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Evaluation of Vocabulary and Subject Contents  
in Twenty-first Century College English



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## Abstract

Suaréz (2001) found that 98% of classroom instructions are from teaching materials, not teachers, and 90% of students' homework time is structured by materials. In China where college English is a compulsory course, the importance of textbooks is quite self-evident. However, facing the dazzling prosperity of publication, it is definitely no easy job in choosing an appropriate textbook. Most of the textbooks in wide use today were published after the year of 1999 and are generally considered to be the fourth generation. Yet, ten years has passed since the publication of them, during which period syllabus has been revised twice, whether these books still suit the requirements of the new version of College English Curriculum Requirement and the students' needs is the focus of the present study.

*Twenty-first Century College English* is selected as the textbooks in question, and the aspects of vocabulary and subject matters are mainly evaluated. The first group of data acquired is the coverage of vocabulary of three levels (basic requirement, intermediate requirement and advanced requirement) in the whole book and Section A: 77.91% and 65.40% , 44.65% and 33.09% , 22.31% and 14.39%, the study of coverage of vocabulary of the three levels in four bands of books reveals that there is gradient in the organization of vocabulary but not an explicit one, the studies of subject matters on the basis of classification and questionnaires find that there's much room of improvement in the selection of subject matters but organization of them is worthy of retaining.

In a word, this evaluation not only exposes the problems existing in textbooks in question, it also provides proposition and guidance for the future textbook compilation.

Key Words: textbooks, evaluation, *College English Curriculum Requirement*, *Twenty-first college English*, coverage of vocabulary, gradient of vocabulary, subject matter

## 摘要

Suaréz (2001) 在研究中发现，课堂教学信息的 98% 并不是来自教师而是来自所使用的教材，学生作业的时间安排的 90% 也是由教材决定的。在大学英语大多还作为必修课的中国，教材的重要性不言而喻。然而，面对令人眼花缭乱的教材出版市场，选择一套合适的教材绝非易事。现在广泛应用的教材大都出版在 1999 年以后，一般被认为是第四代教材。然而，十年的时间过去了，大纲也重新进行了两次修订，这些教材是否符合新的大学英语课程教学要求，是否适合现在的学生需求是此研究关注的重点。

此研究选取了《21 世纪大学英语》作为评估的对象，研究重点定为教材中的词汇和题材。首先，研究得出的三组数据分别是大纲中规定的一般要求，较高要求和更高要求的词汇分别在整本教材和 Section A 中的覆盖率为 77.91% 和 65.40%，44.65% 和 33.09%，22.31% 和 14.39%；然后，通过研究该套教材中的四册书分别对这三个要求的词汇的覆盖发现该套教材的词汇安排有梯度但不明显；依据划分种类和问卷调查对题材的研究发现题材的选择还有很多地方需要改进但对题材的组织值得提倡。

总之，该评估不仅让我们更明白所研究教材中存在的问题，也为此后教材的编写提供了意见和指导。

**关键词：**教材，评估，《大学英语课程教学要求》，《21 世纪大学英语》，词汇覆盖率，词汇梯度，题材

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	I
ABSTRACT .....	II
摘要 .....	III
LIST OF TABLES AND CHARTS .....	VI
ABBREVIATIONS .....	VII
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND .....	1
1.2 PURPOSES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE PAPER .....	5
1.3 ORGANIZATION OF THE PAPER .....	7
CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW .....	9
2.1 OVERSEAS RESEARCHES ON TEXTBOOK EVALUATION .....	9
2.1.1 <i>Cunningsworth's evaluation system</i> .....	9
2.1.2 <i>McDonough and Shaw's evaluation system</i> .....	12
2.1.3 <i>Breen and Candlin's evaluation guide</i> .....	13
2.1.4 <i>Summary</i> .....	15
2.2 STUDIES OF TEXTBOOK EVALUATION IN CHINA .....	16
2.2.1 <i>The current situation of research on textbook evaluation in China</i> .....	16
2.2.2 <i>Zhao Yong's evaluation criteria</i> .....	17
CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	19
3.1 AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH MATERIALS AND TOOLS .....	19
3.1.1 <i>A brief introduction to textbook corpora</i> .....	19
3.1.2 <i>An introduction to the research tool: Range32.exe</i> .....	21
3.2 EVALUATION IDEAS APPLIED IN THIS PAPER .....	22
3.3 THREE CRITERIA TO EVALUATE THE TEXTBOOKS IN QUESTION .....	23
3.3.1 <i>Coverage of core vocabulary</i> .....	23

3.3.1.1 The study of core vocabulary .....	23
3. 3.1.2 A series of reference word lists.....	25
3.3.2 <i>Gradient of vocabulary</i> .....	28
3.3.2.1 What is gradient and what is the working definition of it in this paper?.....	28
3.3.2.2 How to testify the gradient of vocabulary? .....	29
3.3.3 <i>Subject matter</i> .....	30
3.3.3.1 Why subject matter is selected as one of the criteria and what aspects are evaluated?.....	30
3.3.3.2 Ways to acquire data and conduct analysis .....	32
<b>CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS AND ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>4.1 COVERAGE OF CORE VOCABULARY .....</b>	<b>36</b>
4.1.1 <i>Results</i> .....	36
4.1.2 <i>Analysis</i> .....	38
<b>4.2 GRADIENT OF VOCABULARY .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>4.3 SUBJECT MATTER .....</b>	<b>46</b>
4.3.1 <i>The width and variety of subject matters</i> .....	47
4.4.2 <i>Interesting aspect of subject matters</i> .....	48
4.4.3 <i>Organization of subject matters</i> .....	50
<b>4.4 SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>5.1 CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>作者简介.....</b>	<b>78</b>

## **List of tables and charts**

Table 1.1 The list of the English teaching syllabus issued in China

Table 1.2 Outstanding textbooks of the fourth generation

Table 3.1 Vocabulary required in *College English Teaching Syllabus* (1999)

Table 3.2 Vocabulary required in *CECR* (For Trial Implementation) (2004)

Table 3.3 Vocabulary required in *CECR* (2007)

Table 4.1 Processing result of running Section A of Unit 1 Book 1 on the basis of BR family list

Table 4.2 Processing result on the basis of BR family list

Table 4.3 Processing result on the basis of IR family list

Table 4.4 Processing result on the basis of AR family list

Table 4.5 Processing result on the basis of family list of top 5000 words from COCA

Table 4.6 Processing result on the basis of family list of active vocabulary

Table 4.7 Processing results of running Section A of Book 1 of NHCE and 21<sup>st</sup> on the basis of BR family list respectively

Table 4.8 Classification of subject matters in Book 1 of 21<sup>st</sup>

Table 4.9 Results collected from questionnaire

Chart 4.1 Chart 1 Number of tokens in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>

Chart 4.2 Number of word families in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>

Chart 4.3 The distribution of word families of three ranks in the four bands of books

Chart 4.4 The ratio of tokens of basic requirement in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>

Chart 4.5 The ratio of tokens of intermediate requirement in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>

Chart 4.6 The ratio of tokens of advanced requirement in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>

Chart 4.7 Distribution of different categories of subject matters in the whole set of 21<sup>st</sup>

## **Abbreviations**

CECR	<i>College English Curriculum Requirement (2007)</i>
21 <sup>st</sup>	<i>Twenty-first Century College English</i>
NHCE	<i>New Horizon College English</i>
CEIC	<i>College English Integrated Course</i>
BR	Basic Requirement
IR	Intermediate Requirement
AR	Advanced Requirement

## Chapter One Introduction

With the wide application of computers in language learning, virtual classes and on-line learning are playing an increasingly important role in the language acquisition of college students, yet, traditional classes which have been prevalent in college English teaching have not yet been replaced and college English curriculum is still prescribed as a required basic course for undergraduate students (CECR, 2007, p.24). In traditional classrooms, Suárez(2001) found that 98% of classroom instructions are from teaching materials, not teachers, and 90% of students' homework time is structured by materials (as cited in Zhao Yong, 2005, p.1). Cunninghamsworth believes that materials play a vital role in any teaching or learning process and textbooks are best seen as a resource in achieving aims and objectives that have already been set in terms of learner needs (2002, p.7). Richards (2001) also claims that "Much of the language teaching that occurs throughout the world today could not take place without the extensive use of commercial textbooks" (as cited in Seyyed Ayatollah Razmjoo, 2007). Concerning the importance and position of textbooks in the process of language acquisition, college authorities and teachers have to be particularly careful in choosing appropriate textbooks. However, this is definitely no easy job with so many textbooks of different characteristics in existence. Therefore, the importance of textbook evaluation is quite self-evident.

### 1.1 Research background

Before evaluating textbooks, we need to retrospect to the development of linguistic theories and language learning theories which in turn exert great influences on the compilation of textbooks. Since the earliest traditional grammar, linguistic theories have undergone three main stages, namely, the structural grammar, transformational-generative grammar and functional grammar. Under the guidance and influence of these linguistic theories, the development of language learning theories can be roughly divided into five stages: behaviorism, cognitive theory, humanism, and constructivism, input hypothesis and output hypothesis. However, when these language learning theories were applied in the compilation of textbooks in China, they may be already doubted or out of date in foreign courtiers. Therefore, a direct link between language learning theories and the compilation of English textbooks in China is not clearly observed and

some intermediary seems necessary. In this paper, syllabus is regarded as the intermediary between the two for the following two reasons. On the one hand, syllabus design is understood as the organization of the selected contents into an ordered and practical sequence for teaching purposes. For the selection of materials to learn, the linguistic and language learning theories are the most influencing factors. In other words, these two kinds of theories shape the material selection and syllabus design. On the other hand, syllabus is considered to be the baton in the process of textbook compilation in China. A brief examination of the forewords of three sets of textbooks (21<sup>st</sup>, NHCE, CEIC) reveals the fact that the common aim of all compilers is to implement the different aspects of requirements of the corresponding syllabus they claim to follow. Therefore, the influence of linguistic and language learning theories on syllabus, together with the role of syllabus in textbook compilation justifies the syllabus's position as intermediary. Thus, the top task of reviewing the research background is to trace the development of syllabus.

Table 1.1 The list of the English teaching syllabus issued in China

List of syllabus	Year
<i>Public English Teaching syllabus</i>	1962
<i>Public English Teaching syllabus</i>	1977
<i>Public English Teaching syllabus</i>	1980
<i>College English Teaching syllabus</i>	1985-86
<i>College English Teaching syllabus</i>	1999
<i>College English Curriculum Requirement(for Trial Implementation)</i>	2004
<i>College English Curriculum Requirement</i>	2007

The history of syllabus can be told by the above table (Table 1.1). Although there is slight difference between the connotations of syllabus and curriculum, syllabus is very close in meaning to curriculum in curriculum's restricted sense. So the two curriculum requirements issued in the year of 2004 and 2007 are also listed in the above table. A rough examination of the table shows that there are four versions of syllabi amid twenty four years from 1962 to 1986. But from the year of 1999, three different versions are issued in less than ten years' time. This

rapid development of syllabus is in accordance with the rapid increasing proficiency of English of graduates from senior middle school and the increasing requirements from work and society. Usually, a new version of syllabus will urge the publication of a new generation of textbooks. Therefore, different generations of textbooks are elaborated below.

With reference to the table and English teaching reality in China, we can tell that “.....it was not until the founding of People’s Republic of China (PRC), especially the late 1960s that college English education was established and began its development (Fu Ke, 2004, p.200; Li Liangyou, 1988, p.542) (as cited in He Ruifang, 2009, p.19). Since then, the past 50 years has witnessed English textbooks coming into existence generation after generation. According to the classification made by Dong Yafen (1991) who has been the chief witness and user of college English textbooks, up to the 1990s, college English textbooks have undergone three main generations. The first generation went from 1961 to the eve of Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Textbooks of the first generation adopted 1950s’ traditional mode, namely, “Centering on texts with grammar as outlines”. During the Cultural Revolution, anything connected with English was criticized severely, thus ten years’ blank was left on the compilation of English textbooks. The second generation developed from 1979 to 1985, which still follows the teaching mode of the first generation in the main. The third generation began in the year of 1986 and ended when a new syllabus was established at the end of 1990s. During this period, communicative competence becomes the concern of college English Teaching for the first time. The textbooks of this period, take “*College English* (Fudan University, Peking University, etc), Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1986” as an example, which are the most widely used series, comprise five courses: integrated Course, two reading courses, fast reading course, and listening and speaking course. The separation of listening, speaking and writing offers students more opportunities to develop comprehensive language abilities (He Ruifang, 2009, p.30). Li Yinhua (2002) believes that the publication of several series of textbooks such as “21<sup>st</sup> century College English”, “New College English” etc, as well as the re-edition of “College English” “College Core English” mean a new generation--the fourth one--is coming into existence (as cited in Cai Jigang, 2008, p.85). During this period, a large number of excellent textbooks are springing up in the market of publication. The outstanding ones are listed in table 1.2.

Table 1.2 Outstanding textbooks of the fourth generation

Textbooks	Publishing Press	Year of Publication
<i>Twenty-first Century College English</i> (Fudan University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University)	Fudan University Press	1999
<i>New College English</i> (Zhejiang University)	Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press	1999
<i>College English (New)</i> (Fudan University, Peking University, etc)	Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press	2002
<i>Experiencing English</i>	Higher Education Press	2002
<i>New Horizon College English</i>	Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press	2002
<i>New Era Interactive English</i>	Tsinghua University Press	2004
<i>Stand Out College English</i>	Peking University Press	2004
<i>New Perspective English learning system</i>	Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press	2004

The above table shows the list of outstanding textbooks of the fourth generation, including the name of the textbooks, publication press and year of publication. According to the information collected, all these books are published before 2007 when CECR is issued. As a result, these textbooks are all compiled on the basis of the 1999 version of syllabus or the CECR (*For Trial implementation*). It means that while these books are still in wide use, a new version of CECR has been already issued. In response to the new versions, voices calling for the fifth generation of textbooks are echoing among language teachers and researchers. According to Huang Lin (2005), it is Cai Jigang who first proposed the concept of 'fifth generation of college English textbooks' in his speech made on the International Symposium on English Teaching Materials in the year of 2005. Since then, papers about the conceptions and guiding principles of the fifth generation textbooks appeared frequently on core journals, such as: Chen Jianlin (2007)

proposed a three-dimensional teaching system which is composed of theories, structure and methods; Cai Jigang (2008) listed several principles for the compilation of the fifth generation of textbooks.

By reviewing the development of syllabi and textbooks, we find that when arriving at the fourth generation, college English textbooks have been greatly revised and enriched, with meaningful pedagogical teaching content and methods. Yet, Liu Runqing and Dai Manchun (2003) discovers that only a small number of teachers feel greatly satisfied with the textbooks in use, nearly twenty percent of college English teachers feel that the current English textbook cannot meet the requirement of teaching reforms. Pondering on the complaints from college English teachers and the voice of calling for the fifth generation, it is well worth the effort to evaluate the fourth generation of textbooks to see whether they can still fulfill the purpose of college English teaching

## 1.2 Purposes and research questions of the paper

Nowhere in the word is the need of textbook (in this paper, textbook and textbook are all defined as the books used in classroom in college English teaching, so the two are used interchangeably) evaluation more urgent than that in China. In western classrooms, teachers are encouraged to choose and even make their own textbooks to suit their needs and teaching purposes. However, most universities authorities in China assign textbooks to teach and the final exams in those universities are usually related with these books. The dilemma now is that traditionally, the college authorities only have to make a choice among two or three set of textbooks. But now with the boom of publishing has generated a wide variety of textbooks. So when facing such a wide range of outstanding teaching materials available in the market of publication, especially when no definite evaluation criteria could be applied to the selection and evaluation of textbook, they cannot make objective choices. Some of them choose a textbook because of believing in the advertisement made by the press or being attracted by the physical features of the book. These kinds of situation highlight the urgency of a wide research in the evaluation of textbook.

In response to this call of urgency, research on textbook evaluation has mushroomed recently. When typed “college English textbook evaluation” in Wanfang Data, 109 results can be

found, and in the Google search engine, 435,000 relevant results can be found. However, when further analysis is made, the writer finds that there is a huge lack of specific studies. Most of these researches either trace back the history of evaluation theories in foreign countries or comment on the few popular evaluation systems.

Material evaluation refers to the attempts to measure the value of materials. For the purpose of evaluation, Cunningsworth (2002) made an elaborate statement.

Reasons for material evaluation activities are many and varied. The intention to adopt new textbooks is a major and frequent reason for evaluation. Another reason is to identify particular strengths and weakness in textbooks already in use, so that optimum use can be made of their strong points, whilst their weaker areas can be strengthened through adaptation or by substituting materials from other books.

From Cunningsworth's perspective of view, teachers need to evaluate materials in order to choose the ones they consider to be most appropriate to their specific teaching contexts. Under such circumstances, "evaluation is a matter of judging the fitness of something for a particular purpose" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p.96). In Chinese real teaching situations, as mentioned in last section, the syllabus determined by Ministry of Education is regarded as baton of college English teaching. So the matching process is mainly conducted between the textbooks and syllabus. In addition to that, textbook evaluation is particularly useful in teacher training programs and helps teachers to learn more about the nature of textbooks. They will know more clearly about the nature of the whole teaching materials and get a clear insight into methodology in the process of evaluation. Finally, the thorough analysis of the textbook may also provide the writer with some creative ideas for future revisions. (Zhao Yong, 2005, p.1-2).

After two purposes of textbook evaluation are explained, two research questions are listed below in accordance with the two purposes.

1) Are textbooks in question still able to meet the requirements of new CECR (2007)?

- a) How many words required in the CECR are covered in the textbooks? How are these words arranged in the textbooks?
- b) Can the subject matters selected for the textbooks fulfill the task of cultivating students' listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating abilities?

2) What can we do if improvement of the current textbooks should be done?

- a) What kind of words need to be furthered included in textbooks and how to organize them?
- b) What can we do to reselect and reorganize the subject matters in compilation of new textbooks?

In this research, 21<sup>st</sup> is selected as the target textbooks to be evaluated to answer the two questions above. There are two reasons for this choice. First, 21<sup>st</sup> was published in the year of 1999 and it made it clear that the series of textbooks is complied on the basis of the 1999 version of syllabus. According to Zhai Xiangjun, one of the chief editors of the series of 21<sup>st</sup>, the circulation of this series reached 240,000 and it was used in more than 300 universities in the year of 2001. Considered from its compilation principles, circulation and wide application, it can be regarded as representative of the fourth generation of textbooks. Second, as the issuance of new versions of CECR, revised editions of several existing college English textbooks have come into being, such as the second edition of New College English and NHCE were both issued in 2008, but information of the second edition of 21<sup>st</sup> can not be found on the Internet. From this point of view, 21<sup>st</sup> really suits our researching purposes of matching the fourth generation with the new CECR and finding room for further improvement.

In addition to answering the two research questions, a detailed analysis of the series of books will hopefully give the users a clear picture of the structure of the textbook and also reveals the strength and weakness to them. Therefore, the users can supplement some materials to make up the weakness in the textbook and make full use of the strength of the textbook in their process of teaching before the fifth generation come into being.

### 1.3 Organization of the paper

The paper, divided into five chapters, is organized as follows:

Chapter one briefly introduces the research background, namely, the development of teaching syllabus and college English textbooks in China. In the second section, two research questions are proposed and one set of textbooks are selected to be evaluated. Then an overview of the whole paper is also listed.

Chapter two gives a literature review of several popular textbook evaluation frameworks and then makes a brief comment on these frameworks about their theories and weak points. In

this part, the paper written by Zhao Yong is particularly mentioned for the four criteria proposed in his paper to evaluate textbooks are full of creativity and great value from the writer's perspective.

Chapter Three elaborates on the methodology of the study. In this chapter, two aspects of textbooks are proposed to be evaluated under the evaluation system: subject matter and vocabulary. For the vocabulary aspect, coverage of core vocabulary and gradient of vocabulary is mainly evaluated. For each aspect, relevant theories are presented and the ways to get the desired results are explained.

In Chapter Four, the results obtained are presented and analyzed in detail.

Chapter Five mainly deals with the implications of the research for future language teaching and learning. The limitation of the study is also mentioned in this chapter.

## Chapter Two Literature Review

The urgency of textbook evaluation has been being highlighted by the prosperity of publication market in China. However, a thorough review of the history of textbook evaluation both home and abroad leads to such a realization that although overseas researches have achieved many fruits and formed their own systems of evaluation, studies in this field in China are not very extensive. In this chapter, major relative foreign and domestic studies on textbook evaluation will be elaborated as the theory foundation of this paper.

### 2.1 Overseas researches on textbook evaluation

#### 2.1.1 Cunningsworth's evaluation system

According to the time to make an evaluation, Cunningsworth divides materials evaluation into three types: pre-use evaluation, in-use evaluation and post-use evaluation. And the three main purposes of materials evaluation is to select textbook (with the help of pre-use evaluation), to identify the particular strengths and weaknesses in coursebooks (with the help of in-use evaluation), or to make some adaptation of textbooks already in use (with the help of post-use evaluation). No matter what kind of evaluation is conducted, it follows the four following steps: analysis, interpretation, evaluation and selection.

Analysis is more or less neutral, seeking information in a range of categories, and provides the necessary data for the second stage of the process. This is the interpretation of the data obtained. Here a good deal of professional judgment and experience comes into play as the implications of the analysis are worked out and issues such as the relative importance of different aspects of the coursebook are taken into account. The third stage, evaluation, necessarily involves value judgment on the part of those involved..... Selection is the fourth stage of this process and involves matching the features identified during the previous stages against the requirements of a particular learning/teaching situation. (Cunningsworth, 2002, p.9)

According to Cunningsworth, effective evaluation relies on asking appropriate questions and interpreting the answers to them (Cunningsworth, 1995). So at the beginning of his book, Cunningsworth provides a wide range of evaluation questions for the users to select from

according to their own situations. He provides a basic quick-reference checklist for evaluation and selection of textbooks, including various questions on the following concerns of a textbook: aims and approaches, design and organization, language content, skills, topic, methodology, teachers' books, and practical considerations. The checklists for the two aspects which will be useful for the methodology of the research are listed below to illustrate his way to collect data.

Quick-reference checklist for evaluation and selection (Cunningsworth, 2009, p.3-4):

Language content:

- ◆ Does the coursebook cover the main grammar items appropriate to each level, taking learners' needs into account?
- ◆ Is material for vocabulary teaching adequate in terms of quality and range of vocabulary, emphasis placed on vocabulary development, strategies for individual learning?
- ◆ Does the coursebook include material for pronunciation work? If so, what is covered: individual sounds, word stress, sentence stress, intonation?
- ◆ Does the course deal with the structuring and conventions of language use above sentence level, e.g. how to take part in conversations, how to structure a piece of extended writing, how to identify the main points in a reading passage? (More relevant at intermediate and advance levels.)
- ◆ Are styles and appropriacy dealt with? If so, is language style matched to social situation?

Topic:

- ◆ Is there sufficient material of genuine interest to learners?
- ◆ Is there enough variety and range of topic?
- ◆ Will the topics help expand students' awareness and enrich their experience?
- ◆ Are the topics sophisticated enough in content, yet within the learners' language level?
- ◆ Will your students be able to relate to the social and cultural contexts presented in the coursebook?
- ◆ Are women portrayed and represented equally with men?
- ◆ Are other groups represented, with reference to ethnic origin, occupation, disability, etc?

These questions in quick checklists are just general statements for each aspect. More detailed explanations are presented in the following Chapters with specific case studies. Again, vocabulary and subject content are taken as example to illustrate this. The language content is

further divided into grammar items, vocabulary, phonology, discourse, appropriacy and varieties in English. Under the aspect of subject content, topic and subject content, social and culture values are further analyzed. Two sample checklists are listed here about vocabulary and subject content which are the major concern of the paper.

Checklist for vocabulary (Cunningsworth, 2002, p.41)

- Is vocabulary-learning material included in its own right? If so, how prominent is it? Is it central to the course or peripheral?
- How much vocabulary is taught?
- Is there any principled basis for selection of vocabulary?
- Is there any distinction between active and passive vocabulary, or classroom vocabulary?
- Is vocabulary presented in a structured, purposeful way?
- Are learners sensitized to the structure of the lexicon through vocabulary-learning exercises based on:
  - semantic relationships
  - formal relationships
  - collocations
  - situation-based word groups

- Does the material enable students to expand their own vocabularies independently by helping them to develop their own learning strategies?

Checklist for topic and subject content (Cunningsworth, 2002, p.90)

- Are real topics included in the coursebook? If so, how varied are they?
- Will the coursebook contribute to expanding learners' awareness and enriching their experience?
- Does it relate to and engage the learners' knowledge system, i.e. the knowledge of the world that they bring with them?
- Are the topics sophisticated enough in content for the learner, but at the right level linguistically?
- Do they actually do what they set out to do? If informative, do they inform, if humorous, do they amuse, if controversial, do they challenge, etc?
- Are they suitable for the age group?

- At school level, do they link in with other subjects (e.g. history, geography, science)?

In addition to the questions listed in the checklist, Cunningsworth also proposes four guidelines which he believes to be applicable in any material evaluation.

Guideline One: Coursebooks should correspond to learners' needs. They should match the aims and objectives of the language-learning programme.

Guideline Two: Coursebooks should reflect the uses (present and future) which learners will make of the language. Select coursebooks which will help to equip students to use language effectively for their own purpose.

Guideline Three: Coursebooks should take account of students' need as learners and should facilitate their learning process, without dogmatically imposing a rigid 'method'.

Guideline Four: Coursebooks should have a clear role as a support for learning. Like teachers, they mediate between the target language and the leaner.

The questions raised in the checklist of Cunningsworth's system nearly cover all the aspects of a language. Thus, this evaluation system is quite comprehensive. However, "it has been pointed out that the more comprehensive and telling the assessment strategies, the more likely it is that perfectly acceptable textbook or set of materials will be found wanting (Swales, 1980) (as cited in Zhao Yong, 2005, p.8) So Cunningsworth himself also emphasizes that material evaluation is a complex matter, as there are many variables that affect the success or failure of coursebooks when they are in use. The number of variables is reflected in the range and multiplicity of possible evaluation criteria. However, it's important to limit the number of criteria used, the number of questions asked, to manageable proportions. Otherwise, we risk being swamped in a sea of detail. (Cunningsworth, 2002, p.5) Throughout his evaluation system, Cunningsworth places his emphasis on language as a system. The main approach of his evaluation is actually to check the language items provided by textbooks according to learners' needs.

### 2.1.2 McDonough and Shaw's evaluation system

McDonough and Shaw (2003) provide a flexible two-stage model for the comprehensive evaluation of textbooks: an external evaluation which presents a brief overview of the physical appearance of the textbook, an internal evaluation is an in-depth one which provides a closer

and more detailed examination of the textbook. In the process of external evaluation, criteria of outside cover, introduction, table of contents, etc, are included; following that is the internal investigation which is ‘to see how far the materials in question match up to what the author claims as well as to the aims and objectives of a given teaching program.’ (p. 64).

This evaluation system is actually a two stage evaluation model. The work involves at the external stage is relatively easy because most factors concerned are peripheral. But this stage is of particular importance for evaluators who are facing a wide range of textbooks. By looking through the ‘blurb’ made on the cover of textbooks, and the introduction and table of contents, the evaluator can quickly dismiss those which are not suitable for them without going into details. At the internal stage, specific aspects of textbooks are examined carefully to see whether the content really match the claims made on the cover. Apparently, the second stage is the core of evaluation which will take much time to do it. This two stage model can save much time for evaluators don’t need to analyze every textbook on the market in detail.

However, there are two main disadvantages of this evaluation system. For one thing, the physical appearance of textbooks may be misleading. The ones you select out for further analysis may turn out to be a waste of time because the content of them are far from excellent as they have claimed. While the ones you neglect because of poor appearance may of true value for your teaching and learning. For another, guidelines to certify the ‘blurb’s need to be provided. During the external stage, the claims, introduction and table of contents are judged. But what are the most favorable claims? Do these claims have relationship with certain syllabus or teaching environment? What kind of appearance suits the required syllabus most? All these questions need to be answered before evaluators come to the external stage. In a word, this two-stage model can save much time for evaluation, but before the first stage, specific aims and required contents of book should be stated clearly.

### 2.1.3 Breen and Candlin’s evaluation guide

Breen and Candlin (1983) present their evaluation guide in two phases, bearing the aim of assisting teacher “in choosing materials which will be most appropriate to their own learners at various levels and in various teaching setting”. Phase one presents some simple preliminary questions concerning the usefulness of textbooks for adoption. Phase two mainly “evaluates these questions more closely and suggests some criteria for the choice and use of materials in

ways which are sensitive to classroom language learning" (p.13) (as cited in Zhao Yong, 2005).

Phase one is mainly concerned with questions of the following aspects:

- (a) what the aims and content of the materials are;
- (b) what they require learners to do;
- (c) what they require you, as a teacher, to do;
- (d) what function they have as a classroom resource;

According to Breen and Candlin, in the second phase, "we offer some specific questions to help you make a more searching analysis of your materials, with your particular group of learners and your actual classroom situation very much in mind" (ibid, p.18).

The questions concerned in the second phase include:

- (a) learner needs and interests
- (b) learner approaches to language learning
- (c) the teaching/learning process in your classroom

Following all the questions in different phases, more specific questions are raised for a detailed study of the textbook. And Breen and Candlin stress that when trying to answer all these questions, evaluators have to "keep your learners firmly in mind".

Breen and Candlin (1987) provide "an interactive, step-by-step consumer's guide which aims to help teachers to make practical and informed textbook decision" (Sheldon, 1987, p.6). And Nunan describes Breen and Candlin's (1987) model as an "accessible list of evaluative questions" which seems to have some merits and "invites the teacher to adopt a critical stance toward the materials' aims, appropriateness and utility" (Nunan, 2001, p.209). An overwhelming impression of Breen and Candlin's evaluation system is that they propose two phases with comprehensive questions about choosing the right textbook. However, the two phases have different emphasis. Phase one focuses on the textbooks and it considers what is potentially missing in the textbooks and "the mental operations or steps which the learners has to undertake to be successful" (Breen and Candlin, 1987, p.15) (as cited in Zhao Yong, 2005, p.40). Phase two turns to the learners' needs and interests. In this phase, learners are particularly encouraged to take part in evaluation because Breen and Candlin believe that the more we involve "them (learners)" in exploring learning materials with us, the more likely it is that they will want to refine the materials for their use. That, in turn, will produce materials which are in harmony with

their learning priorities and their diverse ways of learning a language. (Breen and Candlin, 1987, p.28)

Therefore, as a whole, Breen and Candlin's guidelines reflect a strong learner-centeredness. Learners' need and interests are the top things to be considered when organizing the content of textbook. The role of teachers has changed from the language stuffers to the facilitators who act as a bridge connecting textbooks and learners. Selecting learners as main evaluators of textbooks is a daring and attractive act. However, there are potential dangers when indulging learner. Because of the limited knowledge and proficiency of learners' language, they may not be able to state clearly what they really need in a textbook. And sometimes emotional factors such as lack of comparison with other textbooks or bad relationship with English teacher may yield some inaccurate results.

#### 2.1.4 Summary

Three Evaluation Guidelines are introduced in this part, which lay the foundation of theories for the research in this paper. Cunningham's guidelines in fact pay much attention to the language as a system. His analysis is to some extent a micro-framework which focuses on various aspects of the language. McDonough and Shaw look at textbooks mostly from the view of teacher-centeredness. They concentrate on the input and output the textbooks can actually generate. The most significant characteristic of Breen and Candlin's guidelines is to involve learners in the evaluation process and pay special attention to their needs and interests. Learners' assumptions and priorities are seriously considered, which is believed to be crucial for the process of selection and design of materials. All the three evaluation systems are trying to evaluate textbooks from the three aspects: textbooks, teachers and learners. Although having different focuses, these three evaluation systems share some common characteristics: evaluation is conducted by proposed checklists; the actual evaluation process is a matching process. Cunningham presents quick-reference checklists concerning eight aspects, under which forty-five general questions and 231 detailed questions. All these questions aim to make a comprehensive evaluation of textbooks. However, if every textbook undergoes the 231 questions, it would take the evaluator a lot of time especially when facing such a rich variety of textbooks as today. McDonough and Shaw's evaluation system saves this problem because during the external stage, inappropriate textbooks are dismissed by judging their "physical appearance" and

several selected books are checked in depth during the internal stage. However, “physical appearance” may be misleading sometimes and makes the evaluator miss some textbooks of real value. Breen and Candlin’s guidelines are similar to that of McDonough and Shaw’s as the guidelines are also divided into two phases. Phase one focuses on the textbooks while the second phase lays emphasis on the learners’ needs and interests. The impressionistic view of this evaluation system is its learner-centeredness.

Besides the three evaluation system mentioned above, many other theories we can draw upon are dispersed in the work of overseas writer as Sheldon (1987), Grant (1987), Hutchinson & Waters (1987), Tomlinson (2004), etc. As these theories are not the focus of this paper, detailed study of these theories is omitted in this paper.

## 2.2 Studies of textbook evaluation in China

### 2.2.1 The current situation of research on textbook evaluation in China

Up to now, domestic researches on textbook evaluation are not very extensive. The existing researches can be broadly divided into two types. One type is mainly conducted by textbook compilers, which is generally about the criteria to select subject matters, content and style arrangement (e.g. Dong Yafen, 1997; Dai Zhongxin/ Liu Jun, 1992; Ying Huilan/ Xu Huifang, 2001; Zhang Yutian, 1987; Liu Hongquan, 1995; Cai Jigang, 1997; Hu Zhuanglin, 1995; Lu Ci, 1992; Wen Qiufang, 2002; etc) (as cited in Xu Feng, 2004). Another type is the reflections made by teachers who have just tried some new teaching materials. However, amid all of these, Zhou Xuelin (1996) proposed a checklist based on the teaching circumstance in China. He believes that a set of reasonable criteria have to be set in order to evaluate textbooks and these criteria should include at least the six following aspects:

- 1) Relationship between textbook and teaching theories: a good set of textbooks should reflect the latest achievements in modern linguistics and teaching theories. What’s more, the real teaching situation in China should also be integrated in the textbook.
- 2) Relationship between textbook and syllabus: syllabus is the compiling foundation of textbooks whilst textbooks are the carrier to practice syllabus. The relationship is like that between fish and water, thus, the two can not be separated.
- 3) Relationship between textbooks and learners. If teaching materials can’t meet the needs of

learners, they may hold a negative attitude towards the materials in use and they will lose motivation in study not to talk about the study effectiveness. As a result, before the compilation of textbooks, the demand analysis is of great importance.

- 4) Selecting appropriate subject matter. Students should have access to authentic language and the minor adaptation should also be done by English native speakers. The subject matter should also be interesting and practical. Besides all these requirements, the choice of subject matter of a textbook should be wide enough.
- 5) The design of exercise. The exercises should be text-centered, rich and coherent.
- 6) Textbook package. Teachers' guide, audio-visual material and facilitation textbooks should be contained in a whole textbook package.

For each aspect, Zhou also gives detailed explanations which constitute a systematic evaluation guideline. However, with the development of language theories and changes of learners' requirement, this checklist can't cover all the necessary aspects of textbook evaluation, thus needs to be revised and perfected.

#### 2.2.2 Zhao Yong's evaluation criteria

Besides the two types of evaluation studies mentioned above in China, another valuable resource of textbook evaluation is the research done in Master thesis and doctoral dissertation. Textbooks in these researching papers are evaluated from different aspects, task-based, college English curriculum requirement-centered, syllabus-centered, etc. Among all these research papers, Zhao Yong's doctoral dissertation *A Quantitative Analysis of Vocabulary in College English Textbook Evaluation* is outstanding and worth mentioning.

In this paper, Zhao first reviews several popular evaluation systems and criticize the common problems in these evaluation frameworks, namely, the defects of expert judgment; the difficulty in obtaining true feedback; the incapability of implementing some criteria; the invalidity and unreliability of questionnaires and checklists. He states that "Such factors as the expert evaluator's personal feeling to the textbook, the learner's attitude toward the course and his or her attitude toward the teacher, will certainly affect the reliability of the final result. The respondents' non-cooperation or unseriousness makes the feedback, though collected, quite unreliable. These psychological factors widely exist in the whole evaluation process, which are fairly difficult to control..... the designing of valid and reliable questionnaires and checklist is

extremely time-consuming and needs to be very considerate. Unfortunately, this is difficult to guarantee in most of the evaluation frameworks widely used nowadays" (Zhao Yong, 2002, p.48-55). In a word, those questionnaires or checklists or the feedbacks obtained are not reliable because of the subjective factors contained in the process. One solution to make up these disadvantages is to make a quantitative analysis of textbook. Then in the third chapter of his dissertation, he emphasizes the importance of vocabulary acquisition in language learning. Accordingly, he proposes four criteria to evaluate *New Horizon College English*. The four criteria are listed as follows, the coverage of core vocabulary, the new word density, the repetition of new word, and selection of typical collocations.

Among the evaluation systems whose research methods are mainly questionnaires and checklists, Zhao's effort to make a quantitative evaluation of textbooks is daring and exciting. Not only because quantitative research can provides us with more objective results, but also this study provide a completely new evaluation method. However, there are two main flaws of Zhao's study. First, many other factors besides vocabulary can be studied quantitatively, such as the choice of subject matters, the gradient of vocabulary dispersed in different bands of textbooks; methodology and organization of textbooks. Vocabulary itself can't assert the quality of textbooks and more other factors should be taken into account. Second, selection of collocations to teach is one the toughest task and is almost an uncontrollable factor in textbook compilation. What's more, Zhao's evaluation of typicality of collocations is only based on the collocates provided in the exercises, which can not reflect the real language occurrence in textbooks. Instead, the most frequent use in texts should be selected out to be evaluated.

## Chapter Three Research Methodology

In this chapter, first of all, the research materials and tools are presented. Then, the evaluation system adopted in this paper is introduced with adaptation to the teaching and learning needs. In the adopted evaluation system, emphasis is laid on two main aspects: subject matter and vocabulary. These two aspects are chosen not only because they are the first two factors that textbook compilers take into account but also because they are easier to be analyzed quantitatively than other aspects such as the pronunciation and methodology. One more thing to be mentioned is that the target textbook (21st) is proud of the subject matter it selected. In Zhai Xiangjun's reflection upon the compiling of 21<sup>st</sup>, he stated that subject matter is one of the key factors that determining whether a set of textbooks is popular among students. In his words, in order to provide interesting and native articles for students, the compilers made great effort. Therefore, the choice of subject matter is very successful in his eyes. The question that whether the subject matters really suit students' needs remains to be evaluated later. But one question rising at the same time with choice of subject is that if the textbooks are arranged around the subject matters, the job of choosing and presenting vocabulary systematically is really a hard job. Therefore, these two aspects are chosen together to be evaluated to match the target textbook with the syllabus requirement and students' needs.

Under the aspect of vocabulary, sub-division is made into coverage of core vocabulary and gradient of vocabulary. In this chapter, the corresponding theories, namely, the reasons why these two aspects are chosen, and the methods to obtain the data required are also elaborated in each section.

### 3.1 An introduction to the research materials and tools

#### 3.1.1 A brief introduction to textbook corpora

With the wide application of computers in language research, the implication of corpus has extended subtly. When corpus was first introduced, Sinclair (1991) defines it as "a collection of naturally occurring language text, chosen to characterize a state or variety of a language (p.71)". Francis (1992) defines it as "a collection of texts assumed to be representative of a given language, dialect, or other subset of a language to be used for linguistic analysis (p.17)". From

the two definitions given above, we can conclude that materials in a corpus have at least two characteristics: naturally-occurring and representative of a given language. However, corpora of different types have mushroomed recently and corpora are generally defined as collections of texts that are stored and accessed electronically, namely, large bodies of machine-readable texts. This implication can be reflected by the definition given by Tognini-Bonelli (2001, p.55) (as cited in Sun Haiyan, 2008):

A corpus is taken to be a computerized collection of authentic texts, amenable to automatic or semiautomatic processing or analysis. The texts are selected according to explicit criteria in order to capture the regularities of a language, a language variety or a sub-language.

For the purpose of research, corpus of 21<sup>st</sup> is introduced here. 21<sup>st</sup> is a set of textbooks compiled on the basis of *College English Teaching Syllabus* (1999). This set comprises four series: Reading and Writing, Listening and Speaking, Comprehensive Exercise and Teachers' Guide, each of which has four bands to be used by non-English majors during their first two years in Colleges. The target of this thesis is the Reading and writing series, so the content of this series is illustrated here. Each band of Reading and Writing is made up of ten units, which contains three passages of the same theme. Text A is for intensive reading and it is accompanied by exercises including the following aspects: comprehension, vocabulary, structure, translation, writing, etc. Text B and C is designed for extensive reading and different kinds of basic reading skills are introduced before Text B. Comprehension questions are also listed after Text B. One more thing to mention is that all the three articles of a single unit is organized around the same subject matter. As a result, Reading and Writing textbooks are combinations of intensive and extensive reading with the purpose of cultivating the ability of reading, writing and translating.

As different search tools of corpus require different kinds of materials, the corpus of 21<sup>st</sup> used in this paper needs to be a raw one and is collected by the writer with the help of Internet. Because of limitation of resources, only texts are collected in this corpus and pre-reading materials and after-class exercises are not included in this paper. On the whole, each unit contains three files and forty units of four books are listed in the corpus. As a result, altogether 240 raw files are studied in this research. These raw materials are compared to the word lists

made in the research, which will reveal the coverage of core vocabulary and gradient of vocabulary. What's more, sub-corpora such as corpus of Section A of all units and corpus of each book are constructed to set aside for the purposes of study.

The main purpose of establishing corpora of textbooks is to conduct textbook evaluation. However, besides this use mentioned in this paper, the establishment of textbook corpora has many other by-products (Zhao Yong, 2002, p.159-160):

- 1) The corpus can provide necessary information as feedback for textbook writers to revise their books later
- 2) The corpus may be used as an efficient tool for both teachers and learners. Detailed description of the textbook will provide an easy electronic tool for teachers to use as live teaching materials. On the other side, the corpus can significantly enrich the learning environment by providing opportunities for using English and observing regularities in this use for learners.
- 3) The corpus may even be put online as a source of learning materials for teachers or learner to access at any time and at any place.

Hopefully, these corpora may apply to many other uses in the future.

### 3.1.2 An introduction to the research tool: Range32.exe

Range is a software designed by Paul Nation. Nation is Professor in Applied Linguistics at the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies and he supervises MA and PhD research on vocabulary. The software designed by him is intended to study the distribution and ranks of difficulty across texts. In the instructions for this software, Nation provides the possible questions this software can answer:

What common vocabulary is found in a collection of texts?

How large a vocabulary is needed to read a text?

If a learner has a vocabulary of 2,000 words, how much of the vocabulary in a text will be familiar to the learner?

What are the words in a text which the learner is not likely to know?

How well does the course book prepare learners for the vocabulary in newspapers?

How rich a vocabulary do second language learners use in their free writing?

In this paper, the adoption of this software is used to compare texts against vocabulary lists

to see what words in the text are and are not in the lists, and to see what percentage of the items in the text are covered by the lists. What's more, the general distribution of vocabulary in 21<sup>st</sup> textbooks can also be examined with the help of the software.

### **3.2 Evaluation ideas applied in this paper**

The evaluation system employed in this paper is combinations of the three evaluation systems mentioned in last chapter and Zhao Yong's quantitative analysis methods. As presented and analyzed in last chapter, the three evaluation systems have their own advantages and these advantages can be taken as the guiding lines for this research.

The typical characteristic of Cummingsworth's evaluation system is a comprehensive list of questions examining eight different aspects of textbooks. Altogether, at least 231 detailed questions are proposed by him. However, a single set of textbooks can't provide satisfying answers to all these questions. Even Cummingsworth himself admits that "it's important to limit the number of criteria used, the number of questions asked, to manageable proportions, otherwise, we risk being swamped in a sea of detail" (Cummingsworth, 2002, p.5). In order to avoid being disappointed, this paper mainly focuses on two of all the eight aspects mentioned in Cummingsworth's evaluation system: language content and topic. Under the aspect of language content subdivisions can be made into language form and language use, grammar, vocabulary, phonology, integration of pronunciation teaching with other work, discourse, style and appropriacy and varieties of English. Particularly, vocabulary is the major concern among all these subdivisions. Under the topic aspect, topic and subject content are examined in this paper. Questions concerning vocabulary and topic have already been listed in Chapter Two, so they are not repeated here.

The lesson learned from McDonough and Shaw's Evaluation System is that before the detailed analysis of textbooks, a rough selection should be made. The same way of choice is applied in the selection of Cummingsworth's evaluation questions. In Cummingsworth's checklist for vocabulary seven questions are asked, which show major concern on what to teach (amount of vocabulary to be taught, principled basis for selection of vocabulary) and how to teach (structured and purposeful way to present vocabulary, distinction between active and passive vocabulary, learning strategies). By examining these two what and how, the overall organization

of vocabulary in a certain textbook can be observed clearly. These “what” and “how” are withdrawn as two criteria to evaluate textbooks: coverage of core vocabulary and gradient of vocabulary.

As stated in last chapter, the main characteristic of Breen and Candlin’s evaluation guide is its learner-centeredness. Learner-centeredness is an attitude only by which can we get the real response from students. After all, students are the users of textbooks and they should find their voice in textbook evaluation. Therefore, in the evaluation of subject matters, a mini-questionnaire is conducted to find out where students’ interests lie.

As for the Zhao Yong’s evaluation theory, the major criterion of his is adopted. In summary, vocabulary and subject matters of 21<sup>st</sup> are evaluated with the help of corpus and questionnaire. The reasons to choose the two aspects (including three criteria: coverage of core vocabulary, gradient of vocabulary and subject matters) and the ways to get the desired data are explained in the following section.

### **3.3 Three criteria to evaluate the textbooks in question**

#### **3.3.1 Coverage of core vocabulary**

##### **3.3.1.1 The study of core vocabulary**

The massiveness of English glossary can not be over-exaggerated. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, reports of the size of English language in the popular press varied greatly: from 400,000 to 600,000 words (Claiborne, 1983, p.5), from a half million to over 2 million (Crystal, 1988, p.32), about 200,000 words in common use, although adding technical and scientific terms would stretch the total into the million (Bryson, 1990). (As cited in Zhao Yong, 2002, p.92-93). On the other side, time set for non-English majors in colleges to study English is quite limited. Take the college the writer works for example, students are required to take 48 class periods a semester to study English and English course will sustain through four semesters. Thus, altogether 192 academic hours are assigned for students to learn English. In such limited time to grasp such a large amount of vocabulary is definitely an impossible task. McCarthy suggests us to alter our perspectives on words the moment we start to involve the users of language in our description, and consider some of the uses to which vocabulary is put. (McCarthy, 2003, p.49) Carter also states that it will not be surprising that language teachers should have been among the first to

attempt to define a basic core vocabulary for initial language learning purposes. (Carter, 1998, p.34) The following table shows the importance of selecting core vocabulary out:

Table 1 Vocabulary size and text coverage in the Brown corpus (taken from Francis and Kucera, 1982) (as cited in Zhao Yong, 2005, p.92)

Vocabulary size	text coverage
1,000	72.0%
2,000	79.7%
3,000	84.0%
4,000	86.8%
5,000	88.7%
6,000	89.9%
15,851	97.8%

Judging from the table, some basic 1,000 constitute 72.0% of the whole Brown corpus which contains at least 1,014,312 words sampled from 15 text categories. No wonder, McCarthy exclaimed that if we could isolate the core vocabulary then we could equip learners with a survival kit of core words that they could use in virtually any situation, whether spoken or written, formal or informal, or in any situation where an absolutely precise term, the *mot juste*, might be elusive and where a core word would do. (McCarthy, 2003, p.49)

The process of defining a basic core vocabulary is to ask whether all the words are of same status in language learning and whether some words are more central to language use than others. At the early stage of defining core vocabulary, English teachers and textbook compliers used to make their decisions based on their intuition. The defects of this method are quite self-evident. Thereafter, word frequency is believed to be the major criterion in selecting of vocabulary. However, this is not sufficient either. McCarthy (2003, p.79-90) proposed three aspects for selecting core vocabulary: frequency and range, learnability and learners' needs. In his theory, frequency is still at the top of the list.

In Carter's study, he adopted an informant-based test to determine core vocabulary. This test is based on the evidence that informants use a high proportion of core words when summarizing events, plots, etc. (Carter, 1998, p.42). One of the examples of core words and how we might distinguish them is cited here:

Consider the set of words comprising the lexical field of ‘having a weight above the norm’; we have in English ‘fat’, ‘obese’, ‘overweight’, ‘plump’, ‘podgy’, ‘stout’, and several other words. We would probably guess that fat was the most frequent. We can also say about ‘fat’ that it would normally be used to describe or define the other words, but not vice-versa. But we can also say the same about ‘overweight’. ‘Fat’ and ‘overweight’ would also be likely to occur in a wider variety of contexts: ‘a fat baby’/ ‘an overweight baby’ sounds far more likely than ‘a stout baby’; ‘fat’ might further be found in context of farm-animals, without any implication that the animals were ‘overweight’. ‘Fat’ seems to form an immediate relationship of antonym with ‘thin’; the antonyms of ‘plump’ and ‘podgy’ are less obvious. ‘Overweight’ might be considered more neutral in the interpersonal sense, less likely to give offence and perhaps more clinical. On the other hand, ‘obese’ seems definitely to carry negative evaluation. ‘Fat’ seems to collocate more widely than all the others and can be more readily used metaphorically and in idioms: ‘a fat wallet’/ ‘salary’/ ‘book’, ‘a fat chance’, ‘the fat of the land’. ‘Fat’ is polysemous and can be used in different word-classes: meat has ‘fat’ on it, we can fry food in ‘fat’, we have a verb ‘to fatten’ and so on. Therefore, applying a wide variety of tests to the words in our list seems to suggest that ‘overweight’ and ‘fat’ are more core than the rest, and that ‘fat’ seems to be the most core item in the set. The other words in the set will have a far narrower band of usability.

Carter’s tests can be summarized in the following aspects: syntactic substitution, antonymy, collocability, extension, superordinateness, culture-free, associationism, neutral field of discourse and neural tenor of discourse.

### 3. 3.1.2 A series of reference word lists

Although core vocabulary is of fatal use for language learning, the selection of it is no easy job. Good news for Chinese teachers and second language English learners is that *CECR* issued by Ministry of Education has specified a series of word lists for college English teaching in China. The decision of this series is mainly based on quantitative analysis and integrated with qualitative analysis as well. The quantitative analysis relies on the word lists of former syllabus and some latest corpora. The corpora mentioned here refer to Brown, Lob and the Collins Bank of English. The qualitative analysis refers to the experts’ suggestions and discussions. Thus,

although the word lists provided by *CECR* can not be claimed as the best one, they are the most satisfying for the present teaching situation in China and meet the needs of most Second Language Learners (SLL for short) in China.

What's more, *CECR* has undergone several major changes in less than a decade. This is the result of the fact that learners are becoming sophisticated and more exposed to wild English materials on the Internet. With the reform and opening up policy being furthered widened, SLL have much wider exposure to native English materials via Internet and their school learning of English begins earlier and earlier. These two main factors plus other various factors have greatly improved the English proficiency of SLL. In order to meet the changing needs of them, *CECR* has made certain changes in all aspects of its requirements. The following three tables can show the subtle changes in the vocabulary part. The first table is cited from Zhao Yong's doctoral dissertation while the other two are summarized from *CECR* (2004) and *CECR* (2007).

Table 3.1 Vocabulary required in *College English Teaching Syllabus* (1999) (Zhao Yong, 2005,

p.161)

Band 1-4 Words		Band 6 Words	Post Band 6 Words	Total Syllabus Words
Middle School	Band 4	1,321	1,046	6,636
1,843	2,426			
4,296				

Table 3.2 Vocabulary required in *CECR* (For Trial Implementation 2004)

BR	IR	AR	Total Syllabus Words
4,538	1,081	1,055	6,674

(The BR is not further divided as this is not the major concern of this research.)

Table 3.3 Vocabulary required in *CECR* (2007)

BR	IR	AR	Total Syllabus Words
4,794	1,601	1,281	7,676

An analysis of the figures in the three tables above can easily tell that the vocabulary has been gradually enlarged by more than 1,000 after eight years with the vocabulary belonging to the BR at its quickest expanding. During the eight years, the tendency of an increase of vocabulary of all levels are positive, with the vocabulary at the level of IR has a slight withdrawn compared with that of syllabus of 1999.

These three tables in turn prove that CECR issued by Ministry of Education is not rigid; instead, it is readily adaptable to the real teaching and learning conditions of China. Thus, the adoption of this series of word list as the reference one can truly reveal the extent to which the set of 21<sup>st</sup> covers the core vocabulary required by CECR. Therefore, the words printed on CECR are first typed in Excel and saved in three separate files according to the marks set down by the compilers of CECR (4794 words at BR level without any marks in the list, 1601 words at IR level with ★ printed before them, 1281 at AR with ▲ printed before them). Then spelling of words in the three files are checked and resaved in txt files. In the process of saving as txt files, the number of words is slightly changed. Originally, there are 4794 words for BR but when saved, 70 duplicates are removed. This is because although these words have different meanings they have the same spelling, such as, wind (n. air that moves quickly as a result of natural forces), wind (of road, river, etc to have many blends and twists); or date (n. a particular day of the month, sometimes in a particular year, given in numbers and words), date (to have a romantic relationship with sb) (all the explanations are taken from Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary). In CECR, all the 70 words are listed in the form of two word items, however, the difference can't be told by research tool of this paper. Thus, the 70 duplicates are eliminated and 4,724 are the total number of words that need to be checked in the textbook corpus. Besides, the difference of spelling of the same word with the same meaning is also ignored, such as “analyse”/ “analyze”, “centre”/ “center”. The same rules are applied to the pick lists of IR and AR. As a result, three duplicates in IR and three duplicates in AR are removed and the total number for the two is 1598 and 1278 respectively.

Among all these 7,676 words required, an active vocabulary list of college English is listed in CECR. The decision of the list is based on the reference of Nation's first 1,000 vocabulary (980), Nation's second 1,000 vocabulary (983), Nation's Academic Vocabulary (570), Key Words list From *Longman Language Activator* (872), Longman Defining Vocabulary (2,222)

(CECR, 2007, p. 199). Judging by the reference it draw upon when the list of active vocabulary is made, we can safely regard the list as the collection of active vocabulary in college English. In this paper, this list will also be adopted to test the coverage of active words. As Dr. Xu Jiajin has provided this list in the form of its family style, the writer doesn't need to type and save them as what has been done to the three levels of requirements.

What's more, in order to test whether the language used in this textbook are what contemporary English speakers use, the writer downloads the top 5,000 word list from COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English). COCA contains more than 410 million words of text and is equally divided among spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic texts. It includes 20 million words each year from 1990-2010 and the corpus is also updated once or twice a year (the most recent texts are from summer 2010). As COCA has proved itself to be the largest and most balanced corpus of contemporary English, the hit of the top 5000 words in the corpus of textbooks as headwords is really worth evaluating. When the rules of eliminating duplicates applied to the 5000 words, only 4342 of them are left, which means that 658 duplicates have been found.

Altogether five lists are prepared to study the coverage of core vocabulary. However, among all the five lists, four of them can not be adopted by the Range software and must be further processed into range lists (family lists). The process of making word lists which are suitable for range software will be explained in the next chapter as they are part of the results of the research. In fact, not only the corpus of 21<sup>st</sup> is examined in the study, sub-corpora mentioned of section A is also checked to identify the distribution of core vocabulary in the target textbooks.

### 3.3.2 Gradient of vocabulary

#### 3.3.2.1 What is gradient and what is the working definition of it in this paper?

Gradient, according to the definition given by Collin COBUILD dictionary, refers to a slope or the degree to which ground slopes. Literally, it usually describes the steady changes in a process. Thus, it is widely employed in the field of physics and economics. In this paper, gradient of vocabulary is defined as the steady growth of difficulty in the compilation of textbooks. That means if there are four bands of books in a set, Book II is supposed to include more words and the words belonging to this book should be of a higher rank than that of Book I.

This rule can also be extended to Book III and IV. The theories that can justify the steady growth of difficulty can be found in Krashen' input hypothesis.

In the studies of Second Language Acquisition, Krashen's language acquisition theories are probably the most influential and most widely applied ones. Krashen's theories are mainly made up of five hypotheses: the Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis, the Monitor Hypothesis, the Input Hypothesis, the Affective Filter Hypothesis and the Natural Order Hypothesis. Among the five, Input Hypothesis attempts to explain how language learners acquire language and Krashen (1982, p.20-21) states it in his famous  $i+1$  way:

More generally, how do we move from stage  $i$ , where  $i$  represents current competence, to  $i + 1$ , the next level? The input hypothesis makes the following claim: a necessary (but not sufficient) condition to move from stage  $i$  to stage  $i + 1$  is that the acquirer understand input that contains  $i + 1$ , where "understand" means that the acquirer is focused on the meaning and not the form of the message.

In his words, only when we understand language that contains structure that is "a little beyond" where we are now can we acquire language. Although, Krashen refers to the acquisition of structure, comprehensible input can be applied to vocabulary acquisition and interpreted as the steady and limited growth of vocabulary in a set of textbooks. This input hypothesis can find supportive evidences in English learning process.

The organization of vocabulary in a set of textbooks should become more and more difficult gradually and slowly. If the difficulty of vocabulary stays at the same level in a whole set, it may be found too difficult for beginners and too simple for advancers as the learners knowledge is supposed to accumulate and expand after certain period of learning during which the set of books last; if the growth of difficulty change dramatically, for example to an unbelievably easy level, students may lose interest in keeping using it no matter what excellent articles may be presented later. On the contrary, if it is changed to an unbearably difficult level, students may get easily frustrated and lose their courage to move on. Both Krashen's Input Hypothesis and teaching practice tell us that the organization of vocabulary growth in a set of textbook should follow the principle of gradual and slow growth of difficulty.

### 3.3.2.2 How to testify the gradient of vocabulary?

Although nearly all teachers and linguists agree on the principle of gradual and slow growth of vocabulary difficulty, there is no direct definition of the gradient of vocabulary and even lack of clear ways to testify it. Concerning the importance of it in the development of students' vocabulary, the writers daringly proposes a way to list all the trends of vocabulary development in a certain set of textbooks.

The basic method is to apply the three wordlists at three different levels that have been set down by CECR in comparison with the text files of each band of book to observe the general development of vocabulary difficulty among four bands of books. As these words belong to three requirements (basic, intermediate and advanced) they can be considered as words of different ranks of difficulty and their ranks of difficulty are in accordance with the requirements they belong to. So the three lists mentioned in the first section of this chapter proved to be useful in the study of gradient of vocabulary. Now that the words lists have been determined, text files of the 21<sup>st</sup> corpus are loaded into the range software to make an investigation.

### 3.3.3 Subject matter

#### 3.3.3.1 Why subject matter is selected as one of the criteria and what aspects are evaluated?

The aim of the research is to conduct an objective evaluation of 21<sup>st</sup> Century College English. Although a quantitative analysis of vocabulary is the most explicit way of presenting an objective description of textbooks, vocabulary itself can't constitute the whole book and analysis of vocabulary itself is not sufficient for evaluation. Did the textbook compliers neglect the choice of materials in the pursuit of arrangement of vocabulary? Did they choose some unreadable texts just to fulfill the purpose of teaching language points? In facts, in good textbooks, learning of vocabulary can take place unconsciously when learners enjoy the materials selected out by textbook compilers.

Language teachers teach vocabulary, grammar and the four basic skills, but these are all "how". They are not what. According to Lindsay Clandfield, language teachers are in a curious and unique position because they don't have a fixed subject in the same way that history teacher teaches history or the geography teacher teaches geography. Thus, Clandfield claims that Language teachers are cursed with no content, but also blessed because everything can be our content. (Lindsay Clandfield, 2010). When stressing the importance of subject matter in

textbooks, Cummingsworth states that “A study of a language solely as an abstract system would not equip learners to use it in the real world. Textbooks must and do represent language as it is actually used and they contain subject matter and deal with topics of various kinds. (Cummingsworth, 2002, p.86)” Judging from the words of the two, subject matter is considered to be the carrier of language points and the soul of textbooks. As a result, subject matter is included as one of the three criteria to evaluate textbooks.

Concerning subject matters, are there any principles guiding the selection of them in textbooks? Einstein once stated that interest was the best teacher. This sentence is not only believed by Albert Einstein but also proved by Hermann Ebbinghaus who lived in the same period as Einstein. Hermann Ebbinghaus was a German psychologist who pioneered the experimental study of memory. In his various studies and experiments, he found out that learning meaningless materials would take as ten times of efforts as learning meaningful materials (as cited in Guo Ping, 2007). The contemporary American Educationist Krashen further stated that only by inputting active and meaningful materials can target language acquisition succeed (ibid). From the studies of both psychologist and educationist, we apprehend the importance of materials presented to SLL. Yet, relatively few studies have been conducted on the selection of subject matters to make a series good textbook. Thus, the writer is determined to deduce several criteria to evaluate the subject matter in the *21<sup>st</sup> Century College English* from the few existing evaluation studies.

Cummingsworth proposes seven questions concerning the evaluation of topic and subject content (with reference to Chapter Two). All these questions can be concluded as the following requirements: topics should be wide and varied; topics should be real and native; topics should suit the age group they intend for and satisfy their needs.

Shu Dingfang and Zhuang Zhixiang also present similar principles in their book *Theory, Practice and Method*. In their book, six principles are listed to act as the guidelines of textbook evaluation. The compiling of foreign language textbooks should abide by the following principles (Shu Dingfang, Zhuang Zhixiang, 1196/2004, p.163):

1. The Principle of trueness. The language materials selected for textbooks must be native and can reflect the real application of the target language in its own community.
2. The principle of graduality. The selection and arrangement of language materials should

follow the principle of development from easy to difficult, from old to new, from simple to complex.

3. The principle of interest. The language materials should be interesting themselves and let students acquiring knowledge in an easy and pleasing atmosphere.
4. The principle of variety. The language materials selected should belong to different subject matters, genre and linguistic fields.
5. The principle of modernism. The language materials selected should stay close to the real modern life as much as possible in order to give students chances to acquire modern language.
6. The principle of practicality. The compilation of textbooks should match the training objective in order to meet the requirement of society and learners.

Although the six principles are intended for the whole process of evaluation, the selection of materials has been highlighted and mentioned repeatedly. For language teaching textbooks, materials include vocabulary on one hand and subject matter on the other hand. It doesn't not only mean that vocabulary selected in textbooks should be native, varied and interesting. The same principles can apply to the selection of subject matter. In other words, the subject matters adopted in textbooks should be native, interesting, varied and modern. What's more, the organization of subject matters should be systematic and the subject matters should be practical in meeting the requirements of both society and students.

Observing the seven questions proposed by Cunningsworth and the six principles laid by Shu and Zhuang, there are a lot of coincidences. Based on these, the writer daringly proposed three aspects to evaluate 21<sup>st</sup> Century College English: width and variety of subject matters, interesting aspects of themes and the organization of subject matters in the whole set of textbook. The ways to obtain data are explained in next section.

### 3.3.3.2 Ways to acquire data and conduct analysis

To test the width and variety of subject matters in a set of textbooks, there are usually two methods. One is to list all the subject matters appearing in the textbooks and then classified them into different categories and analyze these categories. The other one is to define all the possible categories of subject matters in language-teaching textbooks and then try to match them with the real occurrence of topics in textbooks. The former one is relatively easy but less comprehensive

while the major difficulty of the latter one lies in defining the standard categories. In this research, the latter one is tried to evaluate the subject matters of the target textbooks. However, so far, no authority has regulated lists of subject matters to be covered in textbooks. The CECR issued in 2007 makes it clear that College English is not only a language course that provides basic knowledge about English, but also a capacity enhancement course that helps students to broaden their horizons and learn about different cultures in the world. Thus it requires that when design college English courses, it is necessary to take into full consideration the development of students' cultural capacity and the teaching of knowledge about different cultures in the word. Thus, the urgency and significance of evaluation of subject contents is reiterated. In this research, the writer tries to make a list of topics to evaluate textbooks on the basis of studying other researches previously conducted.

In the analysis and research of subject contents of college English textbooks conducted by Zhao Xueai (2005), she covers 15 categories of subject matters: biography, language study, social customs, exotic cultures, sports, religion, science and technology, extract of fiction, morality, social focus, energy and environment, history and geography, economic development, animals and plants, etc. Through the analysis of questionnaire, she further finds that the five top categories in which students are most interested are: cultural difference, social customs, exotic cultures, language study and biography. What's more, students require that more articles about sports should be included in textbooks. In the research of Guo Ping (2007), she describes the topics in which students are interested in 67 detailed aspects (detailed lists are not presented here). In this paper, the writer first concludes the subject matters into seven main categories with many detailed topics under them:

- ❖ Culture and customs: holidays/festivals, cultural differences, Language study, etc;
- ❖ School life: examinations (College English Test Band 4 and 6), interpersonal communication, dormitory life, friendship, learning skills, school memories, etc;
- ❖ Family life: parents, generation gap, boys and girls, sex, marriage, interpersonal relationship, etc;
- ❖ Career life: employment and interview, ambitions, management, interpersonal relationship at work, commerce, etc;
- ❖ Entertainment: films, stars, computer games, humor, sports, cosmetology traveling, food,

fashion, pets, music, love and romance, etc;

- ❖ Science and technology: machines, robot, geo-science, computers and internet,
- ❖ Environment issues: protection, problems, etc;
- ❖ Social problems: traffic and transportation, war and peace, advertisement, pressure, etc;
- ❖ Morality and psychology : retrospection of life, good reputation, integrity, etc;
- ❖ Literature: biography, auto-biography, celebrity's encouraging story, scientists' stories, etc;
- ❖ Knowledge about other subjects: history, health, mass media, animals and plants, etc;

The next step is trying to match these eleven categories with the subject matters appearing in 21st. As stated in the preface of the set of 21<sup>st</sup> textbooks, each unit is composed of three passages of the same theme, the job to be done first is to take down all the 120 tiles for 40 units from Book I to Book IV (see appendix I). Then the topics of all these units are classified according to the categories proposed above.

As to the interesting aspects of the subject matters, students' opinions outweigh that of any other ones. While students' competency and proficiency of English may prevent them from deciding what vocabulary is of vital importance to their learning and what vocabulary is of less importance, every student has his or her instinct for the love and interest in certain subject matters. As a result, the learner-centeredness is relied on to evaluate whether the subject matters selected are what students interested in. The best way to hear the inner voice of students is questionnaire. In fact, the subject matters in which students are interested in may be affected by many factors, such as personality and even students' moods when taking part in the investigation, attitudes towards researchers (for those who are unwilling to cooperate may generate quite disappointing result). However, the factors listed as examples are the uncontrollable ones and can not be measured clearly by a single questionnaire. Therefore, when designing the questionnaire for this research, only the most explicit factor which may influence students' interest in different subject matters is included: gender. Anyway, the purpose of this investigation is to know what students really interested in and how many times of repetition they can accept. So this is a mini-investigation and the questionnaire is made up of only four questions (see appendix II). The investigation is conducted among 90 freshmen of Jiaxing College of three different majors. As they are required to fill in the forms before they take any college English class, their anticipation of subject matters really reflect their interests. In this

questionnaire, the question concerning times of repetition of subject matters is also presented, which will be very helpful in assess the organization of subject matters. With the help of this questionnaire and the investigation, the writer hopes to know what female and male students really like. The corresponding results are listed in the next chapter.

Concerning the organization of subject matters, Shu and Zhuang's principle of developing from easy to difficult, from old to new, from simple to complex are examined here. What's more, whether the organization of subject matters suits the development of college students' psychology is also considered in this section.

## Chapter Four Results and Analysis

In chapter three, specific measures to get the required data are explained in detail. In this chapter, the results obtained will be analyzed. However, some results need to be further processed to reach the final conclusion. Therefore this further processing is also considered to be one part of the results analysis and is included in this chapter. The inclusion of the processing will prove itself to be useful in making explanations of final results much easier.

### 4.1 Coverage of core vocabulary

#### 4.1.1 Results

In chapter three, the core vocabulary to be studied is confined to the three levels of requirements and active vocabulary prescribed by CECR and the top 5000 words from COCA. However, the five lists except the list of active vocabulary saved in txt forms are not readable by the Range software and need to be further processed. The reason is that for most words, there is many a reflection. However, the words listed are mainly the lemmas. Take “go” as an example, in the word family of “go”, reflections are listed as follows: go, goes, going, goings, goin, gone, went, gonna, gunna. However, the probably most comprehensive list of the four, the basic one, only contains the lemma: go. This may lead to a miscounting when coverage of word list is investigated through the research tool---the appearance of the reflections is not counted as the appearance of the lemma. The way to solve this problem is to add all the reflections to lemmas. This work is done via the online “Familizer” provided on the following website: <http://www.lectutor.ca/>. Familizer can expand a raw word list into a family list and its classification of families are on the base of BNC word families. With the help of this software, the four raw word lists mentioned above are transformed into four family lists. Also take “go” as an example to show the structure of family lists.

go 0

goes 0

going 0

goings 0

goin 0

gone 0

went 0

gonna 0

gunna 0

Therefore, when this kind of family list replaces the basewrd1.txt in Range file, target textbook files will be running on the basis of this family list. And every occurrence of single tokens will be counted into the total occurrence of the family, through which we can get the general coverage of vocabulary from the wordlists. The following table (Table 4.1) shows processing result of running Section A of Unit 1 Book I on the basis of BR family list.

In the obtained result, several terms need to be explained for the convenience of description of the results. Tokens: the number of individual words in the text; types: the number of types in a word frequency list is the number of unique word forms, rather than the total number of words in a text; type/token ratio (TTR): the number of types divided by the number of tokens (it is not listed in the table, but can easily be calculated and is of great importance in showing the lexical richness); families: all the word forms under a head word in the base lists are called a word family. Take “go” as an example again, the headword GO has the following family members GOES, GOING, GOINGS, GOIN, GONE, WENT, GONNA, GUNNA.

The above table shows the following information:

- 1) The basic conditions of the target file including the saving path and total number of lines and words;
- 2) How many types and token of basewrd1 have appeared in the target file and their respective percentage and what are they (as listed in types which means the single occurrence of tokens will be counted into the total occurrence of types)?
- 3) The total number of types and families of basewrd1 and that of the appearing ones in the target file.

These three kinds of information not only tell us the relationship between a target file and a base word list, but also enable us to get a general picture of the distribution of the words of basewrd1 in the target files.

Table 4.1 Processing result of running Section A of Unit 1 Book 1 on the basis of BR  
family list

Number of lines: 13			
Number of words: 870			
Reading: E:\论文\Range_BNC\BASEWRD1.txt			
WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	827/95.06	382/91.83	302
not in the lists	43/ 4.94	34/ 8.17	?????
Total	870	416	302
Number of BASEWRD1.txt types: 20100, Number of BASEWRD1.txt families: 3749			
Table of Ranges: Types			
416 Words appear in 1 input files			
Table of Ranges: Families			
302 Words appear in 1 input files			
Types Found In Base List One			
TYPE	RANGE	FREQ	F1
A	1	38	38
ABILITIES	1	1	1

When the four transformed family lists and the active vocabulary family list which is made by Dr. Xu Jiajin are applied, the general coverage is turning out for analysis. The results obtained through running text files on these five lists will be analyzed in next section.

#### 4.1.2 Analysis

Although the results obtained may be of great value for many aspects of vocabulary study in a text file, the purpose of this section is to get the coverage of core vocabulary, so two variables and two fixed quantity are adopted to determine the coverage of core vocabulary. The two variables are the types and families appeared in the target files and the two fixed quantity are the types and families of the reference base word list. As for the corpus to be studied, the one of the 120 passages of four books is be sure to be included. What's more, as stated in the forewords of this package of textbooks, section A of each unit is for intensive reading and

Section B and C is for extensive reading which aims at cultivating the reading skill and is usually selective for students to read. The distinction between Section A and the other two means that both teachers and students will pay more attention to and spend more time in the studying of Section A (which is a common teaching and learning practice in most colleges). As a result, sub-corpus of section A of the entire four books is further investigated to get the percentage of coverage in intensive reading materials which are intended to study more thoroughly. The two variables and two fixed quantity in the processing results on the basis of the five family lists are taken down as following (the original processing results are listed in Appendix III):

Table 4.2 Processing result on the basis of BR family list

	Total Types	Type Ratio (%)	Total Families	Family Ratio (%)
Basic Requirement	20094	100	3749	100
Section A of four books	4700	23.39	2452	65.40
The whole set of four books	6668	33.28	2966	79.11

Table 4.3 Processing result on the basis of IR family list

	Total Types	Type Ratio (%)	Total Families	Family Ratio (%)
Intermediate Requirement	7691	100	1487	100
Section A of four books	838	10.53	492	33.09
The whole set of four books	1267	15.92	664	44.65

Table 4.4 Processing result on the basis of AR family list

	Total Types	Type Ratio (%)	Total Families	Family Ratio (%)
Advanced Requirement	5173	100	1237	100
Section A of four books	259	5.01	178	14.39
The whole set of four books	413	7.98	276	22.31

Table 4.5 Processing result on the basis of family list of top 5000 words from COCA

	Total Types	Type Ratio (%)	Total Families	Family Ratio (%)
Top 5000 words From COCA	17892	100	3263	100
Section A of four books	4522	25.27	2295	70.33
The whole set of four books	6322	35.33	2708	82.99

Table 4.6 Processing result on the basis of family list of active vocabulary

	Total Types	Type Ratio (%)	Total Families	Family Ratio (%)
Active vocabulary	13006	100	2074	100
Section A of four books	3456	26.57	1637	78.93
The whole set of four books	4722	36.31	1853	89.34

(The types/families ratios are the types and families appearing in texts divided by the total number of them in different ranks.)

A general observation can reveal the following two aspects:

- 1) All the type ratios obtained in the tables are lower than their corresponding family ratios. The two have different functions and for the study of coverage of core vocabulary, family ratio is preferred as a word family is usually made up of many a type and is more comprehensive.
- 2) The highest coverage of families appears in the processing results on the basis of active vocabulary, the following sequence of the other four ranks are: top 5000 words from COCA, BR, IR and AR.

A detailed observation of the five tables will be divided into two aspects: correspondence with CECR and coverage of current English usage. For the observation of former one, results running on the three family lists made according to the three ranks of requirements are of particular importance while for the latter one the results running on the top 5000 words from COCA and active vocabulary is selected for their active role in English language.

In the rank of BR, 4,794 words are listed and classified into 3,749 families among which 2,452 ones appeared in Section A of four books and 2966 ones appeared in the whole set of four books. Therefore, the family ratios are 65.40% and 79.11% respectively. These two ratios may sound not high enough. However, one thing which may affect the results is that the corpora of section A and the whole book are all made up of texts only. Pre-reading Activities, Reading Aloud, Comprehension of the Text, Word Building, Structure, Close, Translation, Reading Analysis and Structured Writing which follow the study of Section A are not included in the target corpora. Words families especially those with grammar functions may be included in these exercises. The absence of the exercises in target corpora may also explain why the type ratios are always lower than the family ratios as many variables of certain family is usually placed in exercises for students to drill and memorize.

The result of coverage of vocabulary from BR is compared with NHCE. Although one book is not sufficient to illustrate the whole difference, the comparison of books of the same rank may support the writer's conclusion partly. Thus, the files of Book One of 21<sup>st</sup> and NHCE are both processed on the base of vocabulary of BR and the following result is acquired (the processing results of Section A of Book 1 of two textbooks on the basis of basic requirement):

Table 4.7 Processing results of running Section A of Book 1 of NHCE and 21<sup>st</sup> on the basis of BR family list respectively

	Total tokens of the target file	Tokens/ %	Types/ %	Families
Section A of Book 1 of NHCE	7109	6931/97.50	1721/94.56	1213
Section A of Book 1 of 21 <sup>st</sup>	8104	7609/93.89	1777/86.01	1208

Table 4.7 shows that about 21<sup>st</sup> has more 1,000 tokens than that of NHCE and the tokens and types from the latter one are larger than that of the former one. However, the word families are slightly fewer. On the whole, the two are of comparable coverage of core vocabulary. And Zhao Yong (2005) proves in his quantitative studies of coverage of vocabulary issued by CECR in corpus which is made up of all the language materials printed on textbooks find that the coverage reached 99.09% (p.164). This result and the comparison in turn prove that the coverage of vocabulary of BR is satisfying on the whole.

Now that most words basically required are covered by the set of textbooks, are the most active usages employed in the whole set of textbooks? Then the results processed on the base of active vocabulary and current use in native English will be helpful in answering the question raised above. The results in Table 4.6 show the family ratio on the base of top 5,000 words from COCA are even higher than that of the BR and that of active vocabulary is even higher, nearly reaching 90%. These are clear evidence to show that the usage of words are the most current and active usage. As a result, the mastering of this vocabulary may enable students to talk about everyday topics easily with native speakers

On the contrary, the study of coverage of vocabulary of the IR may prove to be disappointing as the family ratios have dropped dramatically to 33.09 and 44.65 for section A and the whole book respectively. Even all the materials printed on the textbook were included in the target corpus; the result would be far from satisfying. The results got on the basis of AR are even more disappointing for the ratios are only 14.39 and 22.31 respectively.

On the whole, the set of 21<sup>st</sup> textbooks covers most of the words of BR of CECR. And for

the families in the textbooks active and current usages are the top choice to be taught. These two results fulfill the aims of teaching college English set down by CECR and proved themselves to be satisfying. However, the results obtained on the basis of intermediate and advanced requirements are far from satisfying and is one main area which need to be revised in future textbook compilation.

## 4.2 Gradient of vocabulary

As investigated in last section, the coverage of core vocabulary is mainly examined by the words lists of different ranks of requirements. The investigation of Gradient of vocabulary, namely the vocabulary growth of the textbooks, is mainly measured by the comparison among the four bands of books (the processing results of running four bands of books on the three levels of requirements prescribed by CECR are listed in Appendix V).

Talking about the growth of vocabulary, two aspects are focused naturally: growth of passage length and difficulty. The growth of passage length can be clearly shown in the following two charts:

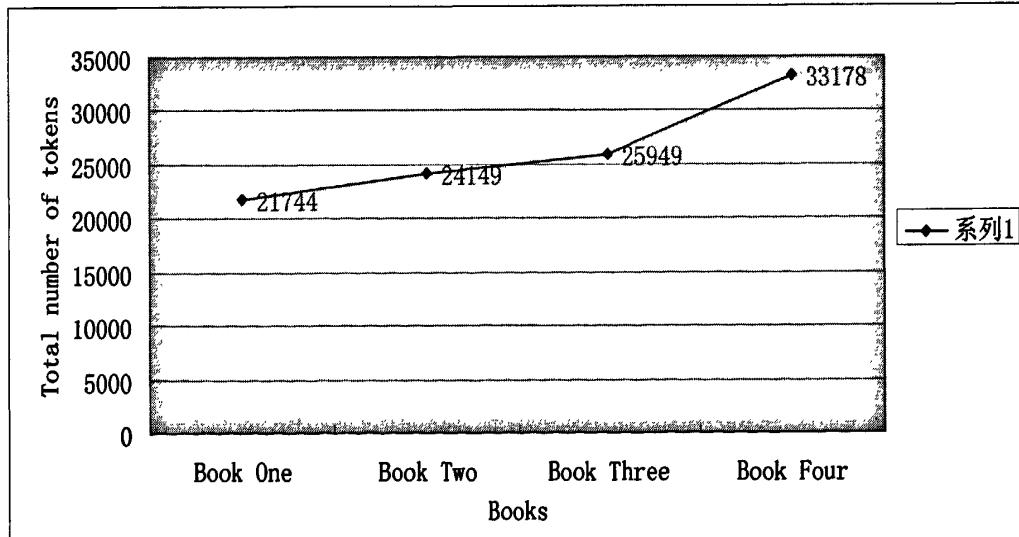


Chart 4.1 Number of tokens in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>

Chart 4.1 shows the total number of words in the four books and Chart 4.2 shows the total number of word families of all the three ranks of requirements (detailed distribution of each rank will be presented later in this section) in the four books. A rough analysis of the two charts can tell us that not only the length of texts but also the number of word families have been enlarged gradually. This gradual enlargement is in strict concordance with the principle of developing

from simple to complex. However, this enlargement can not tell the growth of difficulty of texts. So a detailed analysis needs to be done on the word families' respective changing trends.

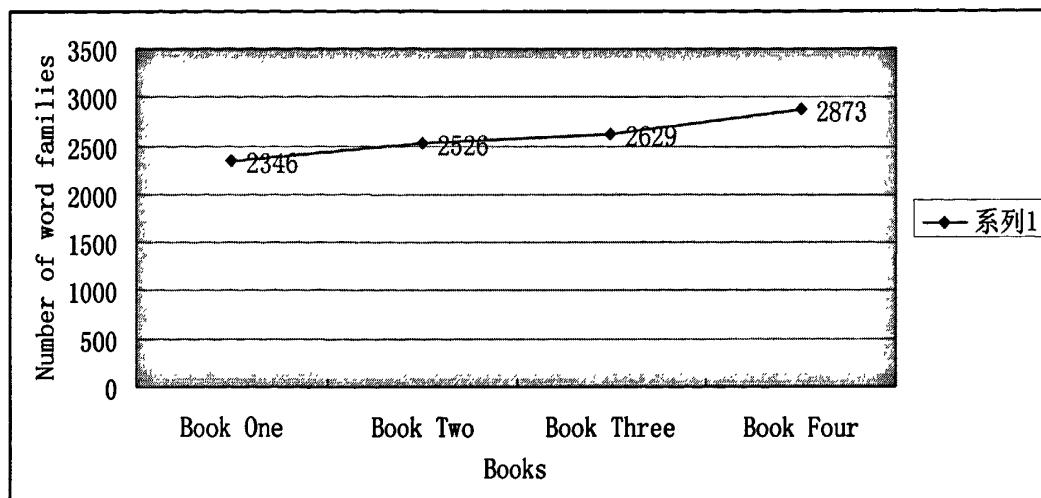


Chart 4.2 Number of word families in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>

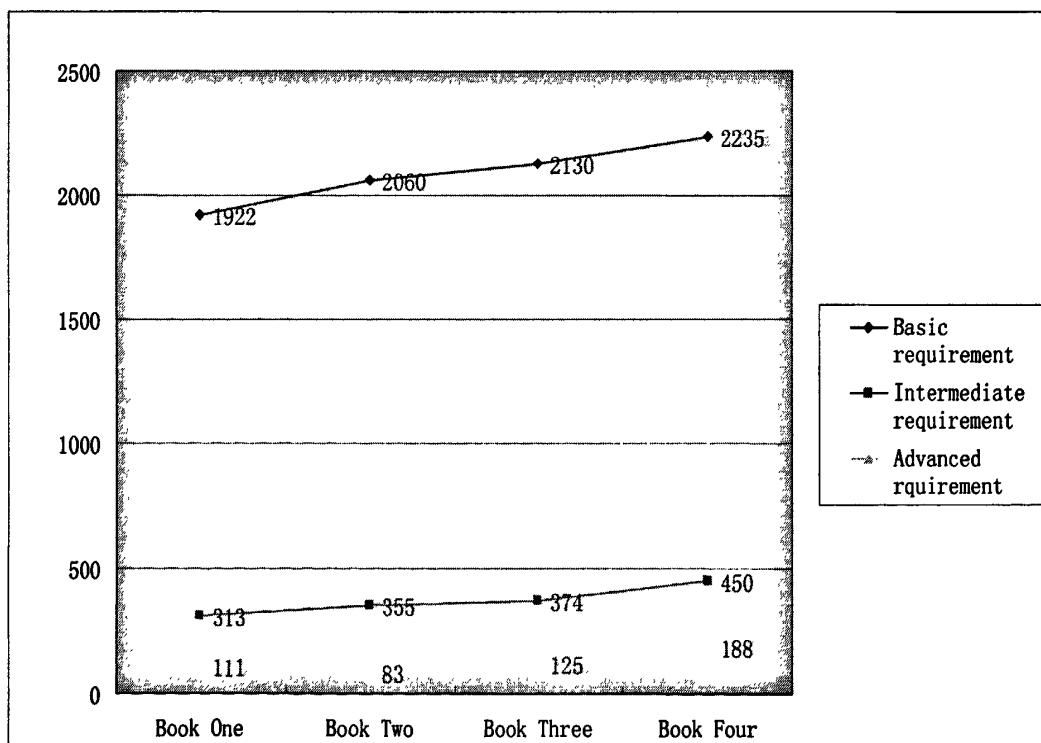


Chart 4.3 The distribution of word families of three ranks in the four bands of books

A detailed description of the distribution of word families which belong to three different ranks proves the same trends. Word families in three ranks are all increasing steadily except a small drawback in the advanced rank of Book Two. As the three ranks of requirements are

classified according to their difficulty, so word families belonging to the intermediate level is more difficult than that at basic level and word families at advanced level are believed to the most difficult for college English learners. Therefore, the increasing word families belonging to the intermediate and advanced level can prove the increase of difficulty in the organization of the four books.

Another ratio that can be taken to weigh the growth of difficulty in textbooks is ratio of tokens appearing in the texts. As mentioned in last section, tokens are individual words in texts, so the ratio of tokens which belong to different ranks can reflect the degree of difficulty of different texts. The following charts from Chart 4.4 to Chart 4.6 show the trends of token ratio in four books. As the numbers of these turning points of the three charts are greatly different so they are not combined into one for fear that the trends may not be clear in the combination of the three. Instead, they are listed separately and represent one rank of requirement respectively.

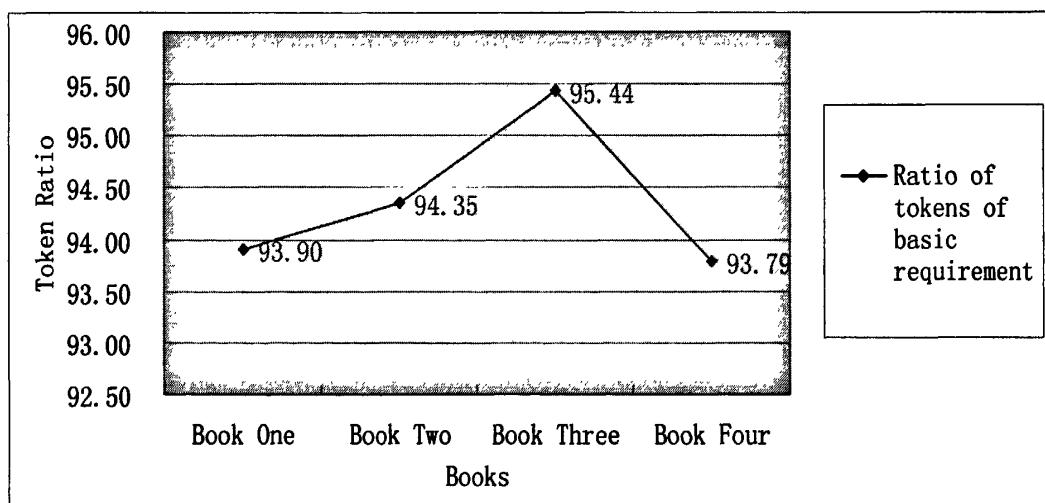
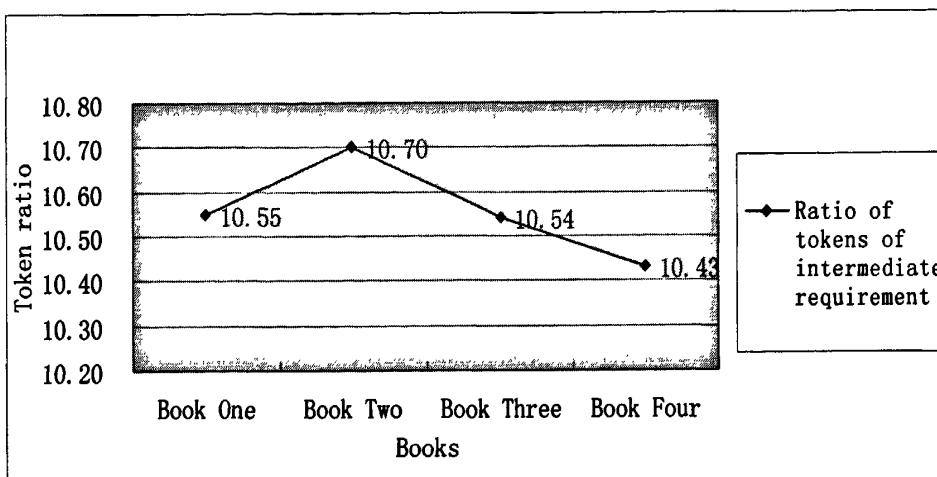
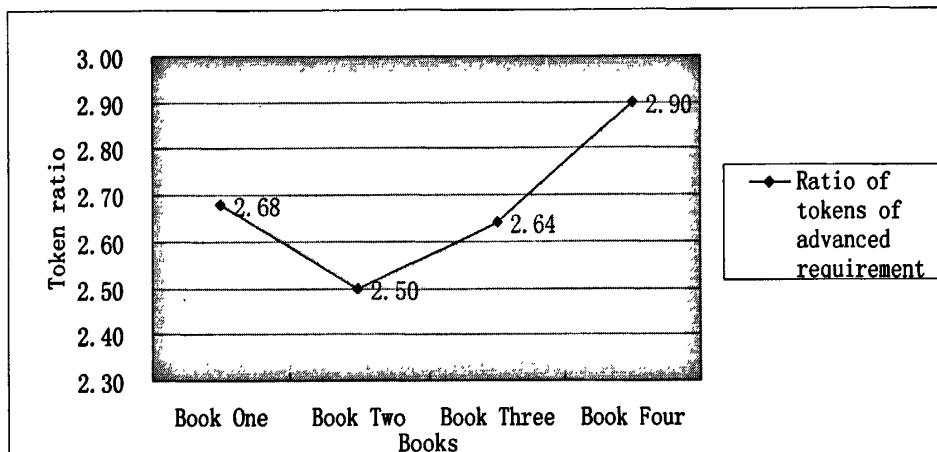


Chart 4.4 The ratio of tokens of basic requirement in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>

Chart 4.4 is concerned about the ratio of tokens which belong to the rank of BR. The distribution of the token ratio in this chart shows that the percentage made up of the basic words are increasing gradually from Book one to Book Three but drops to 93.79% in Book Four. It means Book One to Book Three are all aiming at getting students contacting with the basic vocabulary while book four may intend to let students get acquainted with vocabulary other than the basic one. In fact, the decrease of ratio of tokens belonging to the BR results in the increase of the ratio of tokens belonging to the AR (as clearly seen in Chart 4.6).

Chart 4.5 The ratio of tokens of intermediate requirement in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>Chart 4.6 The ratio of tokens of advanced requirement in four bands of books of 21<sup>st</sup>

An interesting result is that the trend showed by Chart 4.5 is running in the opposite directions instead of the assumed both increasing of the two ranks' ratio. However, through the decline of ratio of basic level and the climbing of advanced level, we can tell the four bands of books are becoming difficult gradually. However, the changing of percentage is not large enough, the largest of which is 1.65%. So the range of difficulty of the four textbooks is not wide enough.

#### 4.3 Subject matter

As mentioned in the corresponding section of last chapter, three criteria are withdrawn from the study of Shu and Zhuang's principles and Cunningsworth's evaluation system and they are the width and variety of subject matters, interesting aspect of subject matters and the

organization of subject matters in the whole set of textbooks.

#### 4.3.1 The width and variety of subject matters

In Chapter Three, the writer proposes to classify the 40 units into eleven main categories. Table 4.8 shows the result of classification of Book 1 (classification of the subject matters of the other three bands of books are listed in Appendix VI).

In the following table, the second column shows the category each unit belongs to and third one shows the detailed description of the subject matters for the convenience of analysis.

Table 4.8 Classification of subject matters in Book 1 of 21<sup>st</sup>

Book 1	Main category of subject matters	Detailed division of subject matters
Unit 1	School Life	Learning skill, school memories
Unit 2	Culture and customs	Language study
Unit 3	Morality and psychology	Building of self-confidence
Unit 4	Morality and psychology	Good reputation and integrity
Unit 5	Family life	Interpersonal relationship
Unit 6	Culture and customs	Popular trends
Unit 7	School life	Relationship between students and teachers
Unit 8	Science and technology	Computers and Internet
Unit 9	Environment issues	Environmental threats
Unit 10	Science and technology	Cloning, computers and internet

An observation of the 40 units reveals a surprising result: 21<sup>st</sup> covers ten out of the eleven categories. The subject matters of the books cover nearly all the aspects of students' life: family life, school life, career life; they also touch upon the aspects students may be interested in: science and technology, environmental issues, love and romance. What's more, articles which tell students how to cope with pressure and face up to failure are also included in the set of books. However, articles about other subjects, such as history, health, mass media, animals and plants are not included in this set of textbooks. What was worse, though two units are classified into the category of Literature, novels and poems are not found in the four books. The missing of this subject matter is quite regretful as literature is the marrow of a nation's culture and customs and can arouse students' interest in learning foreign language. On the other hand,

although a wide variety of subject matters are touched upon in the four books, the distribution of them which means the depth of some subject matters is not balanced, which will be further explained in the next section.

#### 4.4.2 Interesting aspect of subject matters

The conclusion that the subject matters are wide and rich is drawn on the basis of the writers own teaching experiences. Whether they are the favorites of students depends on students. Therefore, a mini-questionnaire is conducted to collect information about what they really like. First of all, the process of conducting the sampling and investigation is explained. With the purpose of finding the relationship between gender and students' interest in different subject matters, the questionnaire is handed out to 45 female students and 45 male students. When questionnaires are collected, 42 female students and 36 male students handed in their papers. One result of the investigation is briefly presented in the following table (the other result got from the questionnaire may be of help to the second criteria).

Table 4.9 Results collected from questionnaire

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
Female students	36	15	7	12	23	2	3	10	5	15
Male students	13	12	7	9	23	5	4	7	6	17
Total	49	27	14	19	46	9	7	17	11	30

(letters from a to j represent the categories whose correspondence with the letters can be found in Appendix II and the numbers represent the number of students who have chosen it as their top three subject matters.)

The main information obtained from the above table is that male students' interest is wider than the female students'. The top three subject matters in which female students interested are: culture/customs, entertainment and literature; for male students, the top three are: entertainment, literature, and culture/customs. Except for the sequences of the three categories loved by female and male students, they have common interest in culture and customs, entertainment and literature.

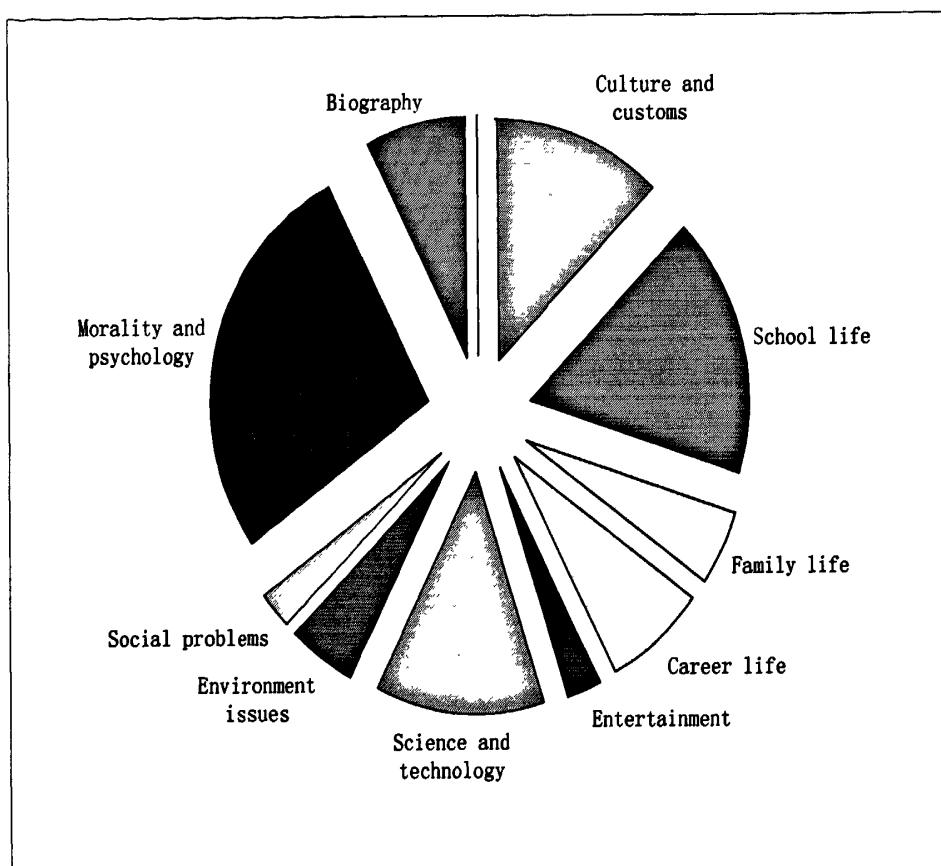


Chart 4.7 Distribution of different categories of subject matters in the whole set of 21st

Chart 4.7 shows the distribution of the ten main categories in the four books explicitly. From the chart, we can easily tell that Morality and psychology, School life and Science and technology occupy the top three percentages while entertainment and environment issues constitute the smallest parts. The comparison of the real distribution with the students' real interest reveals the fact that the subject matters students really interested in are not the focus of 21<sup>st</sup> and the subject matters selected for 21<sup>st</sup> are what students really like. For example, only two of the 42 female students choose Science and technology and the number of male students choosing this category is no more than 5 but 15 articles of five units of the four bands of books are arranged around the subject matter of Science and technology.

The mini-investigation yields another result which is helpful in analysis of this aspect. In the 78 questionnaires collected, 23 students hope to learn some introduction and background information of English movies and songs. The percentage of 29.5% may sound not high enough, but under the condition that no candidate answers are listed, 23 students' calling can prove that subject matters of English films and songs are really what they like. The missing of these subject

matters should be eliminated in the textbook revisions or recompilations.

What's more, the fourth question of the questionnaire shows concern about the times of repetition of one subject matter they can accept. For this question, 31 students think the repetition of once or twice is acceptable and the times of repetition 40 students tend to accept is from three times to five times while only 7 students accept repetition of more than five times. But in 21<sup>st</sup>, Morality and psychology is the subject matter of 33 articles of 11 units and the subject matter of school life shows up in 21 articles of 7 units. This is much more than students can bear. In fact too much repetition may sound like sermonizing which may raise students' boredom which may reduce their interest in learning in turn. On the other hand, subject matter of English movies and songs and sports is completely blank. Therefore, in the future textbook revision or compilation, a wide survey should be conducted about what students are really interested in. Then wider range of subject matters with those in which students are interested as the focus should be arranged in a set of textbooks.

These results concerning subject matters force us to probe into the reasons and one possible answer according to the writer is that this series of books are published a decade ago, during these ten years, science and technology are developing at an unbelievable speed accompanied by all kinds of environmental disasters. Compared with the students of ten years ago, nowadays students show little interest in these new technologies and disasters. Instead, they want to have something more relaxing, such as entertainment and literature. This can be interpreted as an evasion from the reality but this is the real trend of students' changing psychology. In order to suit this trend, more lively subject matters should be increased in the compilation of textbooks and the subject matters of educational significance can be maintained but reduced to a smaller number.

#### 4.4.3 Organization of subject matters

Besides the two criteria analyzed above, one aspect in the organization of subject matters in 21<sup>st</sup> is worth mentioning and retaining in future textbook compilation as it is designed to follow the students' life and psychology.

In 21<sup>st</sup>, subject matters concerning students' lives are presented in the sequence of students' real lives development. When students first entered colleges, they are full of memories of the past middle school life and ambitions of future life, therefore, "Secret of A students" and

“Bittersweet Memories” and “Leaving” are chosen as the first three articles in Unit 1 of Book 1. Then for students who first left home and is living in dormitory, compilers use “The Language of Compromise”, “Easy Ways to Avoid an Argument”, “Good Morning, Neighbor” to give some advice. Then in Book 3 which is intended to be used when students are sophomore and may begin to have affection towards boys or girls, compilers arrange “How I Got Smart”, “Coming of Age” and “Romance and Reality” in the very beginning of Book 3. In Book 4, compilers use two units (6 and 7) to illustrate the factors that may affect future success and management skills. At the end of this series, a graduation speech and an inaugural address are arranged to inspire the students.

From the perspective of psychology, compilers also make great effort to arrange the subject matters. Freshmen of colleges are arranged to study how to build self-confidence through the study of the three articles of Unit 3 of Book 1: “Stevie Wonder: Sunshine in the Shadow”, “We Are What We Think We Are”, “Her Newly-discovered Self”. When students confronted with failures in study or life may turn to the three articles of Unit 4 in Book 2: “Turning Failure into Success”, “Failure? No! Just Temporary Setbacks” and “Heart of a Champion” for confidence. Then the following unit calls for students to “Holding onto a Dream” and balance the study and part-time job. In Unit 7 of Book 4, more abstract definitions of “happiness” and “quality of life” are argued for preparing students to get ready for their future life. As these subject matters are closely connected with students’ physical and psychological development, they may arouse resonance in students and hold their interest in their study. Concerning the native aspect, materials are all taken from books and magazines of 1980s and 90s written by native speakers. This ensures the nativity and newness of materials at the time of textbook compilation.

Following the arrangement of these subject matters, students may grow from dependent children into mature adults who can shoulder the burden of career life after their graduation. This is one aspect worthy of retaining in future textbook compilation.

#### 4.4 Summary

In this chapter, three criteria are applied in the evaluation of two aspects (vocabulary and subject matter) of 21<sup>st</sup> and the corresponding results are analyzed. In the first section, the process of making of word family lists is elaborated and some terms in the results obtained are explained

for the conveniences of analysis of the results. When running Section A and all texts of the bands of books in Range software on the basis of the five family lists, we get the coverage of vocabulary in the different lists by indicators such as tokens, families and their ratios. And then tables of the four indicators are selected out from the processing results and presented in the first section of this chapter. An observation of the tables shows that nearly 80% percent of families of BR are included in the set of four books. Results further prove that the words used in textbooks are mostly active and current use of native speakers. These results are satisfying on the whole. However, the coverage of words from family lists of intermediate and advanced level are not so positive, as the coverage only ranges from 15% to 45% in the whole textbooks. This is one main area for future revision of textbooks.

In the following section, the three levels of requirements are considered as the evaluating weighted lines to elicit the gradient of vocabulary (growth of vocabulary difficulty). The results running on the basis of three levels are shown in five charts as charts can show the trends clearly. Chart 4.1 and 4.2 show that the total number of tokens and families are increasing steadily amid the four books, which indicate the steady growth of texts complexity. Chart 4.3 shows the distribution of word families which belong to the three levels. In this chart, word families in four books are all increasing gradually except a small draw back. Then the ratios of tokens of three levels are shown in three charts separately to give a clearer picture about what tokens are increasing and decreasing in the four books. From all these charts, we can tell the textbooks' difficulty is increasing steadily but at a low speed.

The evaluation of subject matters is conducted from three aspects: the width and variety, interesting aspect and organization of subject matters. For the three aspects, classification into ten categories, questionnaire and citation from the original texts are employed respectively. The results generated in this process disapprove of two disadvantages and approve of one advantage of the subject matters in 21<sup>st</sup>. First, although subject matters selected in this set of textbooks are wide and varied, but novels, poems and subject matters of English movies are not included. Second, the subject matters repeated many times in the textbooks are not what students interested in. Instead, the frequent repetition may sound like sermons which may lead to defensiveness and boredom in these subject matters and then the textbooks. However, one technique in organizing the subject matters in a set of textbooks is worthy of mentioning and

retaining in the future textbook compilations.

On the whole, the series of books did a good job in selecting vocabulary and subject matters to teach when compiled. But ten years has passed and new requirement has been issued in 2007. Facing the enlarging vocabulary and more complicated students, the books exposed many areas that need to be further improved and revised.

## Chapter Five Conclusion

Upon the investigations and findings presented in the previous chapter, answers to the two research questions are presented. Meanwhile, some limitations of the research in this paper are stated for the purpose of future improvement.

### 5.1 Conclusion

In the introduction part, the review of the history of syllabus and four generations of textbooks deduced the two general questions about the current textbooks. In order to answer these two questions, 21<sup>st</sup> was selected out of the fourth generation to be evaluated. The evaluation of 21<sup>st</sup> in this research is a process of matching the content of textbooks in question with the requirements of the new version of CECR. In 21<sup>st</sup>, vocabulary and subject matters are the major components of its content; therefore, the three word lists belonging to different levels and requirement for subject matters are sorted out as the weighted lines of the research. With the help of Range software and a mini-questionnaire, the paper manages to answer the two question listed at the beginning. The finding and implications of the research can be summarized into the following four aspects:

- 1) Texts of the four books cover 77.91% vocabulary of BR, 44.65% vocabulary of IR and 22.31% of AR. For the intensive reading part, Section A of the four bands of books cover 65.40% vocabulary of BR, 33.09% vocabulary of IR and 14.39% vocabulary. The coverage of vocabulary of BR proves to be satisfying while that of IR and AR is far from perfect. Based on this finding, suggestion for compilation of fifth generation is that words of higher ranks should be included in order to catch up with the changing English teaching situation and improving proficiency of college freshmen.
- 2) By examining the results obtained on the basis of active vocabulary and top 5000 words from COCA, the coverage of families reaches 82.99% and 89.34% in the whole set of four books. This is a gratifying result which means the majority of the words included in the textbooks are the current usage of the language and this will ensure their ability in casual talk with native speakers.
- 3) The results yielded in the study of gradient of vocabulary answer the question of

organization of vocabulary in a set of textbooks. The total number of tokens and families depicted in the first two charts of the gradient section prove that the content of vocabulary is becoming more complicated with the growth of bands. Then more detailed depiction of token distribution is presented in the following three charts and conclusion can be drawn that more difficult words show up along the arrangement of four bands of books although not continuously. However, because only a small number of intermediate and advanced words are included in the whole set of textbooks; the gradient of vocabulary is not very explicit. This demerit can also be eliminated by the inclusion of more difficult words.

- 4) The subject matters selected for the textbooks are native materials which are mainly general ones. The materials cover ten main categories of subject matters. But the missing of novels, introduction to English movies and music, sports and stars is a pity as these are what students are interested in. what's more, more frequent repetition of some subject matters should be avoided and leave more room to cover wider subject matter. Yet, the line to organize the subject matters along the changing situation of students' lives and psychology should be imitated in the future textbook compilation.

## 5.2 Limitations of the present research

Although the paper manages to answer the two research questions proposed in the beginning part, it is far from perfect due to limited time and resources. The limitations of the paper are as follows:

- 1) The choice of two aspects (vocabulary and subject matter) and the corresponding three criteria are proposed by the writer herself on the basis of existing textbook evaluation theories. Therefore, the effectiveness of these choices needs to be further
- 2) When textbooks corpus is established, no access is obtained to the electronic edition of the books. So the textbook corpus and sub-corpora are only made up of the passages of every unit, which may lead to the imprecision of the results obtained. The writer is applying for a project in the working college and hopes to establish a more comprehensive corpus. Once this corpus of textbooks is established, the writer also hopes to share with other researchers who may have the same problems as the writer did.
- 3) As for the making of the family lists of the three levels of requirements, repetition among the

three is not eliminated because of limitation of research time and energy. Take “active” for example, two members of the “active” family (active and activity) are listed in the BR, one member (activate) is listed in the IR and another member (activist) is listed in the AR. When family lists are made with the help of online Familizer, the word family of “active” appeared in all the three family lists of the three different levels. This limitation mainly leads to the re-counting of the word families at IR and AR. However, the impact of this re-counting only increases the percentage of coverage of vocabulary at IR and AR level. Yet, results presented in this research show that even the over-estimated percentage of IR and AR vocabulary doesn’t reach 50%, which stresses the urgency to include more words at the IR and AR level in book revisions.

- 4) The orientation of this research is to find whether the textbooks of the fourth generation still fulfill the requirements set by the new version of CECR. So the results obtained from 21<sup>st</sup> should have been compared with that of other textbooks of the same generation to illustrate the more profound and comprehensive conclusion. This is the aim and orientation of future studies.

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## Appendix

### Appendix I The titles of the four books of 21<sup>st</sup>

#### Book One

Unit One	Text A Secrets of A Students	Text B Bittersweet Memories
	Text C Leaving	
Unit Two	Text A Conversational Ballgames	Text B English as a Universal Language
	Text C How to Improve Your Vocabulary	
Unit Three	Text A Stevie Wonder: Sunshine in the Shadow	
	Text B We Are What We Think We Are	
	Text C Her Newly-discovered Self	
Unit Four	Text A The Washwoman	Text B A Good Name
	Text C This Is Why Jordan Is Jordan	
Unit Five	Text A The Language of Compromise	Text B Easy Ways to Avoid an Argument
	Text C “Good Morning, Neighbor”	
Unit Six	Text A Nerds and Geeks	
	Text B Our Changing Lifestyle: Trends and Fads	
	Text C Popularity that Counts	
Unit Seven	Text A I Became Her Target	Text B Firm, Fair, and Friendly
	Text C The Magic Pebbles	
Unit Eight	Text A Foreword	
	Text B Smart Machines: Our Tireless Helpers	
	Text C The Internet	
Unit Nine	Text A Hothouse Earth	
	Text B The Population Problem: Everybody’s Baby	
	Text C Dangers to the Environment	
Unit Ten	Text A Cloning: Good Science or Baaaad Idea	

Text B Internet Helps Solve a Medical Mystery

Text C Fuzzy Logic Smart Machines

Book Two

Unit One Text A Winston Churchill---His Other Life

Text B Little Sister of the Poor

Text C Diana, Princess of Wales: 1961-1997

Unit Two Text A Why They Excel

Text B Methods of Education: East and West

Text C Cheating as Culture: Insights for Foreign Teachers

Unit Three Text A The Tale of a Cultural Translator

Text B A Multicultural Person

Text C A Lifetime of Learning to Manage Effectively

Unit Four Text A Turing Failure into Success

Text B Failure? No! Just Temporary Setbacks

Text C Heart of a Champion

Unit Five Text A Holding onto a Dream Text B The Soft Sell

Text C Working for A Living

Unit Six Text A A Brief History of Stephen Hawking

Text B Inventor of the Future

Text C The New Frontier of Beauty

Unit Seven Text A Thinking: A Neglected Art

Text B How to Teach Your Child to Think

Text C Developing Your Thinking

Unit Eight Text A Unwritten Rules

Text B A Traffic Light Is a Brainless Machine

Text C In Ourselves We Trust

Unit Nine Text A Get Ready for Some Wild Weather

Text B Study Finds Good Effects of El Nino

Text C What's Wrong with Our Weather

Unit Ten Text A The Next 30 Years

Text B Our Forecasts 30 Years Later

Text C The 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Information and Man

Book Three

Unit One	Text A How I Got Smart	Text B Coming of Age
	Text C Romance and Reality	
Unit Two	Text A The Titanic Puzzle-Should a good feminist accept priority seating on a lifeboat?	
	Text B Unjust Desserts	Text C Will You Go Out with Me?
Unit Three	Text A The Sense of Wonder	Text B The Innocent Eye
	Text C If I Were 21	
Unit Four	Text A College Pressures	
	Text B College Lectures: Is Anybody Listening?	
	Text C What Is College for?	
Unit Five	Text A The ABCs of the U.S.A.: America Seen with European Eyes	
	Text B American Values and assumptions	
	Text C A Foreign Anthropologist's Observation of Americans	
Unit Six	Text A Every 23 Minutes	Text B Needed: A Licence to Drink
	Text C My Daughter Smokes	
Unit Seven	Text A So What's So Bad About Being So-So?	
	Text B Stripping Down to Bare Happiness	
	Text C Quality of Life Is Much More Than a Job	
Unit Eight	Text A The Highs of Low Technology	
	Text B Why I'm Not Going to Buy a Computer	
	Text C Obsolete Technology	
Unit Nine	Text A Space Politics	Text B Message to the Unknown
	Text C Your Future in Space	
Unit Ten	Text A Plain Talk About Handling Stress	
	Text B Energy Walks	
	Text C Five Methods I Have Used to Banish Worry	

Book Four

Unit One	Text A Who Is Great?	Text B How to Be a Leader
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Text C The Greatest People in the World

Unit Two Text A The Gratitude We Need      Text B Why Manners Matter

Text C Courtesy: Key to a Happier World

Unit Three Text A How to Change Your Point of View

Text B Lateral and Vertical Thinking

Text C Common Types of Problem Solving

Unit Four Text A How to Become Gifted

Text B The Truth About College Teachers

Text C We're the Retards

Unit Five Text A Prison Studies      Text B Reading for Life

Text C Moon on a Silver Spoon

Unit Six Text A The EQ Factor

Text B What's Your Emotional IQ?

Text C A Classic Study of Environmental Influence

Unit Seven Text A Running a Successful Company: Ten Rules that Worked for Me

Text B The Jeanning of America---and the World

Text C The Purest Treasure

Unit Eight Text A My Father's son

Text B An Open Letter to a Young Person with an Enemy

Text C My Brother's Way

Unit Nine Text A The West's Debt to China      Text B Introduction (Part I)

Text C Introduction (Part II)

Unit Ten Text A My Graduation Speech      Text B The Four Marks of Leadership

Text C Inaugural Address

## Appendix II The questionnaire used in the research

您好。此次问卷是关于大学英语教材题材的调查，期望能得到您的配合与协助。本问卷不记名，请不要有什么顾虑，按您的真实想法填写。谢谢您的支持与合作！

1. 您的性别是\_\_\_\_\_.

A. 男              B. 女

2. 在下列大学英语教材的题材中，您最喜欢那些？（请从其中选择三个）

---

- a) 文化与风俗，如国外节日，文化差异，国外风俗等；
- b) 学校生活，如考试，学习技巧，寝室生活，友情等；
- c) 家庭生活，如代沟，恋爱，婚姻，家庭成员之间的关系等；
- d) 职业生活，如面试，职业野心，管理，商业等；
- e) 娱乐，如体育运动，明星，旅行，食物等；
- f) 科学技术：如最新发明，计算机与网络，机器人，克隆等；
- g) 环境问题：如环境破坏，环境保护等；
- h) 心理与道德，如好名声，如何面对挫折，如何做一个正直的人等；
- i) 社会问题：如交通，和平与战争，广告，犯罪等；
- j) 文学作品：如小说，名人传记等。

3. 除了上述题材，您觉得大学英语教材还应该添加什么题材？

---

\_\_\_\_\_。

4. 在一套教材中（一般有四册 40 个单元，供大一和大二四个学期使用），您认为同一题材重复几次比较适合？\_\_\_\_\_.

A. 一到两次              B. 三到五次              C. 六到八次              D. 更多

Appendix III Processing results of running Section A and the whole book on the basis of five different kinds of requirements

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\section A.txt

Number of lines: 726

Number of words: 39342

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\basic requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	36979/93.99	4700/78.03	2452
not in the lists	2363/ 6.01	1323/21.97	?????
Total	39342	6023	2452

Number of basic requirement.txt types: 20095 Number of basic requirement.txt families: 3749

Table of Ranges: Types 6023 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families 2452 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book.txt

Number of lines: 3880

Number of words: 83774

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\basic requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	79193/94.53	6668/74.55	2966
not in the lists	4581/ 5.47	2276/25.45	?????
Total	83774	8944	2966

Number of basic requirement.txt types: 20094 Number of basic requirement.txt families: 3749

Table of Ranges: Types

8944 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

2966 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\section A.txt

Number of lines: 726

Number of words: 39342

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\intermediate requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	4210/10.70	838/13.91	492
not in the lists	35132/89.30	5185/86.09	?????
Total	39342	6023	492

Number of intermediate requirement.txt types: 7691 Number of intermediate requirement.txt families: 1487

Table of Ranges: Types 6023 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families 492 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book.txt

Number of lines: 3880

Number of words: 83774

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\intermediate requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	8921/10.65	1267/14.17	664
not in the lists	74853/89.35	7677/85.83	?????
Total	83774	8944	664

Number of intermediate requirement.txt types: 7691 Number of intermediate requirement.txt families: 1487

Table of Ranges: Types

8944 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

664 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\section A.txt

Number of lines: 726

Number of words: 39342

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ advanced requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	1070/ 2.72	259/ 4.30	178
not in the lists	38272/97.28	5764/95.70	?????
Total	39342	6023	178

Number of advanced requirement.txt types: 5173 Number of advanced requirement.txt families: 1237

Table of Ranges: Types 6023 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families 178 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book.txt

Number of lines: 3880

Number of words: 83774

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ advanced requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	2205/ 2.63	413/ 4.62	276
not in the lists	81569/97.37	8531/95.38	?????
Total	83774	8944	276

Number of advanced requirement.txt types: 5173 Number of advanced requirement.txt families: 1237

Table of Ranges: Types

8944 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

276 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\section A\section A.txt

Number of lines: 726

Number of words: 39342

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\top 5000 words from COCA.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	36902/93.80	4522/75.08	2295
not in the lists	2440/ 6.20	1501/24.92	?????
Total	39342	6023	2295

Number of top 5000 words from COCA.txt types: 17893 Number of top 5000 words from COCA.txt families: 3263

Table of Ranges: Types

6023 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

2295 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book.txt

Number of lines: 3880

Number of words: 83774

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ top 5000 words from COCA.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	79003/94.30	6322/70.68	2708
not in the lists	4771/ 5.70	2622/29.32	?????
Total	83774	8944	2708

Number of top 5000 words from COCA.txt types: 17892 Number of top 5000 words from COCA.txt families: 3263

Table of Ranges: Types 8944 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families 2708 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\section A\section A.txt

Number of lines: 726

Number of words: 39342

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ active vocabulary.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	28519/72.49	3456/57.38	1637
not in the lists	10823/27.51	2567/42.62	?????
Total	39342	6023	1637

Number of active vocabulary.txt types: 13006 Number of active vocabulary.txt families: 2074

Table of Ranges: Types 6023 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families 1637 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book.txt

Number of lines: 3880

Number of words: 83774

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ active vocabulary.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	60834/72.62	4772/53.35	1853
not in the lists	22940/27.38	4172/46.65	?????
Total	83774	8944	1853

Number of active vocabulary.txt types: 13006 Number of active vocabulary.txt families: 2074

Table of Ranges: Types 8944

Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

1853 Words appear in 1 input files

Appendix IV Processing results of running Section A of Book 1 of two textbooks on the basis of basic requirement

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\book 1\section A of book 1.txt

Number of lines: 174

Number of words: 8104

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ basic requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	7609/93.89	1777/86.01	1208
not in the lists	495/ 6.11	289/13.99	?????
Total	8104	2066	1208

Number of basic requirement.txt types: 20098 Number of basic requirement.txt families: 3749

Table of Ranges: Types 2066 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families 1208 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\nhce\section A\section A.txt

Number of lines: 191

Number of words: 7109

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ basic requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	6931/97.50	1721/94.56	1213
not in the lists	178/ 2.50	99/ 5.44	?????
Total	7109	1820	1213

Number of basic requirement.txt types: 20099 Number of basic requirement.txt families: 3749

Table of Ranges: Types

1820 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

1213 Words appear in 1 input files

Appendix V Processing results of running four bands of books on the three levels of requirements prescribed by CECR

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 1\book 1.txt

Number of lines: 1278

Number of words: 21744

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\Basic Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	20418/93.90	3244/82.02	1922
not in the lists	1326/ 6.10	711/17.98	?????
Total	21744	3955	1922

Number of Basic Requirement .txt types: 20097 Number of Basic Requirement.txt families: 3749

Table of Ranges: Types

3955 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

1922 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 2\book 2.txt

Number of lines: 1186

Number of words: 24149

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ Basic Requirement 1.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	22785/94.35	3668/84.40	2060
not in the lists	1364/ 5.65	678/15.60	?????
Total	24149	4346	2060

Number of Basic Requirement.txt types: 20096 Number of Basic Requirement.txt families: 3749

Table of Ranges: Types 4346 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families 2060 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 3\book 3.txt

Number of lines: 1288

Number of words: 25949

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ Basic Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	24766/95.44	3869/83.60	2130
not in the lists	1183/ 4.56	759/16.40	?????
Total	25949	4628	2130

Number of Basic Requirement.txt types: 20096 Number of Basic Requirement.txt families:  
3749

Table of Ranges: Types

4628 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

2130 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 4\book 4.txt

Number of lines: 1562

Number of words: 33178

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ Basic Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	31119/93.79	4123/76.10	2235
not in the lists	2059/ 6.21	1295/23.90	?????
Total	33178	5418	2235

Number of Basic Requirement.txt types: 20097 Number of Basic Requirement.txt families:  
3749

Table of Ranges: Types 5418 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

2235 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 1\book 1.txt

Number of lines: 1278

Number of words: 21744

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\Intermediate Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	2295/10.55	487/12.31	313
not in the lists	19449/89.45	3468/87.69	?????
Total	21744	3955	313

Number of Intermediate Requirement.txt types: 7692 Number of Intermediate Requirement.txt families: 1487

Table of Ranges: Types

3955 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

313 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 2\book 2.txt

Number of lines: 1186

Number of words: 24149

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ Intermediate Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	2583/10.70	589/13.55	355
not in the lists	21566/89.30	3757/86.45	?????
Total	24149	4346	355

Number of Intermediate Requirement.txt types: 7691 Number of Intermediate Requirement.txt families: 1487

Table of Ranges: Types 4346 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

355 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 3\book 3.txt

Number of lines: 1288

Number of words: 25949

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ Intermediate Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	2736/10.54	630/13.61	374
not in the lists	23213/89.46	3998/86.39	?????
Total	25949	4628	374

Number of Intermediate Requirement.txt types: 7692 Number of Intermediate Requirement.txt families: 1487

Table of Ranges: Types

4628 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

374 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 4\book 4.txt

Number of lines: 1562

Number of words: 33178

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\ Intermediate Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	3460/10.43	725/13.38	450
not in the lists	29718/89.57	4693/86.62	?????
Total	33178	5418	450

Number of Intermediate Requirement.txt types: 7692 Number of Intermediate Requirement .txt families: 1487

Table of Ranges: Types 5418 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

450 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 1\book 1.txt

Number of lines: 1278

Number of words: 21744

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\Advanced Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	583/ 2.68	158/ 3.99	111
not in the lists	21161/97.32	3797/96.01	?????
Total	21744	3955	111

Number of Advanced Requirement.txt types: 5173 Number of Advanced Requirement.txt families: 1237

Table of Ranges: Types

3955 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

111 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 2\book 2.txt

Number of lines: 1186

Number of words: 24149

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\Advanced Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	603/ 2.50	134/ 3.08	83
not in the lists	23546/97.50	4212/96.92	?????
Total	24149	4346	83

Number of Advanced Requirement.txt types: 5173 Number of Advanced Requirement.txt families: 1237

Table of Ranges: Types 4346 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

83 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 3\book 3.txt

Number of lines: 1288

Number of words: 25949

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\Advanced Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	686/ 2.64	187/ 4.04	125
not in the lists	25263/97.36	4441/95.96	?????
Total	25949	4628	125

Number of Advanced Requirement.txt types: 5173 Number of Advanced Requirement.txt families: 1237

Table of Ranges: Types

4628 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

125 Words appear in 1 input files

Processing file: E:\论文\21 世纪语料库 self-made\whole book\book 4\book 4.txt

Number of lines: 1562

Number of words: 33178

Reading: E:\论文\Range\_BNC\Advanced Requirement.txt

WORD LIST	TOKENS/%	TYPES/%	FAMILIES
one	963/ 2.90	261/ 4.82	188
not in the lists	32215/97.10	5157/95.18	?????
Total	33178	5418	188

Number of Advanced Requirement.txt types: 5173 Number of Advanced Requirement.txt families: 1237

Table of Ranges: Types 5418 Words appear in 1 input files

Table of Ranges: Families

188 Words appear in 1 input files

Appendix VI Classification of the thirty units of 21<sup>st</sup> into ten categories

Book 2	Main category of themes	Detailed division of themes
Unit 1	Biography	Celebrity's encouraging story
Unit 2	School life	Different cultures of education
Unit 3	Career life	Fascinating complications of international management
Unit 4	Morality and psychology	Success and failure
Unit 5	School life	Balance work and school
Unit 6	Literature	Scientists' stories
Unit 7	Morality and psychology	Thinking and thinkers
Unit 8	Morality and psychology	The social contact
Unit 9	Environment issues	Wild weather
Unit 10	Science and technology	Technology and future life

Book 3	Main category of themes	Detailed division of themes
Unit 1	Entertainment	Love
Unit 2	Culture and customs	Equality of man and woman
Unit 3	Morality and psychology	Making full use of our senses
Unit 4	School life	Pressure and some misunderstanding about education
Unit 5	Culture and customs	Different aspects of American culture
Unit 6	Social problems	Alcohol and tobacco causing death
Unit 7	Morality and psychology	Ways to cope with pressure
Unit 8	Science and technology	Technology and future
Unit 9	Science and technology	Ventures to outer space
Unit 10	Morality and psychology	Ways to cope with pressure

Book 4	Main category of themes	Detailed division of themes
Unit 1	Literature	Celebrity's successful stories
Unit 2	Morality and psychology	Gratitude and good attitude
Unit 3	Morality and psychology	Ways of solving problems
Unit 4	School life	Relationship between students and teachers
Unit 5	School life	Value of reading
Unit 6	Morality and psychology	Factors influencing success
Unit 7	Career life	Management and brands
Unit 8	Family life	Relationship between family members
Unit 9	Culture and customs	Chinese culture and history
Unit 10	Career life	Speeches and leadership

## 作者简介

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