stir one's feelings.
- [18] When deciding on the subject matter, you choose according to what it has to say about the human condition, and moral values.
- [19] When deciding on the subject matter, you choose according to its ability to speak to one's daily conduct, and imbue one with a sense of morality as applied to one's own life style.

REFLECTING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PICTURE BOOKS

For questions [20] to [27] below, choose only one answer from these six answers to respond to each question.

- 1) Unequivocally true
- 2) Probably true
- 3) No generalization possible--sometimes true, sometimes false
- 4) Probably false
- 5) Absolutely false
- 6) Don't know

- [20] Children should be made to read picture books on a great variety of topics.

- [21] In order for children to enjoy picture books, one would suppose they must like reading as well.
- [22] Its best to have children read books of the best quality repeatedly, even if there are not many, than to have them read many of average quality.
- [23] If a student masters how to read or recognize words through a picture book, he should be encouraged to quickly move on to books of higher reading levels.
- [24] Students should not be reading picture books only in kindergarten and at the elementary school level, but also at higher grade levels.
- [25] It's not as easy to feel comfortable with a foreign book as a domestic one.
- [26] Parents and teachers like their children to be exposed to foreign cultures through picture books.
- [27] Picture books from other countries have better composition and are more interesting than domestic ones.